

**Committee and Date****Cabinet****10th September 2025**

Item

Public



Proposed Consultations on Residential Design Supplementary Planning Documents

Responsible Officer:	Tim Collard		
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Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):	Cllr David Walker		

1. Synopsis

- 1.1. This report seeks approval to consult on two Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). These being a draft Design of New Dwellings SPD (Appendix 1) and a draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD (Appendix 2).

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The adopted Development Plan for Shropshire identifies the vision and policy framework for the future development of Shropshire. It therefore constitutes the starting point when making decisions on planning applications, although there is also a need to consider whether there are any relevant material considerations.
- 2.2. The purpose of SPDs is to provide guidance to support the understanding and application of policies in the adopted Development Plan. They form material considerations when reaching decisions on planning applications.
- 2.3. The 'Healthy Economy' priority of the Shropshire Plan includes strategic objectives to *"develop Shropshire as a safe, strong and vibrant destination to attract people to live in, work in, learn in and visit"* and ensure *"an appropriate mix of housing in the right areas of the county"*.
- 2.4. The two draft SPDs on the 'Design of New Dwellings' (Appendix 1) and the 'Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations' (Appendix 2) can support achievement of these objectives by providing:

- a. Those progressing planning applications for new dwellings or residential extensions or alterations with both 'high-level' and 'technical' guidance on design expectations.
 - b. Communities with further guidance and greater certainty on the design expectations for new dwellings and residential extensions or alterations.
 - c. Planning officers determining planning applications with further guidance to support their decision making on new dwellings and residential extensions or alterations.
- 2.5. The draft Design of New Dwellings SPD provides both 'high-level' and 'technical' guidance for new dwellings, supporting the understanding and application of design policies in the adopted Development Plan.
- 2.6. Reflecting policy expectations in the adopted Development Plan, 'high-level' design guidance for new dwellings is structured around the following key principles:
- a. Layout - responding to the site and its surroundings.
 - b. Character and Appearance - distinctive places that complement their setting.
 - c. Integration - ensuring connectivity to and through the site.
 - d. Inclusivity and Sustainability - health, wellbeing, sustainable development and responding to our changing climate.
 - e. Function - meeting the needs of occupiers.
- 2.7. The 'technical' design guidance then expands on these 'high-level' design principles where it is considered additional specificity is beneficial.
- 2.8. The draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD provides guidance on key design considerations for residential extensions and alterations and then more detailed guidance for those extensions and alterations subject to specific constraints or opportunities. In this way it supports understanding and application of design policies in the adopted Development Plan.
- 2.9. Guidance on key design considerations for residential extensions and alterations are based on the following principles:
- a. Appropriate siting and proportionate in form and scale.
 - b. Utilising consistent or complementary materials, finishes and fenestration.
 - c. Minimising impact on neighbouring amenity and character of neighbouring properties.
- 2.10. More detailed guidance is provided in such circumstances where extensions or alterations relate to previously converted buildings, previously extended dwellings, affordable or agricultural workers dwellings, are to meet accessibility needs, and could impact on natural or historic environment assets. Opportunities to incorporate energy efficiency, zero or low carbon renewable energy generation, and water efficiency as part of an extension or alteration are also highlighted.

- 2.11. Within Shrewsbury town centre, these draft SPDs are designed to be read and applied alongside the draft Shrewsbury Town Centre Design Code, which provides overarching design coding for new development (new buildings and spaces) in Shrewsbury town centre, thereby supporting the understanding and application of design policies in the adopted Development Plan for Shropshire.
- 2.12. The purpose of this report is to present the draft Design of New Dwellings SPD and the draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD to Cabinet and to seek approval to undertake public consultation, seeking the views of all interested parties, upon them. The public consultations on these two SPDs would occur concurrently for a minimum of six weeks, commencing in October 2025.
- 2.13. Subject to the outcome of these consultations and any amendments required as a consequence, the intention would be to bring the draft SPDs back to Cabinet to seek approval to 'adopt' them in early 2026.
- 2.14. If adopted, these two SPDs would support the understanding and application of policies in the adopted Development Plan and form material considerations in the determination of planning applications.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. Cabinet consider the draft Design of New Dwellings Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix 1) and approve a minimum six week public consultation on the draft document. Subject to the outcome of this consultation, the final draft Supplementary Planning Document will be brought back to Cabinet to seek approval to 'adopt' it as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 3.2. Cabinet consider the draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix 2) and approve a minimum six week public consultation on the draft document. Subject to the outcome of this consultation, the final draft Supplementary Planning Document will be brought back to Cabinet to seek approval to 'adopt' it as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 3.3. That authority is given to the Service Director – Legal, Governance and Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, to agree any additional minor changes to the draft Design of New Dwellings Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix 1) and the draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix 2) ahead of these consultations.

Report

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1. The Statement of Community Involvement outlines the methods of engagement the Council intends to utilise during production of SPDs. This includes a stage of public consultation for a minimum of six weeks. As such, the recommendations of this report comply with this provision and reduce risk of suggestions the Council has not followed due process in the production of the draft Design of New Dwellings SPD and draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD.
- 4.2. The proposed period of public consultation on each SPD also provides a valuable opportunity to seek the views of all interested parties, thereby enhancing the value of the resultant SPDs and also allowing for consideration and resolution of any risks associated with the content of the SPDs as identified by these interested parties.
- 4.3. The intention of the draft Design of New Dwellings SPD is to provide design guidance for new dwellings, supporting the understanding and application of relevant policies in the adopted Development Plan. It is considered that not bringing forward this document could adversely affect the design of new dwellings across Shropshire, with the resultant risks and impacts.
- 4.4. The intention of the draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD is to provide design guidance for residential extensions and alterations, supporting the understanding and application of relevant policies in the adopted Development Plan. It is considered that not bringing forward this document could adversely affect the design of residential extensions and alterations across Shropshire, with the resultant risks and impacts.
- 4.5. Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) initial screening has been undertaken for each of the draft SPD's. These documents form Appendices 3 and 4 of this report.
- 4.6. The ESHIA for the draft Design of New Dwellings SPD anticipates equality impacts will be neutral to medium positive overall, across the nine Protected Characteristic groupings defined by the Equality Act 2010. There is potential for positive equality impact for the groupings of Age, Disability, and Pregnancy and Maternity. Additionally, there is potential for neutral to low positive equality impact for those in the further groupings for whom the Council seeks to give due regard in its decision-making processes, i.e. Other – Social Inclusion, Other – Veterans and Service Members and their families, and Other – Young People Leaving Care. Across all these groupings, the impacts would be in terms of health and well-being opportunities arising from the achievement of the high-quality design of new residential development. This includes housing that reflects need, is accessible and adaptable, includes specialist housing for older people and those with disabilities and special needs, includes affordable housing, promotes active travel, and includes well-designed and accessible open space.

- 4.7. This ESHIA also anticipates the draft Design of New Dwellings SPD will have positive health impacts, by enhancing the design of new dwellings. Enhancing layout and integration (connectivity to and through the site) of dwellings can support active travel and associated health and well-being benefits; enhanced provision of open space and green infrastructure would promote access and healthy and active lifestyles; and more inclusive and sustainable designs can meet the needs of communities and individuals with associated health and well-being impacts.
- 4.8. The ESHIA for the draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD anticipates equality impacts will be neutral to low positive across the nine Protected Characteristic groupings defined by the Equality Act 2010. There is potential for positive equality impact for the groupings of Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity. Additionally, there is potential for neutral to low positive equality impacts for those in the further groupings for whom the Council seeks to give due regard in its decision-making processes, i.e. Other – Social Inclusion, Other – Veterans and Service Members and their families, and Other – Young People Leaving Care, in terms of health and well-being opportunities arising from further guidance on the design considerations and design expectations if they wish to extend or alter residential properties to meet their changing needs and for people in these groupings to feel safer on their journeys for education, healthcare, work or leisure as a result of potential benefits of natural surveillance to public realm. This is likely to potentially rise to medium positive impact for veterans and service members and their families, should life-changing injuries or illnesses affect their physical and mental health and well-being and necessitate adjustments to residential properties.
- 4.9. This ESHIA also anticipates the draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD will have positive health impacts, by guiding extensions to provide better natural surveillance of public realm supporting perception of safety and active travel with the associated health and well-being benefits; and enhancing consideration of private amenity space when designing extensions – such space has known health and well-being benefits.
- 4.10. A further ESHIA will be carried out on the final drafts of these SPD's informed by the proposed public consultations, enabling the Council to factor in feedback from people in the Protected Characteristic groupings and our additional groupings, and feedback in regard to health and well-being impacts, alongside any received in regard to environmental and economic well-being impacts, across all groupings in the community. The follow up ESHIAs will also record where responses may have been low from people in particular groupings, warranting further ongoing engagement.

4.11. Risk table:

<i>Risk</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
Procedural risk: failing to comply with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.	The proposed period of public consultation on each SPD complies with the provisions for public engagement in the Statement of Community Involvement, reducing risk of suggestions the Council has not followed due process in the production of these SPD's.
Reputational risk: guidance proposed is perceived not to be appropriate.	The proposed period of public consultation on each SPD provides a valuable opportunity to seek the views of all interested parties, thereby enhancing the value of the resultant SPD's and also allowing for consideration and

	resolution of any risks associated with the content of the SPD's as identified by these interested parties.
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5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. Shropshire Council continues to manage unprecedented financial demands as budgeted for within the Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by Council on 27 February 2025 and subsequent updates. It is also addressed in our monitoring position presented to Cabinet on a monthly basis. Significant management action has and continues to be undertaken to ensure the Council's financial survival. While all reports provide the financial implications of decisions being taken, this may change as officers review the overall financial situation and make decisions aligned to financial survivability. Where non-essential spend is identified within the Council, this will be reduced. This may involve
- scaling down initiatives,
 - changing the scope,
 - delaying implementation, or
 - extending delivery timescales.
- 5.2. Preparation of the draft Design of New Dwellings SPD and draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD has been undertaken using existing resources and budgets within the Planning Policy Team.
- 5.3. Public consultation is a key stage in the production of SPDs. The proposed period of public consultation and associated activities will be met from existing resources and budgets within the Planning Policy Team. The subsequent review of responses and undertaking any amendments required as a consequence would also be met from existing resources and budgets within the Planning Policy Team.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1. The draft Design of New Dwellings SPD and draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD seek to provide guidance to support the understanding and application of policies within the adopted Development Plan.
- 6.2. With regard to the draft Design of New Dwellings SPD, guidance promotes the:
- Maximisation of fabric energy efficiency of new dwellings.
 - Management of travel behaviours associated with new dwellings to minimise need for travel and encourage use of active/public transport.
 - Reduction of waste and re-use/re-cycling during construction and operation of new dwellings.
 - Principle of identifying opportunities to integrate and support community initiatives for on-site low carbon and renewable energy generation within developments for new dwellings.
 - Incorporation of measures to respond to our changing climate, including sustainable drainage, green infrastructure, water efficiency and flood risk management within the development of new dwellings.

- Consideration of opportunities to minimise embodied carbon, support nature-based carbon sequestration, and offset carbon emissions within the development of new dwellings.
- 6.3. With regard to the draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD, it includes guidance on the opportunities to incorporate energy efficiency zero or low carbon renewable energy generation and water efficiency as part of an extension or alteration.
- 6.4. As such, the draft Design of New Dwellings SPD, draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD and associated public consultation and stakeholder engagement is expected to have a positive outcome on the climate change impacts listed below:
- Energy and fuel consumption (buildings and/or travel).
 - Renewable energy generation.
 - Carbon offsetting or mitigation.
 - Climate change adaptation.

7. Background

- 7.1. Planning applications should be determined in accordance with the adopted Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adopted Development Plan for Shropshire consists of:
- The **adopted Local Plan** which collectively covers the period 2006-2026 and comprises:
 - The Core Strategy (2011): which sets out the vision, strategic objectives, broad spatial strategy, and strategic policies.
 - The Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan (2015): which provides detailed 'development management' and 'settlement' policies to guide future development and identifies site allocations.
 - **'Made' Neighbourhood Development Plans**
 - There are currently nine made Neighbourhood Plans and several more in preparation.
- 7.2. Design is the appearance, function, sustainability and connectivity of a building or area. High-quality design maintains and enhances the character, appearance and historic interest of settlements, streetscenes, groups of buildings, individual buildings, our network of green spaces and the landscape. It creates better places in which to live and work, improves sustainability, supports active and healthy lifestyles, and ensures individual and community well-being.
- 7.3. The adopted Development Plan includes a range of policies that address the achievement of high-quality design. Particularly relevant to the design of new dwellings and extensions / alterations to existing dwellings are Policies CS6 of the Core Strategy and Policy MD2 of the SAMDev Plan.

- 7.4. Policy CS6 of the Core Strategy establishes sustainable design and development principles, including requiring:
- High-quality sustainable design; inclusive and accessible environments; enhancement of local distinctiveness; and mitigation and adaptation to climate change.
 - Design to respond to our changing climate; to be adaptable, safe and accessible to all; and to respond to changing lifestyle needs of occupiers.
 - Conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment; development to be appropriate scale, density, pattern and design reflecting local context, character and features - having regard to national and local design guidance and assessments.
 - Safeguarding of community health and wellbeing.
 - Appropriate landscaping and safeguarding of natural resources.
- 7.5. Policy MD2 of the SAMDev Plan addresses sustainable design, including requiring development to:
- Contribute and respect locally distinctive and valued character and existing amenity; respond to form and layout of existing development (including mixture of uses, streetscape, building heights and lines, scale, density, plot sizes and local patterns of movement); reflect local character (including architectural design, details and materials); and conserve and enhance historic and environmental assets.
 - Embrace contemporary design which references/reinforces distinctive local character and creates sense of place. -Incorporate sustainable drainage.
 - Consider design of landscaping and open space holistically as part of the whole development (including natural features such as trees, hedgerows and landscape); and to provide sufficient open space (30sqm per person) that meets local needs (on sites of 20 or more dwellings this should be a functional space for play, recreation and nature) managed in perpetuity.
- 7.6. The purpose of SPDs is to provide more detailed guidance to support the understanding and application of policies in the adopted Development Plan. They do not form part of the adopted Development Plan, and they cannot introduce new planning policies into the adopted Development Plan. They should not add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development. They form material considerations when reaching decisions on planning applications. The requirements for producing SPDs are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and these are being followed in producing these SPDs.
- 7.7. To support the understanding and application of design policies in the adopted Development Plan, two new draft SPDs have been prepared.
- 7.8. The draft Design of New Dwellings SPD provides both 'high-level' and 'technical' guidance on the policy expectations in the adopted Development Plan for the design of new dwellings.

- 7.9. This guidance is applicable to all proposals for one or more new dwellings. However, it recognises that the scale and context of a site will influence the relevance and approach to some components.
- 7.10. The 'high-level' design guidance for new dwellings is structured around a series of design principles, these being:
- a. Layout - responding to the site and its surroundings.
 - b. Character and Appearance - distinctive places that complement their setting.
 - c. Integration - ensuring connectivity to and through the site.
 - d. Inclusivity and Sustainability - health, wellbeing, sustainable development and responding to our changing climate.
 - e. Function - meeting the needs of occupiers.
- 7.11. To provide further specificity, for each design principle and associated guidance is supported by a series of 'themes'. These are:
- a. Layout:
 - Make effective use of the site.
 - Clear relationship with and responsive to the surrounding built and natural environment.
 - Ease of navigation with well-defined streets and spaces.
 - b. Character and Appearance:
 - Create a memorable place.
 - Enhance the character and appearance of the site and its setting.
 - Design of place, including materials and finishes.
 - c. Integration:
 - Safe and convenient movement to and through the site.
 - Green infrastructure and wildlife corridors to and through the site.
 - Access to services, facilities, and sports / play provision on and off site.
 - d. Inclusivity and Sustainability:
 - Promoting healthy and active lifestyles.
 - Supporting inclusive and multi-generational communities.
 - Sustainable development and the transition to net zero through energy and water efficiency.
 - Biodiversity and heritage.
 - e. Function - meeting the needs of occupiers.
 - Homes responsive to community needs – now and in the future.
 - Ensuring the amenity of those living on and near the site.
 - Safe and Secure.

- 7.12. 'Technical' design guidance then expands on these 'high-level' principles - where it is considered additional specificity is beneficial. This includes such issues as separation standards between dwellings; internal and private amenity space; spaces for play and sport; parking; accessible and specialist housing; energy efficiency, renewable energy generation, and water efficiency; natural and historic environment assets; and pollution.
- 7.13. For transparency the draft Design of New Dwellings SPD includes two appendices which summarise the main policies and their expectations to which the guidance within it relate.
- 7.14. The draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD provides guidance on key design considerations for residential extensions and alterations and then more detailed guidance for those extensions and alterations subject to specific constraints or opportunities. In this way it supports understanding and application of design policies in the adopted Development Plan.
- 7.15. Guidance on key design considerations for residential extensions and alterations are based on the following principles:
- a. Appropriate siting and proportionate in form and scale.
 - b. Utilising consistent or complementary materials, finishes and fenestration.
 - c. Minimising impact on neighbouring amenity and character of neighbouring properties.
- 7.16. More detailed guidance is provided in such circumstances where extensions or alterations relate to previously converted buildings, previously extended dwellings, affordable or agricultural workers dwellings, are to meet accessibility needs, and could impact on natural or historic environment assets.
- 7.17. Opportunities to incorporate energy efficiency, zero or low carbon renewable energy generation, and water efficiency as part of an extension or alteration are also highlighted.
- 7.18. Within Shrewsbury town centre, these draft SPDs are designed to be read and applied alongside the draft Shrewsbury Town Centre Design Code, which provides overarching design coding for new development (new buildings and spaces) in Shrewsbury town centre, thereby supporting the understanding and application of design policies in the adopted Development Plan for Shropshire.
- 7.19. These draft SPDs would provide:
- a. Those progressing planning applications for new dwellings or residential extensions or alterations with guidance on the design expectations of policies within the adopted Development Plan.
 - b. Communities with further guidance and greater certainty on the design expectations for new dwellings and residential extensions or alterations.
 - c. Planning officers determining planning applications for new dwellings or residential extensions or alterations with guidance to support understanding and application of design policies in the adopted Development Plan, thereby supporting the decision making process.

7.20. The purpose of this report is to present the draft Design of New Dwellings SPD and the draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD to Cabinet and to seek approval to undertake public consultation, seeking the views of all interested parties, upon them. The public consultations on these two SPD's would occur concurrently for a minimum of six weeks, commencing in October 2025.

7.21. Subject to approval, the following activity is planned as part of the consultation process:

- Use of the Council's social media channels and issuing of a press release to promote the consultation.
- Issuing notification of the consultation to all parties registered on the Local Plan Consultation Database.
- Documents made available on the Council website.
- Hard copies of each draft SPD made available in the Guildhall and libraries across Shropshire.

7.22. The consultation would comply with Shropshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

8. Additional Information

- 8.1. Subject to the outcome of these consultations and any amendments required as a consequence, the intention would be to bring the draft SPDs back to Cabinet to seek approval to 'adopt' them in early 2026.
- 8.2. If adopted, these two SPDs would support the understanding and application of policies in the adopted Development Plan and form material considerations in the determination of planning applications.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1. To support the understanding and application of design policies in the adopted Development Plan, two new draft SPDs have been prepared. The draft Design of New Dwellings SPD provides guidance on the design of new dwellings. The draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD provides guidance on the design of extensions and alterations to existing dwellings.
- 9.2. The Council's Statement of Community Involvement outlines the methods of engagement to be utilised during production of SPDs. This includes a stage of public consultation for a minimum of six weeks. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 set out procedural requirements around seeking and dealing with representations and subsequent adoption of the SPDs which will be carefully followed.
- 9.3. As such, this report presents the draft Design of New Dwellings SPD and the draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD to Cabinet and seeks approval to undertake a minimum six week public consultation (commencing in October) upon them.

- 9.4. The public consultation on each of these draft SPDs would provide all interested parties with the opportunity to comment on the two documents. These comments would be duly considered and any necessary amendments integrated into the draft SPD's.
- 9.5. Subject to this process, the intention would be to bring the draft SPDs back to Cabinet to seek approval to 'adopt' them in early 2026.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Shropshire Council Core Strategy (2006-2026):

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/8534/core-strategy.pdf>

Shropshire Council SAMDev Plan (2006-2026):

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/8503/samdev-adopted-plan.pdf>

Shropshire 'made' Neighbourhood Plans: <https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/neighbourhood-and-community-led-plans/>

Local Member: All

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Draft Design of New Dwellings Supplementary Planning Document.
- Appendix 2: Draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document.
- Appendix 3: Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) for the Draft Design of New Dwellings Supplementary Planning Document.
- Appendix 4: Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) for the Draft Design of Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document.