

To: Business, Enterprise and Economy Scrutiny Board (3)

18<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Subject: Draft Trees and Development Guidelines Supplementary Planning Development

## 1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To brief the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) on the current position in relation to the draft Trees and Development Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – (Appendix A - Draft Trees and Development Guidelines for Coventry: Supplementary Planning Development - Cabinet Member Report, Appendix 1 and Appendix 2).

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) are recommended to:
- 1) Note the content of the report.
  - 2) Identify any comments on the draft strategy as part of the consultation.
  - 3) Identify any recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Member.

## 3 Information/Background

- 3.1 This SPD is intended to provide technical guidance and support to the Green Environment policies set out in Chapter seven of the Local Plan (2016), in particular policies GE3 and GE4. To a lesser extent, it also builds upon some of the policies included in chapters 9 (Conservation and Heritage) and 11 (Environmental Management). The Local Plan provides the framework for determining planning applications across Coventry following its adoption on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2017. This SPD has been developed by the Council's Planning Policy team and is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the requirements for applicants in the planning process where trees are involved.
- 3.2 The SPD is structured in a sequential order for an applicant preparing a planning application submission where trees are involved. It covers supporting technical detail(s) around matters of:
- Land Surveys.
  - Tree Surveys.
  - Tree Constraint Plans.
  - Arboricultural Method Statements.
  - Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees.
  - Works to trees.
  - Tree and root protection measures.
  - Planting new trees.
  - Accessing and moving around sites.
  - Avoiding damage to trees.

- 3.3 This SPD continues to expand upon and support the green environment policies set out in Chapter seven of the Local Plan, with particular focus on policies GE3 and GE4. The changes to this SPD have been made by the Planning Policy team to reflect the comments received through the initial rounds of consultation (8th August 2018 and 23rd September 2018 and 7 January 2019 and 18 February 2019), and which further augment the tree protection, tree conservation and other related policies. The continued technical support and guidance provided within the document will help all stakeholders to understand the Council's tree protection aims and objectives and help applicants to provide the correct information and assess the right areas where tree protection and planting measures will be required, as early as possible in the planning process. This will not only save time and money but will lead to stronger outcomes for green infrastructure in relation to planning decision making.
- 3.4 The SPD remains split across five areas, with the first providing the introduction and the second context (introducing the legislation, guidance and policy important to tree conservation, and providing a brief overview of the importance of trees and history of trees in the city). The third area provides detailed information on what is required by applicants prior to submitting a planning application on a site where trees are located. The fourth section sets out the standards the Council expects to see developers, or any other individual/organisation, meet when implementing such works to and around trees. The fifth and final area concerns the monitoring and review requirements.
- 3.5 There have been two rounds of formal public consultation to date on the draft Trees and Development Guidelines SPD, between the dates of 8th August 2018 and 23rd September 2018 and 7 January 2019 and 18 February 2019.
- 3.6 A total of ten responses were received for both consultations via email as well as a range of informal comments and suggestions made through stakeholder meetings and consultation drop in events. A summary of the representations made and the proposed action in response to the representations as part of the second consultation are set out in Appendix 2.
- 3.7 The primary comments came from stakeholders with an interest in the protection and preservation of the green environment, especially trees. The comments focussed upon the following key aspects:
- The need to update the references to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to reflect the newly updated document issued by Government in July 2018 and February 2019 and other updated guidance issued by the Woodland Trust since the second draft version was issued;
  - Clarification of the CAVAT qualifying replacement planting approach;
  - Clarification of veteran and ancient tree definitions based on the 2019 NPPG revisions;
  - Other minor modifications concerning clarity of wording; and
  - The relevance and justification of the buffer to the existing ancient woodlands and trees.
- 3.8 A final period of public consultation will seek formal representations to the SPD. Following this round of consultation, all responses will be reviewed, and the SPD will be updated (if appropriate) for the final time. The SPD will then be presented for adoption at Cabinet at the earliest opportunity in 2020.

Appendix A - Draft Trees and Development Guidelines for Coventry: Supplementary Planning Development, Cabinet Member Report, Appendix 1 and Appendix 2

**Robert Penlington**  
**Tree Preservation Officer**  
[robert.penlington@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:robert.penlington@coventry.gov.uk)  
**Rob Haigh**  
**Acting Planning Policy Manager**  
[rob.haigh@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:rob.haigh@coventry.gov.uk)