

**REPORT TO:** PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR STRATEGIC GROWTH

**DATE:** 26 JULY 2022

**TITLE:** STAPLE TYE SPD - CONSULTATION

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER:** COUNCILLOR MICHAEL HARDWARE,  
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR STRATEGIC GROWTH

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**This is not a Key Decision**

**It is on the Forward Plan as Decision Number I013957**

**Call-in Procedures may apply**

**This decision will affect Staple Tye Ward.**

**RECOMMENDED that** the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Growth:

- A** Approves the Draft Staple Tye Supplementary Planning Document (as set out at Appendix A to the report), to enable it to be published for the purposes of consultation under Section 12(b) of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- B** Delegates authority to the Director of Strategic Growth and Regeneration to make and approve any minor or inconsequential amendments to the Draft Staple Tye Supplementary Planning Document arising from the statutory consultation.

#### **REASON FOR DECISION**

- A** To approve the Draft Staple Tye Supplementary Planning Document for consultation for a minimum period of four weeks under Regulation 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as

amended). To take into account the summer period and to ensure greater engagement, the consultation period may be extended for a further two to four weeks longer than the legal statutory consultation period.

- B** To meet the legal requirements of developing and adopting a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

## **BACKGROUND**

1. The Harlow Local Development Plan (HLDP) was adopted by the Council on 10 December 2020. The Local Plan sets out a long-term vision for Harlow, identifying land where development will be acceptable and where it will be unacceptable.
2. It contains policies which ensure future development is sustainable by meeting the needs of residents, businesses and visitors, while providing the required infrastructure and protecting existing retail centres and employment areas. These policies are material considerations in the determination of planning applications.
3. Policy ED2 sets out to protect existing employment areas, this includes Staple Tye, and states that these areas will be retained and enhanced for a mix of office, industrial and warehouse uses and other associated activities in accordance with Policy PR1 which sets out general presumption against the loss of office, industrial or distribution/warehouse uses from the allocated employment areas. The Neighbourhood Service Area at Staple Tye is also to be protected in accordance with Policy PR2 and the provision of smaller start-up units, shared spaces and work hubs in these areas will be encouraged. Policy PR2 sets out general presumption against the loss of B1 (now E(g)) uses.
4. The retail hierarchy set out in Policy RS1 shows the Staple Tye Neighbourhood Centre below Harlow Town Centre where retail development should be directed in the first instance. Policy RS2 identifies comparison and convenience floorspace needs in Harlow where a significant proportion will be delivered in Harlow Town Centre. Consequently, the remaining floorspace requirement will be delivered through redevelopment opportunities in Neighbourhood Centres. Policy RS3 protects and enhances the role and function of Neighbourhood Centres with support given in principle to new retail and community uses that are of an appropriate scale and residential development which supports the centres uses. Policy PR8 supports a wide range of services and facilities within Neighbourhood Centres.
5. Whilst the policies in the plan themselves give significant detail of the Council's requirements, the additional guidance contained in a SPD will expand on the adopted plan, to give additional guidance to developers when making planning applications, to officers when making recommendations, and councillors when making decisions. It will also provide a catalyst for positive change linked to the regeneration objectives of the Council, as well as providing a framework within which the environmental character of an area can be enhanced and improved.

6. It should be noted that an SPD cannot introduce new policy over and above that contained in the adopted local plan, although it will have regard to the other adopted SPD's and related guidance of the Council.

## **ISSUES/PROPOSALS**

7. The purpose of the Staple Tye SPD is to provide a clear, robust and deliverable development framework which can be used to regenerate the Staple Tye Neighbourhood Centre and surrounding area. The Staple Tye SPD has been developed around an outline strategy for four key areas which focuses on redevelopment opportunities, public realm improvement, connectivity improvement and retention of key uses. The SPD provides further guidance to support the implementation of Policies RS3 and ED2 of the HLDP. The SPD area will already benefit from investment from the Towns Fund in providing high quality business units and flexible workspace as well as improvements to the cycleway and underpasses.
8. The SPD's Development Framework is based on the following key principles:
  - a) Retain a healthy, vibrant and active Neighbourhood Centre
    - i) Staple Tye should continue to be the heart of the neighbourhood providing local services and convenience retail within a 20-minute walk of homes.
  - b) Promote economic growth and local jobs
    - i) Opportunities for new businesses at the new development opportunity sites in emerging growth sectors should be sought. The retention of the Staple Tye employment area and the shopping centre must continue to support the local economy.
  - c) Enable high quality and diverse housing
    - i) New homes are needed in Harlow to meet local need. The Staple Tye area is set to deliver several new residential development opportunities which are identified at the Site on the Corner of Parnall Road and Pinceybrook Road, Great Parndon Library, Former Lister House and at the three sites that make up the HLDP housing allocation at Staple Tye Mews, Staple Tye Depot and The Gateway. These development opportunities will provide a mix of unit sizes and tenures, including affordable housing, in line with HLDP policies.
  - d) Improved transport and movement options
    - i) Improving walking and cycling routes through the Staple Tye area to support the modal shift as well as the idea of delivering a 20-

minute neighbourhood<sup>1</sup>. Road crossings and routes for pedestrians and cyclist should be reviewed and improved, including the potential for new crossing points, to provide a better and safer experience. The area could act as a mobility hub for active transport uses with improved access to bus stops.

e) Enhance the natural environment and public realm

- i) The Staple Tye area is well connected to the Great Parndon open space as well as benefiting from the Green Finger which runs through the area. Enhancements to the natural environment as well as landscaping within the new developments and improvements to landscaping will help provide a high-quality environment for local residents. Public realm improvements throughout the Staple Tye area will provide a safer and healthier environment. Enhancing the natural environment and public realm will help improve the health and wellbeing of residents.

9. The redevelopment opportunities and their key aspects and requirements that is set out in the SPD include:

- a) Site on the corner of Parnall Road and Pinceybrook Road – the site is currently vacant and is suitable for residential development. It will require cycle spaces and improvements to the pathway to ensure sustainable travel across the area. The frontage would need to be open to the area to contribute to the public realm.
- b) Great Parndon Library – the building is currently one-storey and has a small parking area and amenity space adjacent to the building. The site is suitable for redevelopment, providing additional community floorspace or residential units or the existing site and buildings improved in terms of frontage design and the public realm.
- c) Former Lister House Medical Centre – the site is currently vacant and is suitable for residential and employment use. It will be required to provide a direct access and natural surveillance of the walking and cycling route.
- d) Staple Tye Mews – This site forms part of a HLDP Housing Allocation and currently provides space for small business units; however, the uses are unlike those the service area was intended for. The Mews would benefit from either short-term improvements to the public realm and frontage design or long term redevelopment to provide space specifically for small start-up units.
- e) Staple Tye Depot – This site is suitable for residential reflecting the HLDP housing allocation, taking into consideration the adjacent employment area and connections to the walking and cycle routes. It

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<sup>1</sup> '20 minute neighbourhoods' are places that are designed so residents can meet their day-to-day needs within a 20 minute walk of their home; through access to safe walking and cycling routes, or by public transport.

would be beneficial to reinvest in connections across Pinceybrook Road which connects the walking and cycling routes.

- f) The Gateway – this site is suitable for residential reflecting the HLDP housing allocation, taking into consideration the adjacent employment area and connections to the walking and cycle routes. Similar to the Staple Tye Depot, it would also be beneficial to reinvest in connections across Pinceybrook Road which connects the walking and cycling routes.
10. The connectivity proposals will include improvements to the cycleway and underpasses through the Towns Fund work as well as improvements identified in the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). This includes a cycling route through the Staple Tye area and improvements along the existing path including cycle crossings and resurfacing. The Core Walking Zone (CWZ) of Staple Tye is focused around the local shopping centre and adjoining residential streets. The LCWIP recommends a number of design improvements for walking including additional crossings across the area.
  11. The public realm improvements will concentrate on the small parking area north of Poundland which could be converted into a pedestrian zone to include seating areas and playspace to create a multipurpose space. Improvements to the Green Finger, shown on the HLDP Policies Map, and walking and cycling route would include modern lighting, seating areas and signage to key facilities in the area. As previously mentioned, the amenity space adjacent to the library could be improved to include play space and landscaping.
  12. The employment areas and shopping centres are both to be protected for employment use and retail use through HLDP policies. Community facilities such as the library are key assets for the local area and are also protected under policies in the HLDP.

## **NEXT STEPS**

13. Following Portfolio Holders endorsement to consult, the Staple Tye SPD will follow the statutory process to adoption. The regulation cited above requires the Council to:
  - a) Produce a consultation statement before adoption of the SPD, this must set out who was consulted, a summary of the issues raised, and how these issues were incorporated in to the SPD;
  - b) Publish the documents for a minimum 4 week consultation, specify the date when responses should be received and identify the address to which responses should be sent;
  - c) Make documents available by taking the following steps;

- i) Make the document available at the principal office and other places within the area that the Council considers appropriate;
  - ii) Publish the document on the Council's website.
14. The consultation will follow the Council's Adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) as well as follow a similar consultation to The Stow SPD which was consulted on during June 2015 and adopted 2016. Planning Services will use its consultation database to inform consultees of the SPD, allowing a minimum of four weeks although this is likely to be extended, depending on the start date, to allow for the summer holidays and to ensure greater engagement.
15. Following the consultation period, the Council will consider all responses received and amend the draft SPD as appropriate, to produce a final version ready for adoption. The consultation statement, mentioned above, will be produced and will detail how responses received were taken into account.
16. The finalised SPD will then be adopted by the Council at a future Cabinet meeting, at which point it will become a material consideration in the determining of planning applications. The SPD will be hosted on the Council's website and a number of hard copies will also be made available.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **Strategic Growth and Regeneration**

As set out in the report.

**Author: Andrew Bramidge, Director of Strategic Growth and Regeneration**

### **Finance**

None specific.

**Author: Simon Freeman, Deputy to the Chief Executive and Director of Finance**

### **Housing**

As outlined in the report.

**Author: Andrew Murray, Director of Housing**

### **Communities and Environment**

As outlined in the report.

**Author: Jane Greer, Director of Communities and Environment**

### **Governance and Corporate Services**

The Council is following the statutory process for this consultation under Section 12(b) of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 which has now been delegated to the Portfolio Holder.

**Author: Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Services**

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – Draft Staple Tye Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

## **Background Papers**

[Harlow Local Development Plan](#): Adopted December 2020

[Harlow Design Guide](#): Adopted October 2011

[Harlow Design Guide Addendum](#): Adopted December 2021

[Essex County Council Design Guide](#)

[Green Infrastructure and Public Open Space Standards SPD](#): Adopted March 2022

[Harlow Town Plan Masterplan Framework SPD](#): Adopted March 2022

Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

## **Glossary of terms/abbreviations used**

SPD – Supplementary Planning Document

HLDP – Harlow Local Development Plan

SCI – Statement of Community Involvement

HGGT - Harlow and Gilston Garden Town

LCWIP - Local Cycling and Walking

Infrastructure Plan

CWZ - Core Walking Zone