

# streetscape manual consultation statement july 2013

southend on sea borough council  
local development framework



delivering regeneration and growth



**consultation statement**

**streetscape manual spd**

**july 2013**

**prepared in accordance with regulation 12(a) of the town and country  
planning (local planning) (england) regulations 2012**



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Consultation Statement sets out how Southend Borough Council has prepared the draft Streetscape Manual SPD in accordance with Regulation 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

## 2. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 2.1 The NPPF (2012) sets out the context for the preparation of SPDs, which it defines as 'documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan'. SPDs, in the context of the NPPF, can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites or on particular issues, such as design, and are capable of being a material consideration but are not part of the development plan.
- 2.2 SPDs should be used where they can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery and should not be used to add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development however (NPPF, paragraph 153).
- 2.3 The Streetscape Manual SPD has been prepared in accordance with local planning policy, as set out within section 3 below, to provide further guidance for developers on the palette of materials and street furniture that are employed across the Borough of Southend to ensure a consistent approach is taken to street design and management, with benefit of reducing maintenance costs and improving the quality of the Borough's streets. In this regard, the Council considers that the draft Streetscape Manual SPD will meet the requirements set out by the NPPF.

## 3. Local Planning Policy Context

- 3.1 The Council's Aim for the Borough is set out within its adopted Core Strategy DPD (2007) and forms the basis for this Streetscape Manual:

"To secure a major refocus of function and the long term sustainability of Southend as a significant urban area which serves local people and the Thames Gateway.

To do this there is a need to release the potential of Southend's land and building's to achieve measureable improvements in the town's economic prosperity, transportation networks, infrastructure and facilities, and the quality of life of all its citizens. This will include safeguarding and improving the standards of the town's amenities and including the quality of the natural and built environment."

- 3.2 The quality of the Borough's streets and public spaces are an important component in ensuring this aim is recognised and in recent years Southend has benefitted from a number of notable and award winning public realm improvement schemes, including City Beach (Phase 1) and Victoria Gateway (Phase 1).
- 3.3 The Core Strategy sets a clear design and development agenda through policies KP2 and CP4, and makes provision for further development plan documents and

supplementary planning documents to be brought forward to provide a greater level of detail as necessary.

- 3.4 The Council first adopted its Design and Townscape SPD in 2006, and a refresh of this document was subsequently adopted in 2009. This document provides detailed guidance aimed at encouraging high quality development proposals and to provide a practical basis for achieving this that will assist the Council in resisting poor quality development. While the document provide some guidance on creating successful places in respect of the creation of new streets, it does not contain the level of detail required to successful manage a coordinated palette of street materials and furniture for the Borough's streets. The Streetscape Manual SPD was therefore considered necessary in order to provide detailed guidance for the management and design of the Borough's streets.
- 3.5 The Council's Development Management Development Plan Document (DM DPD) proposed submission version (2011) builds upon the foundations laid by the Core Strategy, setting out specific design and townscape policies that set overall standards for design quality, including the public realm.
- 3.6 This is further progressed for the Central Area of the Borough through the Southend Central Area Action Plan (SCAAP), proposed submission document (2011), that reflects the spatial vision and objectives of the Core Strategy, including more detailed policies and proposals for delivering regeneration and growth in the central area. The policy approach taken forward by the DM DPD and SCAAP will be supported by the Streetscape Manual SPD.
- 3.7 Once adopted, the Streetscape Manual SPD will provide detailed guidance for ensuring a coordinated and consistent approach to the design of streets and public spaces in the Borough, building upon these strategic policy objectives as well as providing more detail.

## **4. Purpose of the Streetscape Manual SPD**

- 4.1 The quality and functionality of streets and areas of public realm can make a vast difference to the success and public perception of a place and to the quality of life for its residents. Southend Borough Council is committed to ensuring that all projects, both large and small, create balanced streets with minimal visual clutter, that employ good quality and durable material that are sustainably sourced, acknowledging the needs of all users. The publication of the Manual will also provide an opportunity for existing schemes to be reviewed and the design principles within the Manual then applied.
- 4.2 Whilst there is a need to rationalise how the Council and others undertaken new schemes and the upgrading of the existing network of streets and public realm, it is acknowledged that schemes need to strike a reasonable balance between reducing unnecessary street clutter and hazards, encouraging personal responsibility and community interaction, whilst maintaining the necessary and easy movement of people both in and out of vehicles.

- 4.3 The Streetscape Manual therefore aims to raise the quality and consistency of schemes which effect the Borough's streets and public realm, creating vibrant and useable spaces. It sets out a number of overarching principles that should be applied to all schemes in order to recreate and define the Borough's streets: remove visual clutter, relocate and merge functions, and rethink traffic management options.
- 4.4 As an SPD, the Manual does not introduce any new policy and will not, once adopted, form part of the development plan. Importantly however, it will add further detail and context to the relevant policies contained within the development plan and will be a material consideration in all relevant planning applications.

## 5. Preparation of the Streetscape Manual SPD

- 5.1 It should be noted that all statutory consultees (including the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage) were consulted on the Core Strategy and supporting evidence base, which sets out within its overarching Aim, Strategic Objectives and Policies KP2 and CP4, the strategic approach and policies relating to the delivery of well-designed and attractive urban environments. The Core Strategy was consulted on in the following stages:
- Issues and Options – January to March 2005
  - Preferred Options – July to September 2005
  - Post submission consultation – September to October 2006
  - Consultation during Examination in Public – March to April 2007
  - Core Strategy adopted in December 2007
- 5.2 In regard to the consultation on the Core Strategy DPD at Preferred Options stage there was generally overwhelming support for Policy KP2: Development Principles, which sets out the policy approach to ensure that all new development contributes to economic, social, physical and environmental regeneration in a sustainable way including securing improvements to the urban environment through quality design. For Policy CP4: The Environment and Urban Renaissance, which seeks to ensure that development proposals contribute to the creation of a high quality, sustainable urban environment, there were no specific objections or modifications proposed in regard to design. The Streetscape Manual SPD expands further on the core principles outlined in these key policies and provides more detailed guidance on the design of the Borough's streets. The Manual will therefore be used to inform the scope and type of general enhancements and improvements to the public realm, supporting the policy objectives of the Core Strategy DPD.
- 5.3 The process for preparing the draft Streetscape Manual SPD began with an initial information gathering stage and discussions with key stakeholders within the Council (who were also engaged with throughout future stages of the documents development) including: Parks Technical Officer, Parks Management Officer, Arboricultural Officer, Group Manager Highways and Traffic Management Service, Team Leader for Traffic Management and Road Safety, Group Manager for Waste and Environmental Care, Environmental Care Team Manager, Senior Waste and

Recycling Officer, Programme Manager for the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, Transport Policy Officers, Street Lighting Engineer, Traffic and Highways Engineer, Development Manager for Sustainable Highways Projects; and team leaders from the Development Control team.

- 5.4 This early and detailed engagement with technical officers in the process allowed for product information and specifications to be collected on the range of street furniture and materials employed across the Borough, identifying areas where a consolidation of products was necessary, or where there were budgetary constraints or other management issues that required a new approach / product to be identified.
- 5.5 A meeting was also held in January 2012 with John Dales of Urban Initiatives (who was acting on behalf of the Council to review the City Beach public realm scheme) to discuss the development of the Streetscape Manual and examples of good practice. This provided the opportunity for the draft document and approach to be peer reviewed by an expert in the field. Other examples, including the Ealing Urban Public Realm Strategy, were recommended as examples of good practice. It was also recommended that the document be divided into clear sections, including an 'up front' introduction followed by technical guidance, including product specifications, to make it more user friendly. The document, it was considered, should also include key aims and a simplified set of objectives. Comments from this meeting were taken into account and examples of best practice considered by Officers from the Council's Strategic Planning team who were drafting the document, and the document remodelled to provide a clearer approach that separated the technical aspects of the documents into individual sections for ease of use.
- 5.6 These discussions enabled the document to evolve in an iterative way, so that a draft could be circulated to these key stakeholders for further comment when and where necessary. This drew out further issues, including the need to ensure the document drew a clear distinction between those products that were currently in use, and those that were being phased out. The document includes, with the product specification tables, details on where products have been specified to enable repairs work only.
- 5.7 Further discussions were held with relevant officers within the Council, including the Project Manager of the Victoria Gateway Phase 1, City Beach and High Street schemes, who provided contact details of the paving supplier (CED Ltd). This enabled officers from the strategic planning team to liaise with the supplier to ensure the document contained an up to date and detailed list of all those products specified within the schemes. This information is now clearly presented within the product specification tables.
- 5.8 The document has therefore been the product of a detailed process of consultation to ensure that its contents appropriately reflect the current 'picture' of the Borough's streets and public spaces, and provide an appropriate approach to ensuring enhancements to these areas are made in a coordinated manner.
- 5.9 The Council's Portfolio Holder for Planning and the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection, Waste and Transport were briefed on the document in February 2013.

The document was also received at this time by the Council's Departmental Management Team. It was agreed that the document should progress to the Council's Pre-Cabinet Scrutiny Committee in April, prior to its publication for consultation.

5.10 At the meeting of the Council's Pre-Cabinet Scrutiny Committee in April 2013 comments were raised by members in regard to the following issues: guidance on roundabout design; guidance on the use of metric and imperial paving slabs; updating images within the product specification tables to include full lampposts; the need to reserve historic lampposts; and clarification of why bus shelters with perch seating are being installed in the Borough.

5.11 In order to address these comments some minor amendments were made to the documents including: a paragraph explaining how roundabouts are designed and managed in the Borough by the Council's Parks team; clarification on the use of metric and imperial paving slabs to ensure a comprehensive approach to resurfacing works in undertaken; additional images added of lamp columns; additional information added in regard to the importance of historic lamp columns, including those to Royal Terrace, and the need to preserve these; additional information provided to highlight where are why perch seating is used in bus shelters.

5.12 The following table provides a summary of the preparation of the Streetscape Manual SPD to date:

| Stage   | Dates                                |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Information gathering and discussions with key stakeholders                         | Winter 2011 / Spring 2012            |
| Draft SPD prepared  | Summer 2012                          |
| Consultation on initial Draft SPD with key stakeholders at Southend Borough Council | Autumn / Winter 2012                 |
| Amendments to Draft SPD / Information Gathering                                     | Spring 2013                          |
| Portfolio Holder and Departmental Management Team Briefing                          | February 2013                        |
| Pre-Cabinet Scrutiny approval to consult on Draft SPD                               | 11 <sup>th</sup> April 2013          |
| Minor amendments to Draft SPD / Preparation for Public Consultation                 | May – June 2013                      |
| Consultation Period start date  | 8 <sup>th</sup> July 2013 (12:00)    |
| Consultation Period end date  | 19 <sup>th</sup> August 2013 (17:00) |

5.13 The draft Streetscape Manual SPD is now being published for a 6 week public consultation period from 8<sup>th</sup> July – 19<sup>th</sup> August 2013. This consultation is carried out in accordance with Regulations 12 and 13 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulation 2012, and the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.

## 6. Sustainability Appraisal

- 6.1 The Streetscape Manual SPD has not been subject to a sustainability appraisal because the requirement to do so was removed by the Planning Act 2008. The Council is satisfied that the sustainability issues (social, economic and environmental) relevant to this SPD have been fully explored and tested during the preparation of the adopted Core Strategy DPD. This is on the basis that the SPD links to the higher-level sustainability testing of the Core Strategy and therefore the likely effects of the SPD are in-line with those anticipated for the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal is available from:

[http://www.southend.gov.uk/download/1075/dpd\\_1\\_core\\_strategy-sa](http://www.southend.gov.uk/download/1075/dpd_1_core_strategy-sa)