



Householder and Planning Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Consultation Report

Results of Public Consultation and Summary of Changes made to the SPD.

January 2020

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Introduction

- 1.1 Wycombe District Council formally consulted on a draft version of the Householder Planning and Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) over six weeks from 11 October to 22 November 2019.
- 1.2 This guidance updates and replaces the previous guidance contained in Appendix 4 of the Wycombe District Local Plan (2004). This Plan has now been deleted and replaced with the Wycombe District Local Plan (adopted August 2019).
- 1.3 This SPD provides further detailed guidance to assist applicants in achieving the design quality required from Policy DM35: Placemaking and Design Quality of the new Local Plan (adopted 19 August 2019).
- 1.4 This report
 - Provides an overview of how we sought to involve people in the formal consultation and information about previous consultations undertaken in the preparation of the SPD (section 2)
 - Sets an overview of the written responses we received to the SPD (section 3)
 - Briefly summarises the proposed amendments to the SPD made in light of these comments (section 4)
- 1.5 The Council received 24 responses to the consultation.

2. How we engaged the community

Before the Draft SPD Consultation

- 2.1 This first draft of the guidance was prepared following a review of the previous guidance, contained in Appendix 4 of the Wycombe District Local Plan (2004). This Plan has now been deleted and replaced with the Wycombe District Local Plan (adopted August 2019).
- 2.2 Officers initially scoped the content of the SPD at a series of workshops with various officers within the team. The sections to be covered were identified and then grouped. A first draft of the SPD was then written.
- 2.3 Officers then circulated this first draft to members of the Development Management Team and the Planning Policy Team. Comments were received and evaluated. The document was then amended and a second draft produced. Meetings were then held with senior officers of the teams to finalise the wording and agree images.
- 2.4 In addition to the above, the contents of the SPD was also considered by an Agents' Panel on 8th July 2019. This Panel consists of local agents with an interest in planning in the Wycombe area.

Internal consultation

- 2.5 As stated above, the draft SPD was prepared in discussion with members of both the Development Management Team and Planning Policy Teams. A meeting took place where officers discussed which elements of householder design they would like to provide further guidance on.
- 2.6 The conclusions of this meeting were then taken away and chapter headings compiled. The document was then produced as a draft. The draft sets out important information for applicants to consider before starting development or applying for planning permission. It includes this information organised by specific development types.

- 2.7 Each development type sets out the aims and design considerations that need to be taken into account by the applicant. Examples of images of both good and bad development practice are included in the document.
- 2.8 This draft document then went back to officers for their comments. Comments received were largely grammatical. The document was then circulated to senior officers. The document was then worked through again, making sure that the advice was appropriate and flowed well.
- 2.9 Following the agreement of the document internally, the document was agreed by the Cabinet Member for Planning and Sustainability and the Head of Planning and Sustainability for consultation purposes.

External consultation

- 2.10 The planning agents' customer panel represents a major user of our planning service. It is made up of professionals who submit planning applications to us on behalf of householders and businesses.
- 2.11 The panel includes architects, surveyors, planners and other specialists with a broad geographic spread across the district and an interest in the full range of planning applications made to the authority.

Summary table of the key issues raised by stakeholders

Main issue	Council response
Need for more visuals to be added to SPD and clearer examples given	Clearer examples provided. Good and bad examples provided.
Title needs to include the word 'planning'.	This has been incorporated.
Make it clear when information is available on the website	This has been added.
Poor developments built should not set a precedent.	This has been made clear.
Avoid the use of the phrase 'building line'	This has been removed, but explained.
Front extensions should comply with the light angle guidance.	This has been added.
The 45 / 60 degree rule needs to be clearer.	Diagram added for clarity.
Include guidance on boundary treatments.	This has been added.
The document needs to be more flexible.	It has been made clear that the SPD has been designed as a guide to help steer prospective applicants.
More information is needed on annexes i.e. what would be acceptable, evidence and future control.	To be included in the document.
More information on permitted development.	The Council have tried to not include too much information on permitted development rights as this information is available elsewhere.
Information should be included on storage of bins.	To be included in the document.

During the draft SPD consultation

2.12 The consultation ran from 11th October 2019 to 22nd November 2019 and we engaged with people through asking for comments on the draft SPD.

2.13 People were made aware of the consultation through:

- Notifying statutory consultees and generic and specific stakeholders on our consultation database including parish councils, residents associations, other local groups and planning agents principally by email.

- Including information about the consultation in the Weekly Bulletin which goes out to interested individuals and organisations.
- Placing hard copies of the SPD in local libraries and the Council's Reception Area. All the consultation material was made available on the Council's website, including a response form.
- A meeting with the Agents' Panel on 4th November 2019 was held to discuss the consultation document. A summary of the comments made during that meeting can be found in Appendix 1.
- A consultation event on Thursday 7 November, 12.30-1.30pm, which was open to all. The purpose of the event was to provide a brief outline of the contents of the Householder Planning and Design Guidance SPD and also to offer an opportunity to ask any questions. A summary of the comments made during that event can be found in Appendix 2.

3. Summary of written responses

- 3.1 This section sets out the overall written responses to the consultation and provides an overview of the issues that received most responses.
- 3.2 24 individual representations were made covering the general aspects of the guidance. Appendix 3 details the organisations and individuals who made representations.
- 3.3 There was general support for the document. There was concern that the guidance as presented was too prescriptive and would not allow for flexibility or innovation. The following general comments were made relating to sections 1 – 7 of the document:
- More encouragement and emphasis should be made to water systems to service outdoor water demand.
 - More emphasis should be made to encourage biodiversity.
 - Reference should be made to other covenants for example National Trust covenants.

- More information should be detailed regarding permitted development rights.
- Consideration needs to be given to the storage of waste bins and accessibility for collection.
- With regard to good design, it needs to be acknowledged that some properties take away good design rather than contribute to. Sometimes extensions should be treated as a 'new build' rather than hanging on to the concept and principle of being in scale, proportionate etc.
- The document should promote the importance of Planning Agents in designing schemes and the advice that is offered.
- More hyperlinks would be useful.
- The guidance should be followed as many developments are being allowed contrary to the guidance.
- Reference to the AONB is brief and there is no key to the map. No explanation as to what is good and bad.
- Some illustrations are out dated.
- There is no general reference to the unacceptability of flat roofs.
- Minor suggestions /corrections and additional references were suggested to be added to the guidance.
- Pleased to see that flood risk is included and the River Wye Advice Note referred to.

3.4 Further comments were made on some of the specific sections and are summarised below.

3.5 *Rear Extensions (Section 10)*

- No explanation is made to the 45 / 60 degree rule. There should be a cross referenced in section 14.

3.6 *Roof Extensions (Section 11)*

- Many dormers can and are placed on front slopes especially bungalows. It needs to be recognised that if large box dormers exist then these could be acceptable for new proposals.

- The guidance does not take into account hip to gable alterations to a roof where this would unbalance the front elevation and impact negatively on the street scene.
- No reference to the unacceptability of flat roofs.
- Conservation roof lights may not always be appropriate. Discussions with the Conservation Officer should be encouraged.

3.7 *Garages and Parking (Section 12)*

- Conversions of garage should not result in additional on street parking.
- Dropped kerbs can result in the loss of available on street parking.

3.8 *Loss of Light and 45 / 60 Degree Guideline (Section 14)*

- More examples need to be set out when you don't have to stick rigidly to the 45 / 60 degree rule.
- At 14. 4, the word 'code' should be replaced with 'guidance'.
- There is no guidance or clarity as to how far these light angles should be maintained or travel for before it becomes impractical or of little use.

3.9 *Outbuildings (Section 17)*

- The reference to 'resulting in a more built up appearance' should be removed as any construction results in a more built up appearance.

3.10 *Residential Annexes (Section 18)*

- There is a growing need for houses of several generations of the same family to live in one house. An independent annex is often the best solution.
- More flexibility is required for annexes. Detached outbuildings may be the best solution for planning. The guidance is unduly prescriptive.
- The occupancy can be controlled by a legal agreement or condition.
- The title should be renamed to 'self-contained annexes'
- The wording from the previous Appendix 4 should be adopted.

- This sections should be allowed for alternative forms of annexes, such as two storey extension, first floor extensions.
- What evidence is required to prove that the ancillary care is needed?

3.11 *Boundary Treatments (Section 19)*

- There should be opportunities set out here to enhance biodiversity.
- Boundary treatments heights should have a maximum height of 2m (unless there are special circumstances) due to the potential detrimental impact on the character of the area. Especially those adjacent to roads.
- The wording relating to native hedges should be amended and expanded.

4. Summary of changes to the SPD

4.1 The following changes have been made to the document

4.2 *Permitted Development (Section 3)*

- Further information has been added on permitted development rights, specifically this sets out what does not benefit from permitted development rights.

4.3 *Planning Advice Service (Section 4)*

- A paragraph has been added highlighting that retrospective applications will not be assessed differently to development that has not commenced.

4.4 *Useful Information Before you Start (Section 5)*

- A paragraph has been added on biodiversity.

4.5 *The Importance of Good Design (Section 6)*

- Further comment has been added at para. 6.15 regarding Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks.
- Further comment has been added on the need to conserve the AONB and re-wording the emphasis.

4.6 *Rear Extensions (Section 10)*

- A link to section 14 has been added at para.10.6.

4.7 *Roof Extensions and Alterations (Section 11)*

- Further comment has been added regarding hip to gable extensions at para. 11.6.
- The unacceptability of flat roofs is covered at para.11.8.

4.8 *Garages and Parking (Section 12)*

- It has been added that garage conversions may need to provide additional on-site parking at para.12.7.

4.9 *Self-Contained Residential Annexes (Section 18)*

- The title has been amended to include 'self-contained'.
- Paragraph 18.3 has been amended to reflect advice similar to the previous Appendix 4.

4.10 *Boundary Treatments (Section 19)*

- Additional comment has been added at para.19.2 in relation to the height of an enclosure and potential impact on the character of the area.
- Further information on native hedging has been added to para 19.2.

Appendix 1 Summary of Comments Made at Agents Panel from 4.11.19

Attended	Panel Members
Matthew Maier	Brocklehurst Architects
Philip Mason	I L Beeks Ltd
Alan Hooper	HAP Architects
Mark Longworth	DP Architects
Mark Schmull	Arrow Planning Limited
Martin Weller	Penn Planning Ltd
Chris Hunt	Christopher Hunt Practice
Irfan Akram	Architect
Richard Clark	Richard Clark Chartered Architects
Apologies	
Duncan Gibson	Duncan Gibson Consultancy
Jeremy Caine	Aston Homes
Deirdre Wells	Red Kite Consultancy
Martin Crook	MSC Planning

Attended	WDC
Alastair Nicholson	Development Manager
Chris Schmidt-Reid	Policy Team Leader
Apologies	
Penelope Tollitt	Head of Planning & Sustainability
Cllr Alan Turner	Chairman of Planning Committee

- The advice included regarding annexe accommodation was questioned by the group. There is a growing need to house several generations of the same family in one house and an independent annexe is often a good solution.
- The Development Manager had the minority view that such accommodation should be provided through an extension to the main dwelling, such that the rooms could be easily and flexibly used when no longer required as an annexe.

- His concern was that a detached and self-contained annexe did not lend itself to reuse and would more likely be let out as separate accommodation. Rather than allow this to happen with all the issues that “beds in sheds” accommodation entails he suggested that these should not be allowed.
- The unanimous view of the group however was that WDC should look at policies that Slough have introduced and revise the position.
- The group will comment directly.

Appendix 2 Summary of Comments Made at Consultation Event from 7.11.19

23 people attended the event including Agents, Parish Councils, Residents Groups, Members of the Public and Councillors.

General Comments Made

- The guide is helpful in providing advice.
- There should be guidance regarding dropped kerbs. Concern raised to loss of parking due to dropped kerbs.
- Retrospective developments are not accounted for in the SPD. There needs to be a greater emphasis on warning people not to start work without permission.
- Words such as 'should not' are not helpful in the document.
- No reference is made to climate change in the document.
- Side extensions should appear as subordinate but specific measurements should not always be adhered to, i.e. step in from front elevation.
- Annexes can be reasonable if they are a detached. There is a need. They could be controlled by a S106 Agreement.
- Prospective applicants should be aware of other covenants, i.e. National Trust.
- There could be further explanation of the 60 degree angle guidance with regard to first floor adjacent windows.

Appendix 3 Organisations and individuals who made representations at consultation stage

Bradenham Parish Council

Brocklehurst Architects

Buckinghamshire County Council, Strategic Planning

Charles Power, WDC

Chiltern Society

Chilterns Conservation Board

Christopher Hunt Practice

Councillor Johncock, Cabinet Member for Planning & Sustainability

Deriaz Campsie

DP Architects

Environment Agency

Highways England

Historic England

IL Beeks (High Wycombe) Ltd

MSC Planning Associates Ltd

National Trust

Natural England

Planning Agents Panel, WDC

Redkite Development Consultancy

Richard Clark Architects

Wildlife Trust

Wooburn and Bourne End Parish Council