



DRAFT: New South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016

CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Summary of a consultation which asked for views on the draft South Oxfordshire Design Guide

SEPTEMBER 2016

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	3
BACKGROUND TO THE CONSULTATION	5
CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY	6
CONSULTATION RESPONSES	7
HOW WE HAVE USED RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION	22
FURTHER INFORMATION	23
APPENDIX A	24
APPENDIX B	
APPENDIX C	
APPENDIX D	

SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of consultation undertaken by South Oxfordshire District Council between June and July 2016 on our draft Design Guide. The draft Design Guide was proposed as planning policy setting out principles that should guide the design of future developments within the district. The consultation sought the views of statutory planning consultees as well as members of the public. Copies of the draft Design Guide were made available electronically on the council's website and in hard copy from our offices. We encouraged statutory consultees and members of the public to provide feedback on the guide by completing a survey which could be completed online or sent to us by email or post. A total of 49 organisations and individuals responded to the consultation. A range of ideas, views and concerns were identified from the consultation responses received. These included, in order of prevalence, the following comments:

Theme	Comments Received
Format, structure and presentation of the guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very accessible, exciting and easy to read. • Like that it is concise and uses illustrations. • The large file size means it takes a long time to download. • Some of the formatting doesn't work when viewing the PDF version of the guide online. • More relevant photograph examples are required. • It is not clear who the audience of the guide is.
Relevance to small scale development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guide focuses on major schemes and not enough on small scale developments or non-domestic buildings.
Too much of an urban emphasis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guide relates more to urban areas and less with the rural and suburban character of parts of the district. • It requires a further section directed specifically at the rural environment.
Public consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This should be proportionate to the scale of the development. • Additional consultees suggested.
There should be more reference to the Chilterns AONB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guide does not refer to the Chilterns AONB. • The guide will be a useful tool alongside the Chilterns Design Guide.
Internal space standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no reference to this. • The size of houses built today are not big enough.
New development should respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development must relate to its context. • Must avoid 'anywhere development'.

the character within the district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development should respect the existing character or have its own complementary character.
Sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This term is vague in the document. • This should relate to the NPPF's definition.
The historic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be more reference and weight given to this.
Amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 25 metre back to back distances are more generous than the commonly used 21 metres and no justification or caveats are given for this
Benefits for the existing community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This aspect is not covered sufficiently.

The council has used information gained from the consultation to make amendments to the guide where appropriate. These include:

- An example of how the principles of the guide apply to small-scale developments has been provided at the end of the document
- Clarification about how this guide relates to all contexts
- Two new Technical Documents covering non-domestic buildings and flats/apartments
- More recent, meaningful photographic examples used which reflect the rural, suburban and urban character of parts of the district
- Updating improving the clarity and structure of all Technical Documents

Council Officers have reviewed feedback from the consultation and made responses throughout this report. We expect the design guide to be adopted in October 2016.

THE DESIGN GUIDE AND WHY WE CONSULTED ON IT

The Design Guide was published in draft by South Oxfordshire District Council in June 2016 for comment.

South Oxfordshire District Council want to replace the existing Design Guide (2008) with an up to date, innovative and exemplar Design Guide. The new Design Guide will be a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and together with the design policies in the Council's emerging Local Plan 2031, will be the key mechanism for delivering high quality design in the district.

The ultimate objective for the design guide is to raise the quality of design in new development in the district. The guide seeks to do this by setting out the aspirational standard that we expect new developments to meet. This is done by structuring the main guide into 9 sections with each one demonstrating a core design principle and explaining why this is important. Clear visuals, best practice examples and links to further information are set out in each section. Alongside this, plans showing the design development of a residential scheme are included and related to the principles of each section. This is to clearly show how each principle relates to a plan and to illustrate the ideal design process. A checklist is then presented at the end of each section for designers and decision makers to use as a tool to work through the design and assess the quality of the development being proposed. The main guide is supported by a series of eight technical documents known as *the suite of documents*. These cover different areas and disciplines which need to be considered at the outset of the design process. The suite of documents comprise: Building Conversions, Householder Extensions, Landscape, Public Art, Shopfronts and Signage, Biodiversity, Sustainable Energy and Trees.

We consulted on the draft guide to allow statutory stakeholders and interested members of the public opportunity to comment and make suggestions for improvement before it is formally adopted as council policy. This was in line with the council's policy commitment to involve stakeholders in the development of planning policies as set out in our Statement of Community Involvement¹.

This consultation summary provides an account of the feedback we received, as well as our responses to the main comments, issues and suggestions raised.



CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

The council published the draft Design Guide on its website on 17th June 2016. We sought to draw this to the attention of residents using press releases, social media and dedicated correspondence sent to people who'd previously registered an interest in council consultations.

These included:

- A press release on the council's website and advertisements in local papers (Appendix B -Publicity)
- A series of Tweets
- Letters sent to everyone on the register of consultee (Appendix C – Consultation Letter)
- Printed copies of the design guide sent to the libraries in Didcot, Wallingford, Henley and Thame and the Council's Office at Milton Park
- A presentation to elected members at a briefing
- A presentation to a group of local architects...

To prompt structured feedback on the guide we asked people to consider the following questions:

1. How far do you agree with *the relevant section, eg. part 1?*
2. Do you have any comments for *the relevant section, eg. part 1?*
3. Do you have any comments on the format and layout of the guide?
4. Do you have any other comments that you would like to make on the design guide?
5. What makes a high quality development?
6. Give us an example of what you think is a high quality development in South Oxfordshire

Responses to these questions could be sent to us via our online consultation portal, by email and by post. We allowed 6 weeks for responses to the consultation which lasted from 17 June to 29 July 2016.

To consult people on the draft strategy we set up an online survey. The survey asked respondents how much they supported each proposal and if they had any specific comments to make. Copy of the question wording used is shown in Appendix D.

To make sense of the feedback received, we employed two types of analysis. In the first instance we looked at the headline quantitative measures of agreement with each of the strategy's proposals. This was followed by coding of the free text comments to help understand the sentiment behind respondents' agreement or disagreement with each of the policies. The codes we generated identified frequently mentioned ideas, suggestions and issues. The findings of the consultation are set out in the next section of this report.

The consultation was conducted in full compliance with the council's Customer Engagement Charter¹ which sets out our commitments for work of this nature.

¹ <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/about-us/have-your-say/our-commitments-engaging-customers>

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

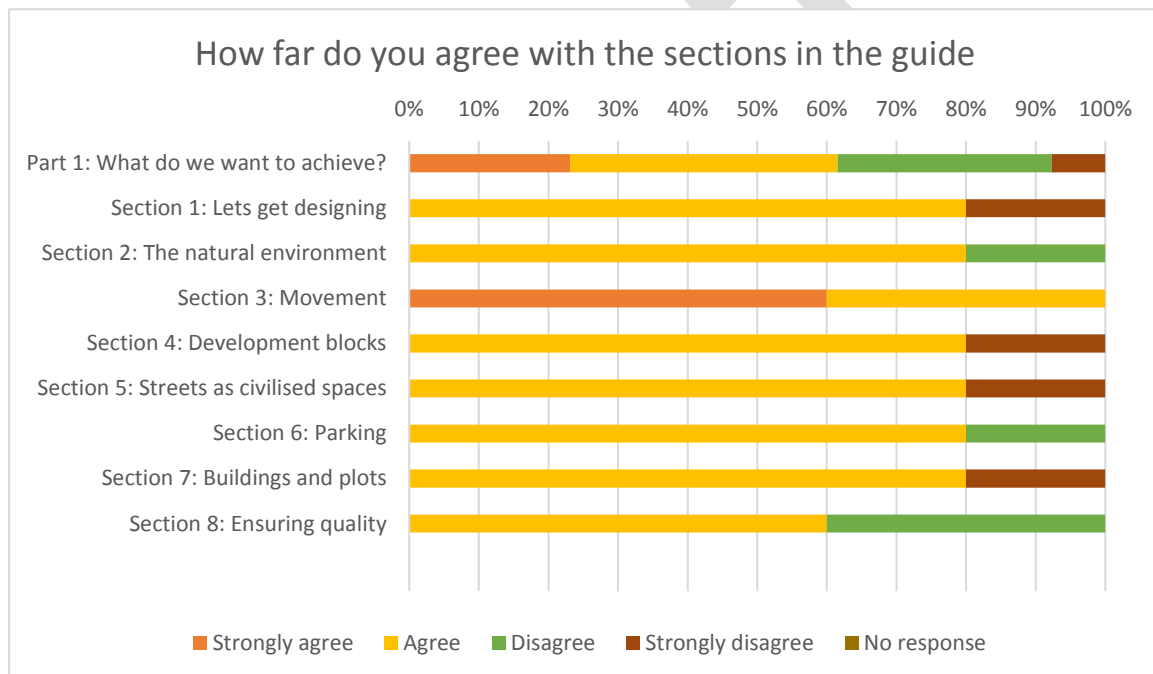
49 people and organisations responded to the consultation.

Responses shown in this section are presented anonymously except where they were made on behalf of a group or organisation. We have responded to all comments and these are shown in the text boxes.

Overall agreement with proposals

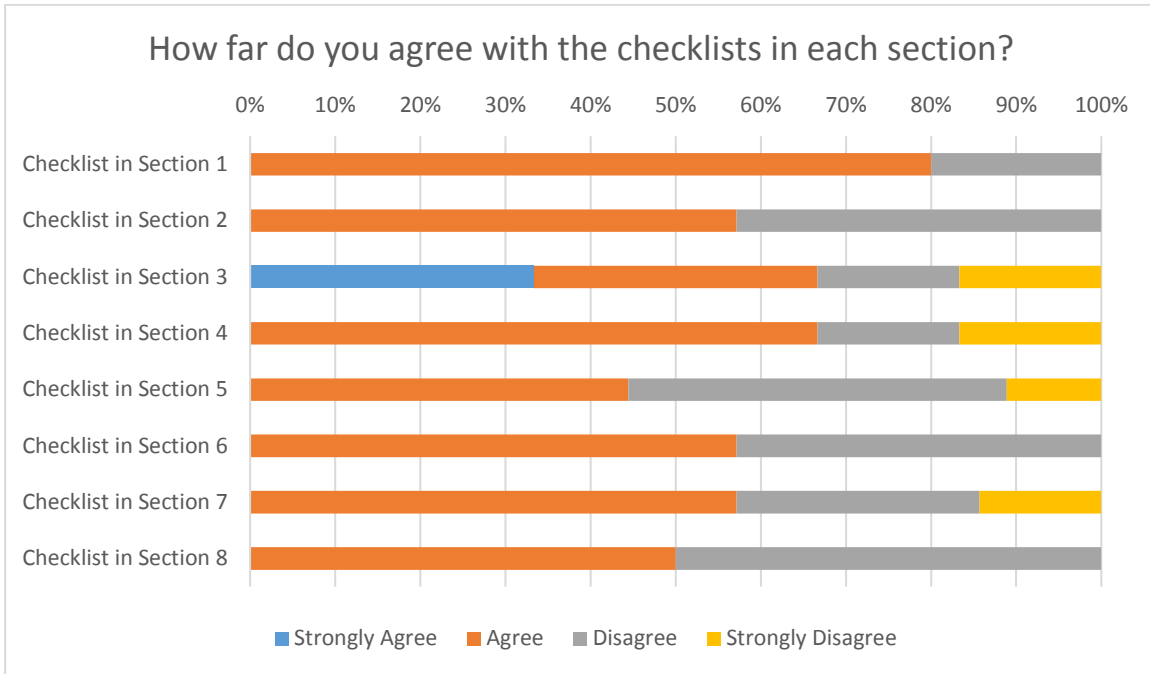
To provide a top line indication of support for the draft guide, we asked respondents to tell us the extent to which they supported each section and technical documents of the main guide.

We found that most respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with all sections made in the main design guide (Figure 1).

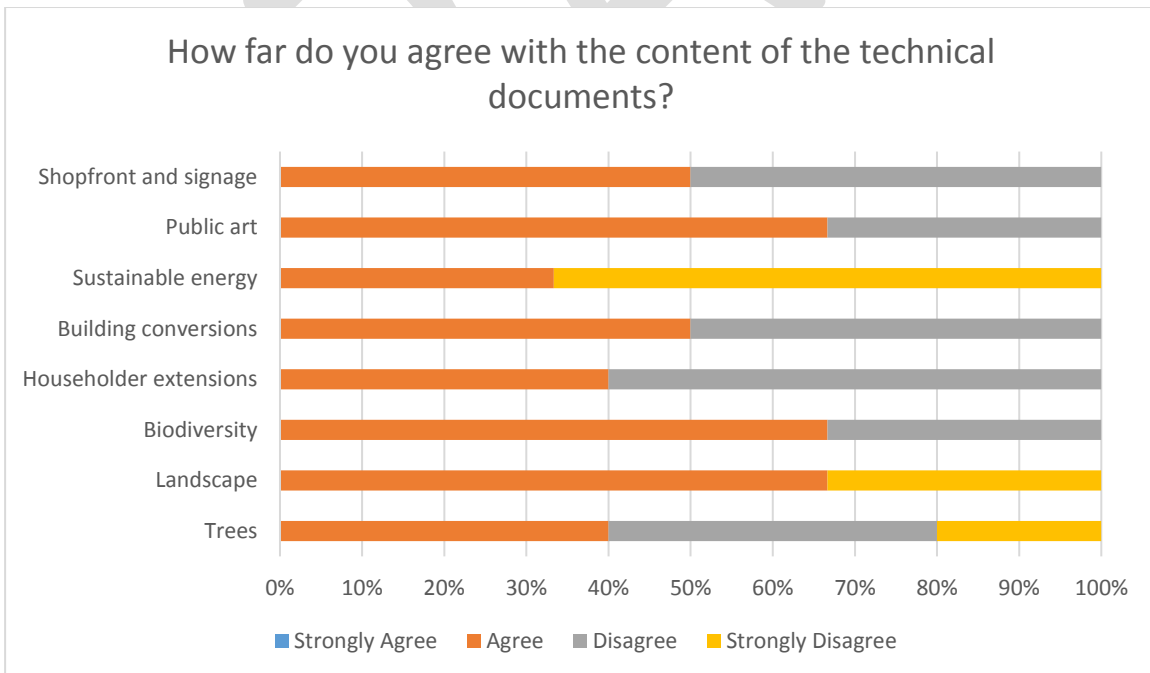


How far do you agree with the checklists in the guide?

We found that most respondents agreed with the checklists in the main design guide (Figure 1).



How far do you agree with the content in the technical documents?



Detailed comments

Respondents were also asked if they had any comments to make for each section. The information provided below picks up on the key themes that ran throughout these free text comments. We have reported on the most common themes shaded which are shaded in grey and provided an officer response where appropriate.

GENERAL REMARKS ABOUT THE DESIGN GUIDE

We asked people if they had any general comments to make about the main design guide. The most frequently made remarks not related to specific proposals were concerns that there is too much of an urban emphasis and not enough about the rural character of the district, strong views that the character of the district is very important, compliments and some concerns about the format, structure and presentation of the guide, concern that it did not cover small scale development and requests that there are stronger references made to the Chilterns AONB.

Comment type	Frequency
The format, structure and presentation of the guide	17
Does not cover small scale development New development should respect the character in the district	8
Too much of an urban emphasis	6
Public consultation	6
There should be more reference to the Chilterns AONB	5
Internal space standards	3
New development should respect the character and context in the district	4
There is not enough emphasis on the historic environment	3
Amenity	3
Benefits for the existing community	3

The format, structure and presentation of the guide:

17 people commented on the format, structure and presentation of the document. 11 people were positive about this:

I like the format and the reduced length. 4

The graphics are good and the document is not too wordy. Amanda Walker, DP Architects

The new Part 1 and Part 2 are very clear and attractively presented. 15

The structure is very clear and the balance between text and graphics is also really good and provides a good way to understand the 'message' either by reading or by looking at the 'how to' process that the graphics show. Dr. Laura Novo de Azevedo, Oxford Brookes University

It is clear, concise, comprehensive and will be a most useful supplement to the NPPF and the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide. Swyncombe Parish Council

5 people however, commented that the format of the guide made it difficult to read online, the large size of the file made it difficult to download and it was not clear who the intended audience was.

The structure of the document works very well, however, when reading it on-line it is not as easy to grasp how the document is structured. Rachel Aldred, Architect

Page 16/17: the table does not work on pages which are aligned vertically. Like they are when viewing this on the web- which I presume you think will be most people. As page 17 table is not in line with other table it is utterly baffling viewed as a single page. John Phillips Planning Consultancy

Layout and Character of the document: I found the document difficult to read on screen, perhaps a website presentation would be better. The green print used for headings did not stand out and was difficult to read. The illustrations are reminiscent of a book for children - I presume that this is a reference for professionals? 28

The document has been formatted in a way that it is meant to be read as a spread – in hard copy and as a PDF. We will add a note before the link to the guide on the webpage to ask readers to ensure their viewing setting are set to view it as a spread.

When viewing the document online, it is also easy to zoom in and out making the text and images easier to read.

Relevance to small scale development:

8 people commented that the guidance did not relate to small scale development such as 0-10 houses, small infill development etc.

Could do with more guidance for small infill sites (1-5 units) where a small developer may need to be convinced to improve the environment and setting through good design. Amanda Walker, DP Architects

I think that part 1 + 2 should have an explanation about application to smaller sites for the benefit of the public. Many sites are of up to 10 dwellings. 15.

The draft design guide states that all proposals should be tested against the Guide. However, it is clearly intended for larger developments and will be of very little use for smaller scale developments. Smaller scale developments are the vast majority of planning applications. John Phillips Planning Consultancy

Whilst we accept that many design principles are applicable at any scale, we feel that for more complicated and large scale applications the guide provides a comprehensive approach but for single dwellings, extensions and other householder applications it may be an intimidating and lengthy document. Historic England

We similarly approve of the goals stated in chapter 8 (pages 44 & 45), both in the setting of design codes and choice of materials, but which should apply equally to single dwellings and minor developments (up to 4/5 dwellings). Swyncombe Parish Council

Whilst the guide has been written for and tested against a range of scales of development, we appreciate that this may not be that clear as the example shown throughout the guide is of a large residential development. We have therefore included a section on how the guide relates to smaller scale development.

Urban emphasis

6 people made comments which raised concern that the guide was written from an urban context and that the guidance would relate more to urban areas rather than rural areas.

The guide appears in essence to be a manual for urban design with a loosely-connected section on the character of South Oxfordshire. Whilst we have no quarrel with the urban design principles, we are concerned that the main emphasis appears to be on a generic urban context and gives little weight or space to the largely rural nature of the District or the character of its village communities. Benson Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee.

Although the intro talks a lot about countryside and villages, most of the detail is about urban or suburban development. Maybe a few of your drawings or comments could be changed so that they portray villages rather than suburbia? 7

*Our major concern is that the guide is written almost entirely from the standpoint of good urban design. We argue strongly that the Guide requires a further section directed specifically at the rural environment. One of the disappointments of the last fifty years has been the tendency for urban design principles to be translated into villages and so to introduce an urban feel which is frequently inappropriate... The heading *Urban Design Principles* rather makes our point for us. Brightwell cum Sotwell Parish Council.*

A number of people were generally complimentary about the guide however and recognised its position as one document to be supported by other, more detailed studies:

It is clear, concise, comprehensive and will be a most useful supplement to the NPPF and the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide. Swyncombe Parish Council

The guide is intended to be applicable to all scales of development and the design principles set out would serve as a guide to best practice even though there is still the flexibility for justification to be provided where they cannot be achieved. The guide places great emphasis on the importance of designing in context and has a dedicated section titled 'This is South Oxfordshire' which provides a brief summary of the character of the district. A comprehensive list of links to additional resources containing detailed information about the district and its character is provided.

The use of the term 'Urban Design' does not refer only to urban areas but to any built development which could also be in rural or suburban areas. The guide has been updated to set clearer definitions of what we mean by 'urban design' and how the criteria relates to a mix of urban, suburban and rural areas of the district. We have also included more examples of developments in a rural context.

Public Consultation:

6 respondents made reference to public consultation. 4 respondents asked for additional groups to be added to the list of who to consult in the guide:

Could Public Health be added to the list of example areas covered by OCC for consultation? Oxfordshire County Council.

It is surprising that, in the list of organisations that should be consulted by developers, town and parish councils are at the bottom of the list - they should be much higher up. Also the list should local civic societies such as the Henley Society. Henley Society.

One respondent commented that our recommended approach of two stages of public consultation was not relevant to minor proposals:

Two-stage consultation process not relevant to minor proposals. John Phillips Planning Consultancy.

We have added Public Health to the list of consultees. Town and Parish Council's are now higher up in the list. We consider the two stage approach for public consultation to be best practice, whatever scale of development. We cannot insist this approach is taken but we can encourage it.

There should be more reference to the Chilterns AONB

5 people raised concern that the guide did not refer to the Chilterns AONB or Chilterns Conservation Board.

There is no reference to the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide which has been adopted by SODC as SPG (see South Oxfordshire Core Strategy para 15.27), or its supplementary technical notes on Chilterns Brick, Chilterns Flint and Roofing Materials. Please add reference to these documents within the new Design Guide to signpost where to find detailed advice on designing in the Chilterns AONB. 7.

The guidance in the Design Guide could be applicable anywhere in the UK, it makes no reference to the character of the district and fails to mention Chilterns AONB.
Goring Heath Parish Council.

One respondent felt that the design guide would be complementary to the Chilterns AONB Management Plan however:

We are very glad that the Chilterns AONB Management Plan, Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and Shopfront Design Guide remain part of the foundation blocks of the new SODC Supplementary Guide. Henley Archaeological and Historical Group

We have referred to the Chilterns Conservation Board, Chilterns Building Design Guide and the Chilterns AONB. The section on 'This is South Oxfordshire' refers to the Chilterns AONB.

Internal space standards:

3 respondents mentioned that there was no reference to internal space standards.

There is no reference to the design of internal space standards. 19

I feel some aspiration ought to be included in Part 2: 7, or at the least some reference to storage requirements. Rachel Aldred, Architect

One respondent made reference to minimum room sizes and stated that the UK has the smallest sqm spaces for dwellings in the EU.

There is no mention anywhere of minimum room sizes. UK has the smallest sqm spaces in the EU for dwelling of all types. We do not want to live in tiny boxes. There is plenty of land. Something like the Parker Morris standard.

We have referred to the Government's Planning Practice Guidance for space standards.

New development should respect the character within the district:

4 people made comments which related to the character of existing settlements and the design of new development within them, commenting that new developments should respect the existing character of the area. References were also made to the relationship between local building materials and character and the importance of providing consistent guidance about this in the main guide. One person commented that the guide lacked local examples of good and locally distinctive design.

Recently in the rush to build, much characterful detail has been lost and suburban houses are creeping into the villages. This must be curtailed in a big way if South Oxon is to keep its charm. 7

In defining distinctive character, it would be helpful if the list of building materials on page 17 could be more readily associated with the character areas identified on pages 15-16, and if more detail could be given about the distinctive use of the materials. Benson Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee.

You refer to 'anywhere' design yet the good examples given are not local and are just the same anywhere design – just a newer version of it. John Phillips Planning Consultancy.

The local materials table gives a very variable level of detail. The lack of consistency risks losing some key local characteristics. Watlington Parish Council

Two people mentioned the need to support cotemporary development and the potential for creating new, distinctive character.

The emphasis of the document should be reviewed to consider new settlements and the potential to create a new character that is not related to an existing area. Persimmon Homes.

We agree that new development should be respectful of the local character of an area which is why the guide highlights the importance of contextual analysis.

We also support the potential for creating new developments with their own character and seek to encourage this.

Sustainable development:

3 respondents specifically mentioned the term 'sustainable development'. All 3 were concerned that the reference to it in the design guide and the definition used was vague, incorrect and different from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

P7 – Sustainable Development: Differs from the definition provided within the NPPF. It is important that the whole document is NPPF compliant. No mention made of the environmental role of sustainable development. SODC Planning Policy.

The term "sustainable" was too vague and not clearly defined what it would require from developments to be considered to be sustainable. Tetsworth Parish Council.

We have clarified this definition and referred to the one used within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The historic environment:

3 respondents raised concern that there was not enough regard for the historic environment in this guide and the role in could play in helping to deliver sustainable development.

The section on Historic Features and Heritage on page 18 mentions only designated heritage assets and does not refer to the local value of non-designated assets. We are concerned that this does not tally with the NPPF, and could result in lack of regard for the historic but unlisted buildings that contribute to the character of Benson. Benson Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee.

The guide underplays the importance of the historic environment in successful, sustainable design which the NPPF includes. Historic England.

The guide refers to the historic environment in 'This is South Oxfordshire' and refers to relevant publications which provide further, detailed information, including those specifically related to the historic environment of South Oxfordshire.

Amenity:

3 respondents commented on residential amenity. The first respondent asked for more detailed considerations to be included in the guide:

I think it would be useful to include guidance regarding the placement of vents from kitchen extractor fans, i.e. that consideration is given to neighbours and that extractor fans do not blow directly into a neighbours garden (noise, smell and appearance). SODC Environmental Health

The other 2 challenged the proposed 25 metre back to back distances between dwellings stating that they couldn't see the justification for this distance as opposed to the commonly used standard of 21 metres.

I would suggest that 21m back-to-back distance (common planning practice in relation to the consideration of mutual overlooking of dwellings) rather than the suggested minimum of 25m is progressed as I can't see a justification for a minimum distance of 25m in all circumstances. I note that, unlike the existing 2008 Design Guide, there are no caveats to either the 21/25m minimum back-to-back distance, or the amenity space, or the back-to-side and front-to-front and back-to-boundary distances. Paul Butt on behalf of Croudace Homes and the University of Reading.

The minimum distances set out are overly prescriptive and are not based on any urban design best practice. Persimmon Homes.

We have updated the document to clarify that the back to back distance is 25 metres. We have also made it clearer that where these distances are not met the plans must be able to demonstrate how the design proposals can still ensure that privacy is maintained.

Benefits for the existing community:

3 respondents mentioned the importance of considering how new development could benefit the existing community.

We feel that in this and other respects the draft guidance should perhaps consider the well-being of the community as well as the well-being of the development that will hopefully be part of it. Benson Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee.

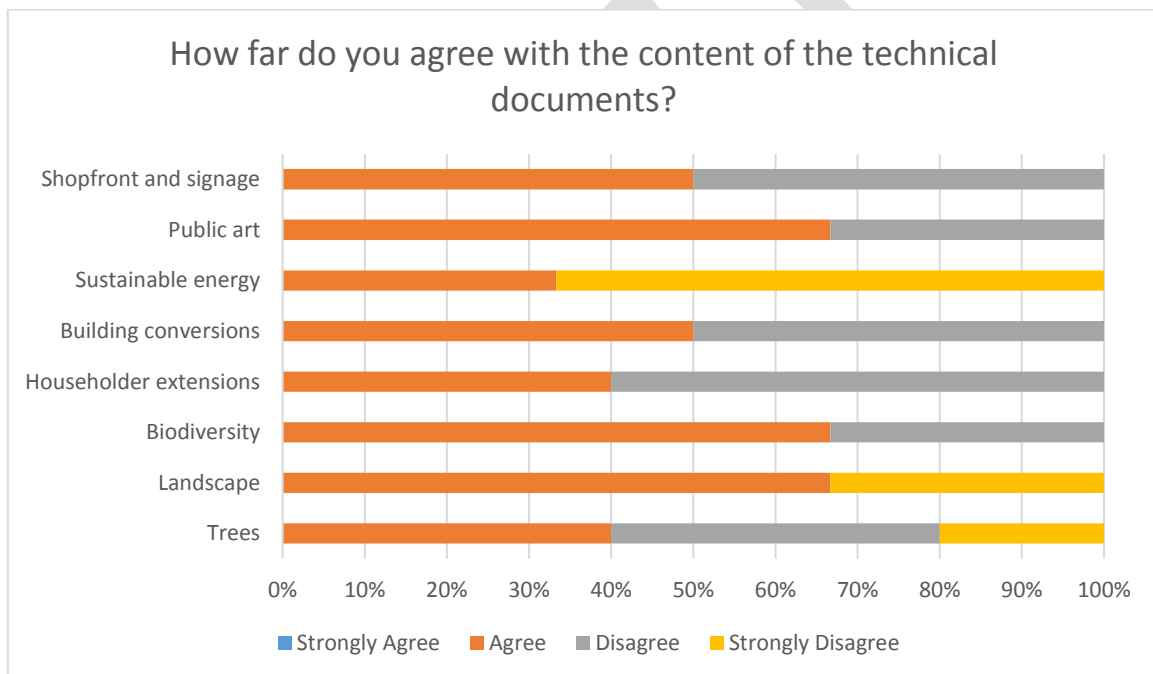
Some consideration of how the new development will benefit the existing community. What is there to draw in neighbours and knit this new development into its surroundings? Rachel Aldred, Architect.

We have added a reference to high quality development benefiting the existing community under 'The Value of Good Design'.

DESIGN GUIDE TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS

The main guide is supported by a suite of technical documents which cover more detailed aspects relevant to development. These documents were subjected to the same public consultation and we asked for views on each one of them.

How far do you agree with the content in the technical documents?



Trees:

4 respondents commented on this technical document.

One matter of concern is the lack of emphasis on the problem of air quality in built-up areas. Should this not be dealt with in Technical Document No 4 under 'Trees-Retaining and Planting?' All one can see is a squiggly sketch in a drawing of a street scene, saying 'air quality' or so it seems unless there is more in another part of the document which we have overlooked. Henley Archaeological and Historical Group.

The document requires the use of larger tree species. This appears to be a false economy and should consider earlier planting of smaller trees to allow these to naturally grow. Matters such as management should be capable of being dealt with by condition and should not prevent commencement of development. Persimmon Homes.

Existing mature trees should be protected, on new estate sites, and further saplings planted. The latter should be adequately stated/ protected and watered. Residents can be requested to adopt your trees near their properties. 10

We agree and have updated this technical document to relate it to air quality. We think that smaller tree planting could be a successful approach if the planting is delivered early but in some situations, larger and more mature trees will be required – to deliver instant maturity for example and so it depends on the context. We have updated the text to reflect both options.

We agree with the comments on tree protection and this is reflected in the main guide and this technical document.

Landscaping

3 respondents commented on this technical document.

Open space should be accessible for all users including people with disabilities, parents/carers and older people. SODC Equality Officer

Insufficient weight has been given to the accepted methodology for Landscape Character Assessment. SODC Planning Policy

This SPD could consider making provision for Green Infrastructure (GI) within development. Natural England

We have sought to promote inclusive design throughout the document. We have also referred to Landscape Character Assessment guidance and expanded the definition of Green Infrastructure.

Biodiversity:

4 respondents commented on this technical document.

The key elements of the document appears to be the 'Planning positively for biodiversity'. The document references that the Council applies a form of Biodiversity Accounting, but the details of this scheme are thin on the ground. As set out previously, where a large scale development comes forward on a green field site, the high quantity of low scoring habitats (such as arable fields) start to negatively impact upon developments. The Council needs to use a common sense approach to see mitigation and creation of habitats; but not to the level where strategic developments are required to deliver a net increase. Persimmon Homes.

The guidance reflects that provided by the Government in Paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Householder extensions:

5 respondents made specific reference to this technical document. 2 respondents asked for clarification of the 45 degree test.

Technical Document 5 twice refers to the 45 degree rule without ever explaining it. This is not a problem for design professionals who one hopes would know about it, but as the document is entitled "Householder Extensions" the rule should be explained for the benefit of lay users of the guide. Watlington Parish Council

3 respondents asked for further information about the link with sustainable energy, accessibility and outbuildings.

There should be more encouragement of contemporary design in house design and environmental energy efficient elements on existing and new buildings rather than designating them as unsightly add ons. 15

The document is are largely silent on accessibility features and there appears to be no stated requirement to conduct or apply the findings of an accessibility audit nor to consider the accessibility needs of visitors, as distinct from the owner/occupier. Mobility Issues Group for Goring and Streatley

What is missing is the detail for extensions and outbuildings, which was very helpful in the old guide. Kidmore End Parish Council

We will be explaining the 45 degree test by including a sketch to show how it is carried out. We have tried to use contemporary examples throughout the document. We will reference all relevant guidance and other technical documents under 'Additional information'. We have included the guidance on outbuildings.

Building Conversions:

2 respondents questioned the purpose and need for this document, citing that many conversions are now permitted development.

Need an explanation of the purpose of the document. Many changes of use are now permitted development. SODC Planning Policy.

The Building Conversion technical note is very restrictive and appears inflexible. 15

We have edited the text to make it less prescriptive but as this is a guidance document, we seek to encourage best practice even when it is permitted development.

Sustainable Energy:

5 respondents commented on this technical document. Each comment related to the lack of further information and the need for some clarification.

I am very disappointed that I cannot find any reference to choosing an aspect for the new dwellings which will give south facing roofs, and that these south facing roofs should have solar panels. Nor can I find any other references to utilising energy sources where possible. 42

The document does not appear to have regard to all other documents prepared. Persimmon Homes supports the creation of homes which operate on a fabric first basis. There is no point in creating energy to be wasted within the home, and the energy in the home should be used efficiently. Building orientation should not focus solely on the potential for solar gain. Firstly solar gain is not necessarily a positive feature as this can lead to over heating of a property; secondly it disregards the contextual assessment of a site.

The technical guide on Sustainable energy is encouraging but not encouraging enough of retrofit power generation and heat source pumps etc. there should be clear link between householder extensions and this technical note. The Building Conversion technical note is v restrictive and appears inflexible importance of sustainable energy should be included. Commercial buildings should all be required to include power generation of some sort. Particularly buildings with large low pitched roofs should be required to have photovoltaic panels. 15

We have tried to include more examples showing different types of sustainable energy systems. We have sought to cross reference the technical documents.

Public Art:

2 respondents commented on this technical document. 1 stated that public art was welcomed but its delivery should not impact on the viability of the development.

The creation of art for arts sake is not something that is supported. Integration of artistic features within a development is welcomed, but if the art has an impact upon the best use of the land it should not become an over riding factor. The delivery of such initiatives should also be subject to viability assessments, the Council already seek significant contributions through CIL and affordable housing; the creation of additional costs relating to public art further dilute the ability to deliver viable schemes. Persimmon Homes

The other sought clarification on the definition of public art.

Public art is art for the public specifically designed by artists for the purpose of public display (i.e. it is beyond the artist’s work merely shown in public spaces). Is this the definition of public art? SODC Planning Policy.

We have updated the definition of public art to link it with the reference in the NPPF.

Shopfronts and Signage:

4 respondents commented on this technical document. 3 comments related to the design of shopfronts and signage:

The Shop front guide needs to be clear what is meant by natural materials. Stand alone stainless steel or powder coated letters on traditional shop fronts can be acceptable. 15

we would suggest that the text should read " illumination of fascias and hanging signs is discouraged" rather than "...is not encouraged". Henley Society.

1 related to the accessibility of businesses units:

Consideration should be given to people with visual and mobility impairments in the design. Doors should be easily distinguishable from their surrounds. Door opening furniture that is easily reached, and which provides a secure grip, is of critical importance to disabled people, including disabled children. It should be possible to operate all door opening furniture one-handed, without the need to grasp or twist.

Wheelchair users can also find it difficult to open and close doors when door operation is not power-assisted. SODC Equality Officer

We have sought to include inclusive design throughout the document and have made reference to the relevant building regulations.

Other Comments:

Other less frequently made comments related to:

- Bin storage
- Parking
- Connectivity
- Transport
- Size of the document
- Health and safety
- Protecting farmland
- Water/flooding
- Pedestrianisation
- Ageing population
- Validation requirements/information supporting an application
- Taller buildings
- Density
- Hierarchy of streets
- Daylight/sunlight
- Environmental enhancement
- Commercial development
- Contemporary design
- Environmental efficiency
- Future maintenance

- Light pollution
- Design codes
- Design review
- Shared space
- Footpaths
- Health
- Co-located services
- Cycling
- Air quality
- Privacy
- Cellars/basements
- Equestrian/Public rights of way
- Views
- Archaeology
- Enclosure
- Building control
- Adaptability
- Gardens
- Infilling
- Guidance is too prescriptive
- Guidance is not clear

DRAFT

HOW WE HAVE USED RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION

The council would like to thank everyone who took part in this consultation. The council has used information gained from the consultation to make amendments to the guide where appropriate. These include:

- An example of how the guide relates to small-scale development has been provided at the end of the document
- A new technical document for non-domestic buildings has been created
- A new technical document for flats and apartments has been created
- Updated section on the Value of Good Design
- Updated section on public consultation
- More recent, meaningful photographic examples used which reflect the rural, suburban and urban character of parts of the district
- Updating and improving the clarity and structure of all technical documents

DRAFT

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you wish to discuss the findings of this consultation or learn more about our work on the design guide, please view our website www.southoxon/designguide or contact:

Planning Policy Email: Planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk

DRAFT

APPENDIX A – CONSULTATION WORDING

Planning

HEAD OF SERVICE: **Adrian Duffield**



Listening Learning Leading

Address 1

Address 2

Town

City

Postcode

CONTACT OFFICER: **Clare Golden & Marta Bou Fernandez**

planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk

Tel: 01235 540546

135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park,
Milton

OX14 4SB

Our reference: New South
Oxfordshire Draft Design Guide

17 June 2016

Dear

Notice of consultation for new South Oxfordshire Draft Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

South Oxfordshire District Council is consulting on the new South Oxfordshire Design Guide Document (SPD). The document provides guidance to decision makers and those wishing to design new developments on best practice and the criteria that we will use to assess the quality of developments. This document is an SPD.

This consultation lasts a period of six weeks running from Friday 17th June to Friday 29th July 2016 closing by 4.30pm precisely. Representations must be received in this time period. You can view an electronic copy of the Design Guide by visiting www.southoxon.gov.uk/designguide.

Hard copies of the document will also be available to view at the District Council's Offices at 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB during normal office opening hours. It will also be available to view at the libraries in Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford.

You can comment using our online consultation system, accessible via the web address above. If you have not already done so, you will need to register to use our system.

You can send your comments through to: planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk

Or by post to: New South Oxfordshire Design Guide, C/O Urban Design Officer, Planning Services, South Oxfordshire District Council, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, OX14 4SB.

Comments received will be used to inform the development of the document. Please be advised that all consultation responses will be available to the public to view and may be included on our website. Following the consultation, we will be producing a consultation report which will be made available on our website in due course.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

For and on behalf of Adrian Duffield
Head of Planning

DRAFT

APPENDIX B: Publicity

Editorial: (01491) 419444 Advertising: (01491) 419419



**South Oxfordshire
District Council**
Listening Learning Leading

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF CONSULTATION FOR NEW SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DESIGN GUIDE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

Regulations 12 and 13 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, amended 2013.

Purpose of this SPD:
South Oxfordshire District Council is consulting on the new South Oxfordshire Design Guide Document (SPD). The document provides guidance to decision makers and those wishing to design new developments on best practice and the criteria that we will use to assess the quality of developments. This document is an SPD.

Consultation time frame and viewing documents:
This consultation lasts a period of six weeks running from Friday 17th June to Friday 29th July 2016 closing by 4.30pm precisely. Representations must be received in this time period. You can view an electronic copy of the Design Guide by visiting www.southoxon.gov.uk/designguide

Hard copies of the document will also be available to view at the District Council's Offices at 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB during normal office opening hours. It will also be available to view at the libraries in Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford.

You can comment using our online consultation system, accessible via the web address above. If you have not already done so, you will need to register to use our system.

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Comments received will be used to inform the development of the document. Please be advised that all consultation responses will be available to the public to view and may be included on our website.

Following the consultation, we will be producing a consultation report which will be made available on our website in due course.

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APPENDIX C: Detailed responses

See attached document

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APPENDIX D: Questions asked to structure the consultation

Questions for Design Guide

South Oxfordshire District Council want to replace the existing Design Guide (2008) with an up to date, innovative and exemplar Design Guide. The new Design Guide will be a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and together with the design policies in the Council’s emerging Local Plan 2031, will be the key mechanism for delivering high quality design in the district.

What the Design Guide seeks to achieve:

The ultimate objective for the design guide is to raise the quality of design in new development in the district. The guide seeks to do this by setting out the standard we expect new developments meet through a series of checklists which each relate to a key design principle. Alongside the checklists, examples of best practice and solutions for common design problems will be provided. Clear links and references to further guidance and technical documents will supplement the content in the guide. The guide should also be used as a tool to design and assess development proposals by encouraging designers and decision makers to follow a process and checklist which will help secure and assess the quality of the development being proposed.

How the new guide will be different to the existing guide:

The new guide is much more concise than the existing guide, being 50 pages rather than 204. It is a much more visual document, relying on illustrations, plans and photos to convey important messages and provide explanations rather than detailed text which the previous guide had. The introduction of the checklists is also a new tool which sets the standard we expect new developments to meet and provides a basis for assessment and testing of the design of proposed developments.

Name

Name of organisation representing (if applicable)

Please provide your e-mail address or contact address

Part 1 of the Design Guide explains what the design guide is trying to achieve, why it is important and how to do it. It focuses on the purpose of the guide, its objectives, explains the design process to be followed for all applications and who to consult. Part 1 also gives a brief overview of the character of South Oxfordshire.

How far do you agree with this section?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below if you would like to

Section 1

Summary: One of the first things to consider before designing is to look beyond the red line of the application site. This is the site context. A contextual analysis identifies the context within which the application site is set. This section explains how the site features and the wider area beyond can help to shape your design. The outcome of this first step is the production of an opportunities and constraints plan. This will help inform your design rationale which is the explanation of the reasons behind the design decisions made.

How far do you agree with Section 1?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

How far do you agree with the checklist on Section 1?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below

Section 2

Summary: This section explains how the physical features and natural resources from a site can be used to benefit the intended occupants of your development and ensure that it does not have a negative impact on neighbouring properties.

How far do you agree with Section 2?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

How far do you agree with the checklist on Section 2?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below, if not please leave blank

Comments box

Section 3

Summary: This sections focuses on how to create a network of paths and roads which result in a place that is easy to get to and move through for all users.

How far do you agree with Section 3?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

How far do you agree with the checklist on Section 3?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below

Comments box

Section 4

Summary: This section focuses on the building blocks of development, density and variety of uses

How far do you agree with Section 4?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

How far do you agree with the checklist on Section 4?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below

Comments box

Section 5

Summary: This section explains how to achieve safe and attractive streets and spaces for all. It also covers how to integrate street furniture, lighting and public art and avoid street clutter.

How far do you agree with Section 5?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

How far do you agree with the checklist on Section 5?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below

Comments box

Section 6

Summary: This section focuses on how to integrate parking to support attractive streets and spaces

How far do you agree with Section 6?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

How far do you agree with the checklist on Section 6?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below, if not please leave blank

Comments box

Section 7

Summary: This section covers character, scale form and massing. It also covers amenity spaces.

How far do you agree with Section 7?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

How far do you agree with the checklist on Section 7?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below

Comments box

Section 8

Summary: This section talks about the importance of securing design quality and create a place that works well for everyone and will continue to work well in the future

How far do you agree with Section 8?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

How far do you agree with the checklist on Section 8?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below

Comments box

Do you have any comments on the general format and layout of the Guide?

Comments box

Any other comments that you would like to make on the new Design Guide?

Comments box

What makes a high quality development?

Give us an example of what you think is a high quality development in South Oxfordshire

Technical documents:

A series of technical documents accompany the Design Guide. These cover different areas and disciplines which need to be considered at the outset of the design process.

Trees

How far do you agree with this Section?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below, if not please leave blank

Comments box

Landscape

How far do you agree with this Section?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below

Comments box

Biodiversity

How far do you agree with this Section?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below

Comments box

Householder Extension

How far do you agree with this Section?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below

Comments box

Building Conversion

How far do you agree with this Section?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below

Comments box

Sustainable Energy

How far do you agree with this Section?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below

Comments box

Public Art

How far do you agree with this Section?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please provide any comments about this section below

Comments box

Any other comments that you would like to make on the new Design Guide?

Comments box

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APPENDIX E: Detailed consultation responses attached in separate document.

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