

## Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Initial Consultation (Planning, Policy & Economic Development – Judith Orr)

### Synopsis of report:

The adopted Runnymede 2030 Local Plan contains a number of policies for securing an appropriate amount and mix of affordable housing units from new development across the Borough, particularly Policies SL20: Affordable Housing and SL19: Housing Mix and Size Requirements. To support the delivery of these policies an Affordable Housing SPD (AH SPD) has been prepared. The SPD provides clarity and guidance on the implementation of the affordable housing policies of the adopted Runnymede 2030 Local Plan by setting out when, how and what affordable housing the Council expects in new developments.

The Council undertook public consultation on a draft of the AH SPD for a period of 8 weeks from 1 December 2021 to 25 January 2022. A total of 9 representations were received. The issues raised in these representations, and any changes made to the AH SPD as a result of these comments, are set out in the Consultation Statement that accompanies this report and which can be viewed at Appendix B. In addition, the Consultation Statement also summarises the issues raised during early stakeholder engagement on the draft SPD and includes any other changes made during the finalisation of the AH SPD and the reasons for these changes.

A number of minor modifications are proposed to the SPD upon its adoption. The modifications have been included in the SPD (shown bold and underlined in the document at Appendix A) and are also set out separately in the Consultation Statement, as explained above.

It is considered that the modifications proposed are minor in nature and as such, do not materially change the draft SPD and so do not require further consultation. As such the Planning Committee is asked to adopt the AH SPD with the modifications outlined in the Consultation Statement.

**Recommendation(s): The Planning Committee is recommended to APPROVE the Affordable Housing SPD for adoption, with an implementation date of 20<sup>th</sup> April 2022.**

### 1. Context of report

- 1.1 The Runnymede 2030 Local Plan contains Policy SL20: Affordable Housing which seeks to ensure that development proposals of 10 or more (net) additional dwellings will provide 35% of dwellings as affordable units. The tenure split of these affordable units proposed in the Plan is 70% affordable/social rent to 30% other forms of affordable housing (including affordable home ownership).
- 1.2 On 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021 the Government published a Written Ministerial Statement on First Homes. This introduces a requirement that a minimum of 25% of all affordable housing units secured through developer contributions should be a new low-cost home ownership tenure, known as First Homes. The introduction of First Homes therefore results in the tenure mix required in Runnymede changing from the 70:30 set out in Policy SL20, to 25% First Homes, 53% social/ affordable rent and 22% other forms of affordable housing such as, for example, shared ownership.
- 1.3 Policy SL20: Affordable Housing of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan sets out that the affordable housing requirement applies to all types of residential development falling under use class C3. Sites that have been sub-divided or which are not being developed to their full potential must contribute proportionally towards achieving the amount of affordable housing which would have been appropriate on the whole or larger site.
- 1.4 Policy SL19: Housing Mix and Size Requirements aims to ensure that housing development sites, including those providing affordable housing, deliver a range of housing sizes and types that reflect identified needs over the plan period, taking into account the current housing stock and projected demographic changes. This policy also has important implications for the Affordable Housing SPD and its contents.
- 1.5 Other policies in the adopted 2030 Plan that also have implications for the AH SPD include:

- Policy EE1 (Townscape and Landscape Quality) which sets out the criteria for achieving good urban design within the context of national advice.

- Policy SD7 (Sustainable Design) which contains criteria for development to demonstrate and implement sustainable design measures;

- Policy SD4 (Highway Design Considerations) which contains relevant design and parking standards for vehicle and cycle parking within development proposals and how these will be assessed against the Council's current adopted guidance;

- Policies SD9, SL2- SL18 & IE7- IE11 site allocations which set out the housing requirement for these allocated sites in terms of housing provision.

1.6 The AH SPD will help to support, implement and provide guidance on aspects of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan policies which relate to affordable housing. The SPD will, once adopted, be a material consideration in decision making.

## 2. Report and options considered

2.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the representations received during the consultation period on the AH SPD and the resulting modifications which are proposed to be made to the AH SPD to address the issues raised.

2.2 The Consultation Statement, which accompanies this report, sets out the details of the representations and the proposed changes to the AH SPD. These changes mainly relate to points of clarification and are considered to be minor in nature. As a result, it is not considered that they change the general thrust or substance of the SPD and so do not require any further consultation to be undertaken. The Planning Committee is therefore asked to adopt the AH SPD with the modifications set out in the Consultation Statement.

## 3. Policy framework implications

3.1 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) do not form part of the Development Plan for Runnymede but are a material consideration in decision taking.

3.2 Although not part of the Development Plan, once adopted, the SPD will support the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan policies referred to in section 1 of this report. The SPD also supports the 2030 Local Plan vision that the Borough's communities will, *'benefit from improved life chances and reduced inequalities achieved through the creation of inclusive places delivering a range of housing including for those with specialist needs'* and the objectives to *'protect and improve the health & well-being of the population'* and *'to support the delivery of affordable housing, starter homes'*.

## 4. Financial and resource implications

4.1 Production of the AH SPD has largely been undertaken in-house. The exception to this, is the commuted sum contributions cap work, which was produced by consultants. The methodology used by the consultants in formulating this contribution cap can be viewed at Appendix 3 of the SPD. This work has been funded by the existing budgets of the Planning Policy and Housing Departments.

4.2 The introduction of this SPD, when adopted, will support the Runnymede Housing Strategy Statement 2021-26 particularly the priorities to support delivery of affordable housing in the Borough.

## 5. Legal implications

5.1 None.

## 6. Equality implications

6.1 The Council has a Public Sector Duty under the Equalities Act 2020 to have due regard to the need to:

a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation;

b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a Protected Characteristic and persons who do not share it;

c) Foster good relations between those who share a relevant characteristic and persons who do not share those characteristics;

in relation to the 9 'Protected Characteristics' stated within the Act.

- 6.2 The Affordable Housing SPD has been screened to establish whether there may be an impact whether positive or negative on any of the nine protected characteristics (namely, age, disability, race/ethnicity, pregnancy and maternity, religion, sexual orientation, sex, gender reassignment and marriage/civil partnership). The conclusion of the screening assessment has confirmed that the SPD complies with the Council's duty under S149 of the Act and that a full Equalities impact Assessment is not required. A number of minor changes have been made to the EQIA, since it was produced for the draft Affordable Housing SPD, but the conclusions remain unaltered. The latest EqIA assessment is attached as Appendix D for information.

## 7. **Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity Implications**

- 7.1 The Affordable Housing SPD is not part of the Development Plan for Runnymede and as such is not subject to Sustainability Appraisal.
- 7.2 The SPD has however undergone Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening with the conclusion that there will be no likely significant effects on designated habitats or any other significant environmental effects. This conclusion has been checked and confirmed by the three statutory bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England), in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004. A copy of the updated screening assessment is attached as Appendix C for information (this updated assessment only contains very minor changes, which mainly relate to the reporting of the comments received from the 3 statutory bodies and the inclusion of a reference to the Thorpe Neighbourhood Plan as a key plan or project in table 1.1).
- 7.3 The SPD has the potential to deliver positive impacts on anyone seeking housing within the Borough particularly those with the protected characteristics of race, disability, sex and age. The Affordable Housing SPD is therefore likely to have a positive impact on health and well-being, including mental health and the well-being of lower paid Runnymede residents.

## 8. **Other Implications**

- 8.1 None.

## 9. **Conclusion**

- 9.1 Planning Committee is asked to RESOLVE to:

- i) **APPROVE** the Affordable Housing SPD for adoption, with an implementation date of 20<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

(To resolve)

## **Background papers**

Appendix A: Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (April 2022)  
Appendix B: Regulation 12 Statement of Consultation  
Appendix C: SEA/HRA Updated Screening Assessment  
Appendix D: EqIA Final Screening Assessment