

# WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

16<sup>th</sup> December 2021

**Councillor Rebecca Breese, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Built Environment  
and Rural Affairs**

---

**Report Title**                      **Deanshanger Villager Design Statement**

**Report Author**                      **Alan Munn, Planning Policy and Conservation Manager,  
alan.munn@westnorthants.gov.uk**

## **Contributors/Checkers/Approvers**

<b>West MO</b> (for West and joint papers)	Catherine Whitehead	Emailed
<b>West S151</b> (for West and joint papers)	Martin Henry	22 November 2021
<b>Legal</b>	Justin Price Jones	Emailed
<b>Finance</b>	Antony Russell (Senior Finance Business Partner)	22 November 2021

## **List of Appendices**

**Appendix 1 – Deanshanger Village Design Statement Consultation (15 January 2021 - Friday 26 February 2021): Summary of responses received and Council Response and Action**

**Appendix 2 – Opus Partnership Response**

## **1. Purpose of Report**

---

- 1.1. For members to consider the responses to the consultation on the draft Deanshanger Village Design Statement (DVDS) and, subject to the amendments set out at Appendix 1 being made, endorse the adoption of the DVDS.

## **2. Executive Summary**

---

The report summarises the process which has been followed to produce the DVDS and presents the responses to the public consultation on the design statement along with suggested amendments to the document.

## **3. Recommendations**

---

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Policy Committee:
- a) Notes and welcomes the significant progress in making the DVDS by the Deanshanger community,
  - b) Note the response to the public consultation on the Deanshanger VDS,
  - c) Accepts the recommended modifications in respect of the Deanshanger VDS,
  - d) Approves the adoption of the Deanshanger VDS, modified in accordance with recommendation (c) above, as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD),
  - e) Agrees that delegated authority be given to the Interim Head of Planning and Climate Change Policy to make further minor editorial changes to the VDS to address any factual and typographical errors and to reflect the fact that the document will be in its intended final form.

## **4. Reason for Recommendations**

---

- 4.1 The Deanshanger VDS has been prepared to add further detail to the design policies contained in the South Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 and its adoption will allow it to be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

## **5. Report Background**

---

- 5.1 West Northamptonshire Council recognises the importance of village design statements as an important tool for community planning that gives local communities the opportunity to have their say on its future place-making. A village design statement does not detail what type of development should take place in a village or the state of local services, they are a form of planning guidance used to inform the design of new development. Their aim is to offer guidance to ensure that new development is in keeping with or respects existing local character. A key aspect of Village Design Statements is that they are written and researched by local communities, with only advisory input from the Council, and so represent a community view of how new development should be designed in order to retain a sense of place.

5.2 The Deanshanger Village Design Statement has evolved over a number of years and was subject to a six-week public consultation in January 2021. Following the close of that consultation the responses received were analysed by officers and amendments are now proposed to the VDS before its adoption as an SPD for use in the planning process.

## **6. Issues and Choices**

---

6.1 The Deanshanger Village Design Statement has been produced by the Deanshanger Village Design Group, a group set up by the Parish Council and formed from volunteers who responded to an invitation in the parish newsletter.

6.2 The village design statement provides an analysis of the historical development of Deanshanger and its present-day character identifying important natural and built features and the other defining characteristics. Informed by that analysis it then goes on to present a number of development guidelines against which it is suggested proposals for future development should be considered.

6.3 In November 2020 South Northamptonshire Council's Planning Policy and Regeneration Strategy Committee approved a draft of the VDS for a six-week public consultation. That consultation was undertaken in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (South Northamptonshire Area – adopted July 2020) and ran from 15 January 2021 to 26 February 2021.

6.4 A total of six responses to the public consultation were received from a range of stakeholders comprising: residents, landowners, Historic England, the Northamptonshire Ramblers, the British Horse Society and Network Rail.

6.5 Whilst these responses raised a number of varied points none objected the VDS in principle nor to its status as an SPD that adds supporting detail to the existing policies of the Development Plan. A number of matters of detail and clarity were raised, and in response to these, in some cases, amendments to the VDS are proposed. One objection to the adoption of the VDS in its current form was however made.

6.6 In making that objection the respondent considered that the character zones identified through the VDS were not sufficiently evidenced and that Zone 1 in particular had been drawn too widely incorporating modern development that has not been subject to character assessment. They consider that the principles for this zone, as presented in the consultation draft, could not be effectively applied to the whole of the area.

In particular the respondent felt that the inclusion of modern development within Zone 1 (specifically Maltings Row, Roberts Close, Boswell Drive, The Smithy and The Beeches) dilutes the character cues for that Zone. The respondent continued that it was inappropriate, undesirable and ineffective for those areas to be required to meet the standards of design expected for the conservation area.

They considered that the VDS as drafted and applied to those areas of Zone 1 but outside of the Deanshanger Conservation Area would result in additional financial burdens to development and that without amendment the DVDS does not meet the guidance for SPDs as set out in the PPG and will result in the guidance, particularly in relation to Zone 1 being applied as policy.

- 6.7 In response to this objection the Council acknowledges that whilst some areas of modern housing are included within Character Zone 1 (The Historic Core) their inclusion is not inappropriate and that development has either taken its design influence from the historic development that surrounds it or is located amongst that traditional development and of such a scale that would make its transfer into a different character zone inappropriate and unrealistic. This is a situation not unique to Deanshanger with character areas identified in both design guides and conservation area appraisals often including newer development.
- 6.8 Whilst the design statement identifies the key characteristics of the various character zones and offers guidance as to how they can influence future development it does not seek to stifle creativity. In respect of the perceived additional burdens being placed upon homeowners it is considered that there is sufficient flexibility within the design statement and its principles to allow appropriate decisions to be made in respect of the newer properties that are located within the Historic Core.
- 6.9 The modifications proposed at Appendix 1 ensure that this is the case.

## **7. Implications (including financial implications)**

---

### **7.1 Resources and Financial**

- 7.1.1 The council's costs in respect of preparing and adopting the VDS will be met from existing budgets.

### **7.2 Legal**

- 7.3 The process for preparing SPDs is set out in Part 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Once adopted the SPD would be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

### **7.4 Risk**

- 7.4.1 There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

### **7.5 Consultation**

- 7.5.1 The consultation undertaken in the preparation of the SPD is dealt with in the main body of the report and appendix.

## **7.6 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

7.6.1 Not applicable.

## **7.7 Climate Impact**

7.7.1 The Deanshanger VDS contains guidance in respect of climate change and supports sustainable development.

## **7.8 Community Impact**

7.9 The Deanshanger VDS has been prepared by the community of Deanshanger for Deanshanger and has been subject to formal consultation in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the council's own Statement of Community Involvement for the south Northamptonshire area.

## **8. Background Papers**

---

8.1 None