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Ward (s) affected	All	Key Decision	Yes
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Subject	Proposed Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger Rural Villages Character Appraisals SPD; and • Landscape SPD
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RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to recommend the Council adopts the Larger Rural Village Character Appraisals SPD and the draft Landscape SPD, which have been the subject of public consultation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report concerns two proposed Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

The draft Larger Villages Character Appraisal SPD covers the six "larger rural villages" i.e. Beare Green, Brockham, Capel, Charlwood, Hookwood and Westcott. The Landscape SPD covers the whole District, focusing on the natural landscape and the setting of towns and villages.

The Executive considered draft versions of both SPDs in November 2012. They were published for public consultation from 18 January to 1 March 2013. This report summarises the consultation responses and proposes that amended versions of the SPDs be agreed by the Executive and recommended to the Council for adoption.

The Executive is invited to approve the SPDs and recommend them to the Council for adoption as Supplementary Planning Documents.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Environment: The SPDs will contribute to the Corporate Priority of improving the quality of our built environment. They will provide additional tools to assist with the appraisal of sites put forward for consideration as part of the Land Allocations Plan. They will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and will assist with the implementation of Core Strategy policies CS 13 - Landscape Character and CS14 - Townscape, Urban Design and the Historic Environment.

1. BACKGROUND

Landscape SPD

1. Preparation of a Landscape SPD fulfills a commitment under Core Strategy Policy CS13. The SPD draws together material from a variety of published sources, assessing the landscape in and around Mole Valley. Key source documents include the AONB Management Plan and a County-wide landscape study undertaken in 1997.
2. The draft SPD uses the boundaries of 14 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) identified in the County study. They are given a local focus by highlighting the characteristics which are particular to the Mole Valley area. The SPD provides a Character Profile for each LCA which includes a map, descriptive text, a summary of key characteristics, identification of threats and opportunities for landscape enhancement, and consideration of the landscape setting of settlements.
3. The SPD also provides general guidance (in Chapter 3), on landscape issues and how they should be addressed by developers and those responding to planning applications.

Larger Rural Villages Character Appraisals SPD

4. In February 2010, the Council adopted Built Up Areas Character Appraisals for the settlements of Dorking, North Holmwood, Pixham, Leatherhead, Ashted, Bookham and Fetcham. These are the areas where it is anticipated that the majority of development will take place during the life of the Core Strategy.
5. The Core Strategy also identified six "Larger Rural Villages" which are inset from the Green Belt. Within these six villages, the Core Strategy allows for infilling and limited development on previously developed land. With that in mind, it was considered appropriate to prepare a similar Character Appraisal SPD for the six larger villages.
6. The draft SPD has a similar structure to the Landscape SPD, with general advice as to how the guidance should be used, followed by a series of Character Profiles; one for each village. Each village is divided into a number of Character Areas, which share common characteristics. A number of key characteristics are identified within each Character Area. Maps are included within the text to identify the boundaries, with a larger map of the whole village appearing in an Appendix.
7. At present the SPD is not illustrated. It is proposed that suitable photographs of each Character Area are taken once the weather has improved, to be inserted prior to publication.
8. It is recognised that, since work on the SPD was begun, the village of Westcott has embarked on the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan. These SPDs will still be a tool for the Council when making planning decisions within and around the village and they will sit alongside and inform the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan in due course.

Consultation

9. The SPDs were published on 13 January 2013, with a six week period for public consultation, ending 1 March 2013. Nineteen responses have been received, copies of which are attached as an Appendix to this report.
10. Twelve comments relate to the Landscape SPD and twelve to the Larger Rural Villages SPD (five responses relate to both SPDs). None of the comments raise objections to the general thrust of the SPDs. Four respondents express support and have no further comments.
11. The issues raised are summarized in the tables attached to this report, along with the amendments made to the SPD, where appropriate.
12. Comments from the Surrey Hills AONB Board were received after the deadline and too late to be incorporated in the first draft of this report. Their comments were reported in an Addendum report to the Local Plan Working Group on 25th March and the Scrutiny Committee meeting of 26 March. The comments in question are incorporated in the summary table at the end of this report and amendments have been made to the SPDs.
13. The Surrey Hills AONB Board is concerned that the Landscape SPD should not be seen as a substitute for site-specific landscape character assessment by qualified consultants, where land is proposed for development, either as part of the Local Plan process or through a planning application. They are particularly concerned about proposals which could affect the landscape setting of Dorking and other settlements, and/or views into or out of the AONB. Amendments have been incorporated to re-emphasise the special status of the AONB and make it plain that developers will be required to submit detailed landscape character assessment where the circumstances of the site mean that this is justified.
14. As a general comment, Capel Parish Council welcomes the fact that the Larger Rural Villages SPD reflects written submissions which they made to officers at an early stage in preparing the SPD. However, they feel that the Parish Council could have had a larger role in preparing the SPD text and the Council could take more account of the Parish Council's views, which are based on professional planning advice.
15. Where consultees have made detailed comments, they mainly relate to the way that areas are described, the precise location of boundaries between character areas or valued locally-valued landscape features which should be given a higher profile. Most of the points raised bring a valuable local perspective. The SPDs have been amended in light of comments, as summarised in the attached tables.
16. Some consultees raise issues related to the current consultation on the Green Belt review, regarding the limits of areas where development should be contemplated. This is outside the scope of these SPDs.

2. OPTIONS

17. **Option 1:** To accept the proposed amendments and recommend the Landscape SPD and Larger Rural Villages SPD to the Council for adoption as Supplementary Planning Documents.
18. **Option 2:** To make further amendments to one or both documents, prior to recommendation to the Council for adoption as Supplementary Planning Documents.
19. **Option 3:** Not to recommend one or both SPDs for adoption by the Council.

20. The SPDs are in line with the Council's priorities under the Environment heading. They will assist in implementation of the Core Strategy and preparation of subsequent Local Plan documents.
21. Consultation responses to date are generally supportive and it is considered that the proposed amendments are an appropriate response to the issues raised.
22. Options 1 or 2 would fulfill the commitment made under Core Strategy policy CS13 (Landscape Character) and provide a more comprehensive suite of SPDs, to be used in appraising sites for development. The SPDs will be used alongside the Built up Areas Character Appraisals, adopted in February 2010. They will be an important tool in ongoing planning decisions and an important part of the background evidence for identification of development sites in the Local Plan.
23. Option 3 would fail to fulfill the commitment made under Core Strategy policy CS13 (Landscape Character) and would be poor value for money as a result of abortive work already undertaken. The opportunity would be lost to use the SPDs as tools in the appraisal of sites and consideration of planning applications.

3. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

24. **Legal Implications** – Publication of the Landscape SPD fulfills a commitment made under the Core Strategy. Both SPDs will assist the Council and those submitting and commenting on planning applications in interpretation and implementation of Core Strategy Policies CS13 and CS14.
25. **Financial Implications** - Preparation of both SPDs is covered by the existing budget provision for the production of Local Plan documents.
24. **Risk Implications** - The SDPs support robust decision-making in connection with Local Plan documents and planning applications. The risk associated with planning decisions has been identified and managed through the business unit's risk register; adequate controls are in place to mitigate the risk.
26. **Equalities Implications** – No equalities implications have been identified.
27. **Employment Issues** – No employment issues have been identified.
28. **Sustainability Issues** – The protection of landscape and village character is consistent with the objectives of sustainable development as defined in the NPPF.
29. **Consultation** – The draft SPDs were subject to internal consultation and shared with key stakeholders, as outlined above. A public consultation process has taken place and amendments are proposed to the SPDs in response to issues raised.

30. BACKGROUND PAPERS

31. Copies of 19 representations from interested parties (attached as Appendix to this report).

Table 1: Larger Villages Character Appraisal SPD - Issues raised in Public Consultation

Name	Organisation	Summary of main points raised	Proposed Amendments
Pauline Olive	Resident	Urges that Green Belt/green areas around Hookwood are protected at all costs. Open spaces are enjoyed by local people for walking and accessing the countryside. Development would erode the openness and rural feel.	Noted – the amendments made at the request of the Charlwood Society and Charlwood Parish Council (see below) include additional content about the significance of open spaces around the village, including along the River Mole.
Peter Collis	Resident	Suggested amendments to the description of Hawksmoore Drive (para 4.13).	Para 4.13 amended
Mr Dino Adriano	Resident	Some of the areas listed in para 6.9 are in the Parish of Ockley and will be covered by the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NPD) which is being prepared for Ockley. Refers to Green Belt review consultation, which confirms that there is no intention to review the area of the Green Belt within the Ockley NPD.	Para 6.9 amended to note this point. Noted.
Jackie Coke	Capel Parish Council	Detailed comments about village profiles for Capel and Beare Green, including some recommendations about position of boundary lines (see proposed amendments, right). The inclusion of material submitted by Parish Council in March 2010 is welcomed, but the Parish Council would have liked to be more involved in the production of the document. The Parish Council's views on planning matters are based on professional advice and should carry more weight in MVDC decisions.	Amendments are proposed to boundaries as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beare Green: include Old Horsham Rd in Area 2. • Capel: include frontage properties south of Laundry Way in The Street (See maps at end of this report) It is not proposed to merge Beare Green Areas 2 and 3, as it is considered that the housing in these areas is of a markedly different density and character. However, textual amendments are proposed, to acknowledge that both areas have ready access to Great Turners Wood. It is not proposed to enlarge Area 4 as proposed (to

			<p>include properties as far as Wigmore Lane). Although it is agreed that these properties share some characteristics of those within Area 4, they are physically separated by open fields. The existing boundary represents a coherent area with continuous frontage development. It takes in the larger non-agricultural uses (e.g. the primary school, brickworks and park homes site) on the edge of the village. The boundary is considered to represent a consistent approach, compared with the boundaries of other villages.</p> <p>The boundaries have also not been enlarged to take in rear gardens in Capel and Beare Green. It is acknowledged that the gardens contribute to character, but the designated village boundary has been followed, to avoid confusion by having two boundary lines in close proximity and avoid giving the impression that the village envelope may have been relaxed.</p> <p>Capel Recreation Ground remains in the "The Street " character area, but its significance to the setting of Vicarage Lane is acknowledged in the text.</p> <p>The description of Turner House has been deleted and function of recreation ground clarified.</p>
Matthew Ellis	Waverley BC	No comment.	None
Katherine Harrison	Surrey CC	Recommendations as to additional material on historic environment issues	Additional material on historic environment issues has been added to Chapter 3, including details of sources of information held by the County Council. Reference has been added to Sites of High Archaeological Potential in Brockham, Capel, Charlwood, Hookwood and Westcott.

Francesca Barker	Natural England	No specific comments, but proposals that are considered in the context of this SPD should be considered in the context of threats and opportunities for landscape, biodiversity and for habitat networks.	Noted
Charles Muriithi	Environment Agency	Add reference to areas prone to flooding, particularly in Brockham, Charlwood and Hookwood. Include links to flooding policies and technical guidance in introduction.	Amendments made to highlight locations where flooding is a known issue. Not considered appropriate – flood management is not part of purpose of document and does not cross-refer to technical policies on other topics.
Alan Jones	Horley Town Council	No comment	None
Patrick Cox	Charlwood Society	Several detailed amendments suggested for descriptions of Charlwood and Hookwood. The Society also elaborates on the issues in this particularly sensitive part of the Green Belt bordering Gatwick Airport and the benefits that have been obtained through careful management of the River Mole corridor and strict enforcement of the Green Belt. The Society believes it of paramount importance that the open area bordering the airport boundary should continue to be preserved.	Amendments have been incorporated, generally as suggested, with some changes to phrasing, factual corrections and rewording to draw in related issues raised by Charlwood Parish Council. Noted
Peter Barclay	Charlwood Parish Council	Several detailed amendments suggested for descriptions of Charlwood and Hookwood.	Amendments have been incorporated, generally as suggested, with some changes to phrasing, factual corrections and rewording to draw in related issues raised by Charlwood Society.
Alan (surname)	Resident	The part of Beare Green west of the A24 is not really a village and has already experienced excessively	Noted, but it is not the function of this SPD to revisit the designation of the village or proposals for the location of

withheld on request)		<p>cramped development. Core Strategy policy to allow further development here is misguided.</p> <p>Chapter 3 is aimed at developers and is irrelevant in a public consultation document.</p> <p>Makes recommendations as to which village boundaries should be regarded as sacrosanct.</p> <p>Mention of introduction of street lighting is misconceived.</p> <p>Amendments are requested to the description of football pitch and bungalows at Leith Lea.</p>	<p>development as set out in the Core Strategy.</p> <p>Developers are among the target users of the SPD so it is valid to include guidance for them.</p> <p>Views on the outer limits of the village envelope are for the Green Belt review and will be taken into account as part of that process.</p> <p>The SPD does not propose introduction of street lighting. References to illumination in section 3 are specifically intended to ensure that developers exercise care in areas which are <i>not</i> illuminated, where this is part of their character.</p> <p>Amendments made.</p>
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Table 2 - Landscape SPD – Issues raised in Public Consultation

Name	Organisation	Response	Proposed Amendments
Penny Tyson-Davies	British Horse Society	Supportive of the SPD, which is stated to describe the landscape extremely well. Makes observations on paragraph 4.15, Soils / impact of “horsiculture” and issues around hedgerow maintenance. Recommends that the Council better enforces maintenance of roadside hedges, trees and verges and places more importance on the maintenance of public bridleways.	Amendments to 4.15 to elaborate on issues raised. Maintenance of rights of way and roadside planting is a County matter, but additional material has been inserted in Chapter 3, to highlight these issues to developers where better management might be secured as part of a scheme.
Roger Bennett	Ashtead Residents Association	No comments with respect to description of landscape setting of Ashtead.	None
Brian Mellor	Fetcham Residents Association	Has reviewed the Landscape SPD and supports its adoption.	None

<p>Caroline Brown</p>	<p>Leatherhead Residents Association</p>	<p>Comments that Leatherhead is a rather “hidden” town – surprisingly well hidden from most of the surrounding areas.</p> <p>Comments that the names of the Landscape Character Areas are unhelpful and should be changed to be specific to Mole Valley (e.g. North Leatherhead and Ashted, instead of Esher and Epsom)</p> <p>Highlights the following features which are not currently mentioned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teazle Wood • Pakesham Park • Ancient chalk grasslands on Box Hill - needs more prominence • Nower Wood educational centre • Juniper Hall • High Ashurst <p>Landscape issues which could be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ryebrook (clogged with debris in vicinity of Teazle Wood) • Widen and improve road to refuse site • Prominence of Elmer Treatment Works. 	<p>Noted in Landscape Setting section.</p> <p>LCA names are taken from County landscape study and it is considered appropriate to keep them, in order to aid cross-reference between the two. Text has been added to explain this, in the areas which have names from outside the District.</p> <p>References added to these locations</p> <p>Included in description of Teazle Wood</p> <p>Not a landscape issue</p> <p>Visual impact is limited to specific viewpoints and this is considered too detailed a point for a document of this nature</p>
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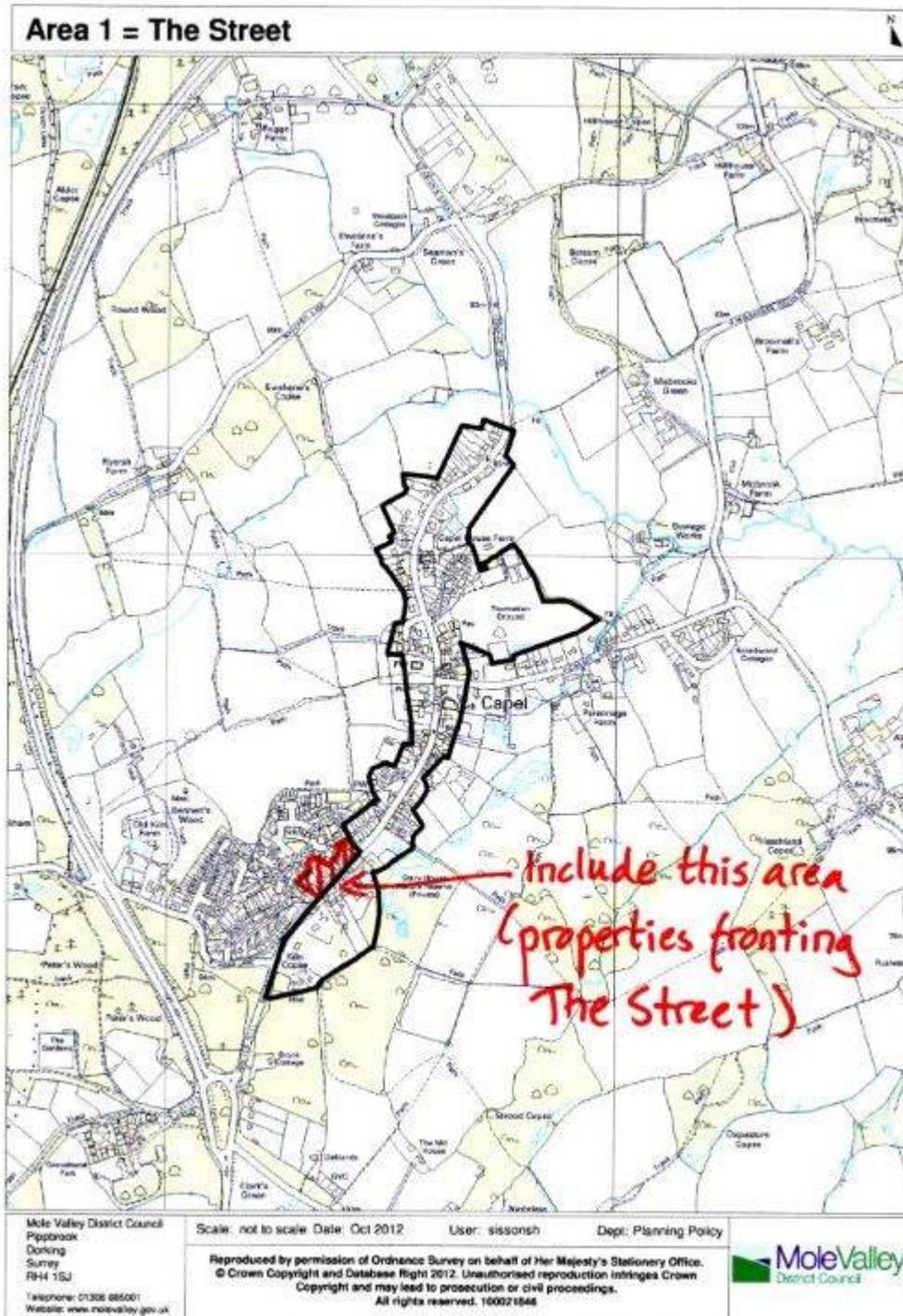
Jackie Coke	Capel Parish Council	Welcomes inclusion of material submitted by Parish Council in March 2010, but concerned that Parish Council were not more involved in production of document. PC's views on planning matters are based on professional advice and should carry more weight in MVDC decisions.	Noted
Matthew Ellis	Waverley BC	No comment.	None
Mike Waite	Surrey Wildlife Trust	Generally supportive, but makes several detailed suggestions about how to raise profile of biodiversity issues alongside purely landscape issues. Also corrections and updates to terminology.	Amendments made as recommended
Katherine Harrison	Surrey CC	Would like to see more emphasis on historic environment issues and the resources available from County to understand these.	Additional material on historic environment issues has been added to Chapter 3, including details of sources of information held by the County Council.
Francesca Barker	Natural England	<p>Welcomes SPD, which they feel offers appropriate protection for the AONB and AGLV, and clear criteria for considering development in different areas. They do not perceive any conflict with work towards review of the AONB boundaries, although the SPD will need updating if AONB review expands boundaries to include AGLV.</p> <p>Advice given on progress towards updating National Character Areas and recommends that reference is included in SPD.</p> <p>SPD should include consideration of the capacity of the landscape to accommodate renewable energy infrastructure.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Reference to update included</p> <p>This is considered to be more appropriately addressed at planning application stage, should any proposals be submitted. The SPD will provide the context for understanding the capacity of the landscape to accommodate specific proposals.</p>

		SPD should make reference to need for high quality design of developments which take account landscape characteristics.	Chapter 3 aims to do this. Wording has been updated to more closely reflect wording in NPPF re “high quality design”
Charles Muriithi	Environment Agency	No comment, but section on River and Drainage systems could include a section detailing flood risk.	Cross-reference included to refer users to Mole Valley Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, which includes comprehensive information on flooding.
Alan Jones	Horley Town Council	No comment	
Clive Smith	Surrey Hills AONB Board	<p>The SPD should not be seen – by the Council or developers – as a substitute for proper landscape impact assessment by suitably qualified professionals. This is particularly important where it is proposed to allocate land in the AONB, or affecting views into or out of it.</p> <p>Nothing in the SPD should override or outweigh any landscape designation or planning policies relating thereto.</p> <p>Suggests that Officers are authorised to update the SPD just before printing regarding the latest position on AONB boundary review.</p> <p>The SPD should identify land within the AGLV and conclusions reached on their characteristics in the 2007 Chris Burnett study.</p> <p>3.8 should include material discouraging emphasis on tree screening and highlighting risks of trees being</p>	<p>Amendments made to place additional emphasis on the need for site-specific landscape analysis, especially within the AONB or where views to or from the AONB might be affected (paras 3.6 to 3.14)</p> <p>Agreed</p> <p>The wording has been updated in paragraphs 2.4, 3.20 and 4.32. The new wording is unlikely to be out of date within the timescale between this report being considered and the SPD being adopted.</p> <p>References added to paragraphs 5.51, 5.100, 5.152</p> <p>Amendments made to 3.8</p>

		<p>removed/dying.</p> <p>Suggest replacing “natural beauty” with “landscape and scenic beauty” as per NPPF.</p> <p>Some actions at ends of Area Profiles are inconsistent, in that they could equally be applied to other Landscape Character Areas.</p>	<p>Done</p> <p>Action lists have been edited to focus on Actions which are genuinely specific to the LCA in question and to remove those which were generic landscape considerations and better covered by the questions in para 3.8.</p>
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Larger Rural Villages SPD: Capel

Proposed amendment to boundary of The Street, to include properties between Laundry Way and Markham Park, which face The Street.



Larger Rural Villages SPD: Beare Green

Proposed amendment to boundary of Southern Loop, to include properties south of car park, which front Horsham Road, but share characteristics of the properties in the Southern Loop.

