

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**24 October 2005**

**Report of the Director of Planning & Transportation**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision**

**1 KENT DESIGN GUIDE**

**Summary**

**To update the Board on the progress towards the publication of the new Kent Design Guide and to seek authority to enable a revision to the Council's Local Development Scheme in order to enable the adoption of the Design Guide as a Supplementary Planning Document in due course.**

**1.1 Introduction**

- 1.1.1 The new Kent Design Guide is now nearing the final stage of preparation. It is anticipated that the final document will be published in December.
- 1.1.2 The new design guide has been produced by the Kent Design Initiative which is a partnership involving a wide range of organisations. Project management has been handled by a small group of officers from a number of Kent Local Authorities and the work in preparing the new guide has been undertaken by a combination of officers, the Kent Architecture Centre and external consultants in various specialist fields.
- 1.1.3 The consultation process that was undertaken earlier this year has been important in shaping the final document as well as being a necessary requirement in order to enable the adoption of the design guide as a supplementary planning document. A summary of the headline results of the public consultation exercise is provided in the attached document. A very much more detailed account of all the comments received and the response that has been made is held in my department and can be viewed at Members request. The Borough Council's views both in terms of principles of design and the technical details have been fed into this process.
- 1.1.4 It is a significant challenge to produce a design guide that is relevant to a County with such diverse characteristics as Kent. Nevertheless I believe that when the document finally appears it will be both an excellent promotional and aspirational document as well as a practical working tool for designers, developers and local authorities.

- 1.1.5 Following the publication of the new design guide it is intended that it will be adopted by all local planning authorities in the County as a Supplementary Planning Document. In this sense it would be 'supplementary' to a key policy on design that is included within the draft core strategy of the Council's Local Development Framework. In advance of such adoption it will be necessary for the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) to be revised and approved by the Government Office of the South East. Members will recall that the LDS is a project management tool setting out the various Development Plan Documents that it will be preparing.
- 1.1.6 The Kent Design Initiative will continue following the publication of the document in order to promote continued training and the promotion of good design through demonstration projects and beacon schemes. As part of this members might like to know that an Urban Design Certificate course accredited by the Westminster University is being run for planners and other professionals in Kent. In Tonbridge and Malling we have already two officers who have been through this course and a further two are due to take on the following year's course which commences in January.

## 1.2 Recommendations

- 1.2.1 The Board **NOTE** the progress towards the publication of the new Kent Design Guide.
- 1.2.2 That the Council's Local Development Scheme **BE REVISED** to include the preparation of the Kent Design Guide as a Supplementary Planning Document within its Local Development Framework.

Background papers:

Nil

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