

OPD/14

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From: Wheeler, Kate (NE) [kate.wheeler@naturalengland.org.uk]
Sent: 23 August 2012 10:07
To: ldf
Subject: Selby Council Local Plan - Olympia Park consultation Draft Supplementary Planning Document

Attachments: 58956 Selby SPD.pdf; Natural England Consultation Feedback V4 (2).pdf

Dear Sir/Madam

Please find attached our response to the above consultation, together with an associated feedback form which we would appreciate if you would complete and return.

<<58956 Selby SPD.pdf>> <<Natural England Consultation Feedback V4 (2).pdf>>

Thank you

Kind regards

Kate Wheeler

Lead Adviser

Land Use Operations Team

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Post should be sent to **Mail Hub Block B Government Buildings, Whittington Road, Worcester WR5 2LQ** marked for my attention.

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk>

We are here to secure a healthy natural environment for people to enjoy, where wildlife is protected and England's traditional landscapes are safeguarded for future generations.

In an effort to reduce Natural England's carbon footprint, I will, wherever possible, avoid travelling to meetings and attend via audio, video or web conferencing.

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23/08/2012

Date: 22 August 2012
Our ref: 58956



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Dear Sir/Madam

Selby Council Local Plan – Olympia Park consultation Draft Supplementary Planning Document

Thank you for consulting us on the above which was received by Natural England on 16 July 2012.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

We welcome this opportunity to comment, as the specific topic of the Supplementary Planning Document does relate to Natural England's interests. However the production of an SPD after a major planning application for the site is not usual and does mean comments which have already been made by us on the planning application are also relevant to the SPD. The masterplan provided for the SPD consultation and the Draft Framework and Delivery Document are also part of the planning application for the site. We have made specific comments to the Hybrid application in our response dated 2 July 2012, reference 55867.

We have however set out comments below and also taken the opportunity to include a note on the Biodiversity Duty introduced by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the requirements in relation to Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Green Infrastructure

The SPD provides a clear focus in relation to Green Infrastructure (GI) provision, where possible such provision should be incorporated into new development with assistance from developer contributions.

As well as amenity and recreational benefits, the Natural Environment White Paper highlights the natural environment importance of GI in planning; 'We need urban green infrastructure to complete the links in our national ecological network. Urban green space allows species to move around within, and between, towns and the countryside. Even small patches of habitat can benefit movement. Urban green infrastructure is also recognised as one of the most

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effective tools available to us in managing environmental risks such as flooding and heat waves.

It is part of the answer to the challenges posed by a changing climate.' (para 2.78, White Paper), 'We want urban green spaces to be recognised as an essential asset and factored into the development of all our communities. They will be managed to provide diverse functions for the benefit of people and wildlife.

They will cool urban areas and reduce flood risk, helping communities to adapt to a changing climate. They will continue to play a key role in regeneration projects throughout England, supporting local economic growth. Greener neighbourhoods and improved access to nature will improve public health and quality of life and reduce environmental inequalities. Urban green spaces will provide varied ecosystem services and will contribute to coherent and resilient ecological networks' (Para 2.80, White Paper)

Natural England has developed a GI signposting document, which may be of assistance, it includes detail in relation to GI provision and provides some best practice example of LDF policies relating to GI.

http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/GI-signposting_tcm6-11961.pdf

In addition it is important to emphasise the multi-functional benefits of GI to biodiversity, amenity, recreation and health and wellbeing and the need to consider GI in urban design and demonstrate how GI and green and open spaces could link to the wider GI network and interlink with access, the landscape and biodiversity. Consideration also should be given to the ongoing maintenance and management that greenspaces and green infrastructure will require. Pedestrian and cycle access should be considered.

There may be significant opportunities to retrofit green infrastructure in urban environments. These can be realised through:

- green roof systems and roof gardens;
- green walls to provide insulation or shading and cooling;
- new tree planting or altering the management of land associated with transport corridors (e.g. management of verges to enhance biodiversity).

The protection of natural resources, including air quality, ground and surface water and soils needs to be considered in all urban design plans.

Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace

(ANGSt) standards

ANGSt aims to address the spatial distribution of natural greenspace, its accessibility at different size limits and the hectareage of Local Nature Reserve per head of population with the

aim of securing access to natural greenspace close to where people live. These standards recommend that people living in towns and cities should have an accessible natural greenspace: (ANGST)

- Of at least 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes walk) from home;
- At least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometres of home;
- One accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres of home;
- One accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres of home;
- Statutory Local Nature Reserves at a minimum level of one hectare per thousand population

Landscape considerations

New development and design should respect and enhance the existing landscape. All proposals however should complement and where possible enhance local distinctiveness and be guided by your Authority's landscape character assessment where available, and the policies protecting landscape character in your local plan or development framework.

This application may provide opportunities to enhance the character and local distinctiveness of the surrounding natural and built environment; use natural resources more sustainably; and bring benefits for the local community, for example through green space provision and access to and contact with nature. Landscape characterisation and townscape assessments, and associated sensitivity and capacity assessments provide tools for planners and developers to consider new development and ensure that it makes a positive contribution in terms of design, form and location, to the character and functions of the landscape and avoids any unacceptable impacts.

Sustainable Design & Construction

We strongly encourage sustainable construction methods, sustainable design (including climate change adaptation), sustainable drainage systems and the use of local construction materials and techniques. All development and design should promote the principle of sustainable development to ensure social, economic and environmental objectives can be achieved together with no net loss to the environment.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Supplementary Planning Documents must be screened in relation to the Habitats Regulations. If not already undertaken, the council will need to undertake a screening to determine whether an Appropriate Assessment is required. This screening is necessary even where there are no European designated sites within a plan area, since possible impacts on sites outside the borough also need to be considered. In addition, the screening needs to consider not just the potential impacts of this plan but also any cumulative or in-combination effects when taking account of other plans and projects, including those in relevant authorities beyond the borough boundary.

Biodiversity Duty

Biodiversity is a core component of sustainable development, underpinning economic development and prosperity, and has an important role to play in developing locally distinctive and sustainable communities. All local authorities and other public authorities in England and Wales now have a Duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in exercising their functions. The Duty aims to raise the profile and visibility of biodiversity, to clarify existing commitments with regard to biodiversity and to make it a natural and integral part of policy and decision making.

The Duty is set out in Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Communities Act (NERC) 2006 and states that:

"Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity".

Guidance is available in the Defra publication, Guidance for Local Authorities in Implementing the Biodiversity Duty, <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/biodiversity/documents/la-guid-english.pdf>

The Local Authority may find the [Nature on the Map](#) website useful to source information on conservation sites and important habitats.

We advise that any development proposals should aim to avoid damage to existing biodiversity features, and to create opportunities for enhancing biodiversity through the delivery of Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) targets.

LBAPs identify the action required at a local level to deliver UK and regional targets for habitats, species, public awareness and involvement. They also identify targets for other habitats and species of importance in the more local context of their geographical area. Further information about Biodiversity in the UK is available on the JNCC website, including details relating to [UK BAP priority species and habitats](#).

Natural England does not hold protected species records and therefore cannot advise as to the likelihood of their presence. Information on non-statutory sites and species records may be obtained from The Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.

Further information

The advice given in this letter is made for the purpose of the present consultation. We would of course expect to be included as a consultee in relation to any additional matters that may arise as a result of, or are related to, the present consultation.

If I can provide any further advice relating to this consultation, please do not hesitate to contact me. For all other correspondence, please contact the address above.

Yours sincerely

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Land Use Operations

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