

# Cabinet Report



Report of Head of Planning

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To: CABINET

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## Botley Centre Supplementary Planning Document

### Recommendation(s)

To adopt the Botley Centre (appendix A) as a Supplementary Planning Document to the saved planning policies of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011.

### Purpose of Report

1. Following public consultation, to consider comments made about the draft Botley centre supplementary planning document (SPD) and Sustainability Appraisal, agree proposed changes and adopt the document.

### Corporate Objectives

2. Two key objectives are building the local economy and meeting housing need.

### Background

3. Botley Centre is a three hectare site comprising a range of retail, residential, office and community uses, including the West Way Shopping Centre, two supermarkets, offices, community halls, a library, Botley Baptist Church, the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Elms Parade, three public car parks, a post office, bank, cafés and restaurants and elderly persons accommodation.

4. The area covered by the SPD is in a number of ownerships including Vale of White Horse District Council.
5. One of the aims of the Local Plan 2011 is to ensure that Botley is an attractive place for living, working and pursuing leisure interests. In order to achieve this, the Council seeks to safeguard and promote the vitality and viability of Botley as a local service centre alongside reducing congestion and improving conditions for cyclists and pedestrians. There are a number of saved policies in Local Plan 2011 that guide development in Botley, such as policies on retail (S1), major commercial leisure facilities (L6), tourism (T1), employment (E2, GS1, S12), housing and community uses (H10, H16, H17, H19). These are summarised in section 2.4 of the SPD. This SPD is supplementary to these policies.
6. The emerging Local Plan 2031 Part1 identifies this site under Core Policy 11, which sets a strategy for comprehensive redevelopment and improvement for the Botley central area. As there are objections to this emerging policy and we are currently in the examination process, limited weight can be applied to this policy.
7. A planning application for the comprehensive redevelopment of Botley Centre, including Field House and Elms Parade was refused in December 2014.

## Options

8. Feedback from local people was that they wanted a greater say in setting the policy context for any future planning application. In deciding the appropriate planning policy framework for the regeneration of Botley Centre the following options were considered:

Rely on adopted and emerging local plan policies only (do nothing)

9. There are a number of saved policies in the Vale Local Plan 2011 that support the redevelopment of Botley Centre. The emerging Local Plan 2031 Part 1, contains Core Policy 11 relating specifically to the redevelopment of Botley. Local people would have an opportunity to comment on the specifics of any planning application put forward. This option was rejected as it did not meet the commitment to give local people a say in guiding new development for Botley Centre.

Prepare a development brief

10. This was the preferred option at the project outset because a development brief creates a more detailed planning framework and provides an opportunity for local people to inform the brief. A development brief is also quick and simple to produce. However, a development brief does not require formal consultation or sustainability appraisal and therefore carries less weight in the determination of a planning application compared to an SPD. This option was ultimately rejected in favour of the option below.

Prepare a supplementary planning document

11. The preferred approach was to use the work already produced for a development brief to inform the preparation of an SPD, which gave local community groups an informal input into the preparation of the draft SPD but also engaged the wider community through a formal stage of consultation. It was also subject to sustainability appraisal and therefore carries more weight in planning application decisions.

## **Development of Botley Centre Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

12. The purpose of the Botley Centre SPD is to expand on planning policy with the Local Plan 2011 to give greater clarity to developers and the public about the type, form and quality of the development the council wants to see on the site.
13. The Botley Centre SPD proposed for adoption is attached at Appendix A.
14. The SPD should also be read in conjunction with the sustainability appraisal (Appendix B), equalities impact assessment (Appendix C) and the consultation statement (Appendix D) that informed it.
15. An evidence report setting out the development scenarios that were tested in terms of viability and transport impact in order to test the robustness of the development framework within the SPD is also attached at Appendix E. These documents are available on the web site.

## **Financial Implications**

16. There are no ongoing financial implications of preparing a supplementary planning document. Existing budgets can accommodate consultants and staffing resources.

## **Legal Implications**

17. Preparation of the SPD must be in compliance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and paragraph 153 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

## **Conclusion**

18. The Botley Centre Supplementary Planning Document will be a useful tool for drawing together, and adding further detail to, the policies in the Local Plan 2011 that relate to Botley. It will give greater clarity to the community, developers and development management officers about what could come forward on the site, without adding unnecessary financial burdens on development, as required by the NPPF. It is therefore recommended that the Botley Centre Supplementary Planning Document is adopted.

## **Background Papers**

Appendix A: Draft SPD

Appendix B: Sustainability Appraisal

Appendix C: Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix D: Consultation statement

Appendix E: Evidence report