

**Scoping Report for Supplementary Planning Document Consultation – Affordable and Supported Housing**

Date of Issue:	29 November 2024
Date of Decision:	9 December 2024
Report to:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Highways
Report of:	Chief Planning Officer
Portfolio:	Housing and Highways
Wards affected:	All
Is this a key decision:	No
Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt/confidential report:	No

**Summary:**

The purpose of this report is to seek the Cabinet Member's approval to publish a scoping report to update the Affordable and Supported Housing Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) for public consultation.

**Recommendation(s):**

That Cabinet Member approves:

- (1) The Scoping Report for the Affordable and Supported Housing Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) for public consultation

## **1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations**

1.1 A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is intended to provide further detail to policies in the Local Plan. It does not have Development Plan status, but it will be accorded weight as a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.

1.2 The Council adopted its Local Plan in April 2017. This includes policy HC1 which set out the Council's approach to affordable housing in the borough. To support this policy the Council has had an Affordable Housing SPD in place from 2018. This was replaced in 2023 by the Affordable and Supported Housing SPD. This Scoping Report is looking to update this 2023 SPD.

1.3 The main reason for updating the SPD is to reflect proposed changes to affordable housing policy in the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>1</sup>. Specifically, the government propose:

- setting an expectation that housing needs assessments explicitly consider the needs of those requiring Social Rent and that authorities specify their expectations on Social Rent delivery as part of broader affordable housing policies
- removing the requirement to deliver at least 10% of the total number of homes on major sites as affordable home ownership, as set out in paragraph 66 of the current NPPF
- removing the requirement that a minimum of 25% of affordable housing units secured through developer contributions should be First Homes, as set out in the 'Affordable Homes Update' Written Ministerial Statement of 24 May 2021.

1.4 If these changes are confirmed, they will result changes to how we apply the tenure mix of affordable housing we secure under Local Plan Policy HC1, which had to be changed when the NPPF was last updated.

1.5 There is also a need to review some our local eligibility criteria for Discounted Market Homes (and 'First Homes') in light of applying these for 18 months or more. This is particularly important for larger homes were the household cap, when applied to a couple, is too low to allow a mortgage to be secured without a large deposit. Other policies in the SPD will also be reviewed.

1.6 If approved, the Scoping Report will be published for public and stakeholder consultation for a minimum 6 week period. Comments made will be assessed and taken account of when the draft Supplementary Planning Document is written. The draft Supplementary Planning Document will be reported to Cabinet Member at a future meeting and approval sought for approval for consultation.

## **2. Financial Implications**

Any costs associated with this report will be met from the existing local planning budget.

## **3. Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications.

## **4. Risk Implications**

No implications.

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<sup>1</sup> [Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system)

## 5 Staffing HR Implications

No implications.

## 6 Conclusion

The draft Scoping Report for the Affordable and Supported Housing SPD is the first stage of producing the SPD. It is intended to alert stakeholders and others to the Council producing the document and its broad content and seek comments. This will inform subsequent stages of the SPD which will also be consulted on.

### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not to do an SPD. It is not a requirement to do an SPD on this (or other topics) but the existing one will be overtaken by events and it is good practise to provide additional guidance on this issue to secure the affordable housing that we need in Sefton.

<b>Equality Implications:</b>
There are no equality implications. The Scoping Report in itself does not set out how proposals for Affordable and Supported Housing will be assessed. At this stage the Council are just setting out an intent to update its guidance for Affordable and Supported Housing with the detail to follow at a later stage.
<b>Impact on Children and Young People:</b>
There are no impacts for Children and Young People. The Scoping Report in itself does not set out how proposals for Affordable and Supported Housing will be assessed. At this stage the Council are just setting out an intent to publish guidance for Affordable and Supported Housing with the detail to follow at a later stage.
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>
The recommendations within this report will have a Neutral impact.

### What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

#### (A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Services & Commercial (FD7835/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD5935/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

#### (B) External Consultations

None to date. The approval of the SPD scoping report will facilitate external consultation.

### Implementation Date for the Decision:

Following the expiry of the "call-in" period for the Cabinet Member decision.

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**Appendices:**

The following appendices are attached to this report:

Draft SPD Scoping Report - Affordable and Supported Housing

**Background Papers:**

None