



Strategic Planning & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report for:	Strategic Planning & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Title of report:	Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning Document
Date:	10 th January 2023
Report on behalf of:	Councillor Alan Anderson, Portfolio Holder for Place
Part:	I
If Part II, reason:	N/A
Appendices:	Appendix A: Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning document Appendix B: Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning Document Consultation Report Appendix C: Community Impact Assessment
Background papers:	1. Dacorum Core Strategy (adopted September 2013) 2. Strategic Planning & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning Document Report 16 th March 2022 3. Dacorum Economic Recovery Plan (2021)
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	APD: Approved Delivery Partner CIA: Community Impact Assessment SCI: Statement of Community Involvement SPD: Supplementary Planning Document

Report Author / Responsible Officer

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Corporate Priorities	Building strong and vibrant communities Ensuring economic growth and prosperity
Wards affected	ALL
Purpose of the report:	1. To consult the Committee on the adoption of the

	Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s):	1. That the Committee informs Cabinet of its views on the Employment and Skills SPD (Appendix A).
Period for post policy/project review:	5 years

1 Introduction/Background:

- 1.1. The Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Appendix A) is a new tool that will enable the Council to ring-fence specific opportunities arising from a development to benefit the Borough's residents, thereby generating additional social value.
- 1.2. The SPD sits under Policy CS14 Economic Development of the Dacorum Core Strategy (2013) and will support the delivery of the Dacorum Economic Recovery Plan, helping to tackle the economic challenges the Borough faces.
- 1.3. The SPD is set out under the following sections:
 - 1) Introduction and explanation of what the document is and why it is needed;
 - 2) National policy and Legal Framework;
 - 3) Local policy background;
 - 4) Justification and context; and
 - 5) Implementation and monitoring.

Summary of Employment and Skills SPD Process

- 1.4. Development Management Officers will make applicants aware that the Employment and Skills SPD will be applicable for residential development of 30 or more homes and building(s) of 1,000m² or more for non-residential development. The applicant will be issued with a social value forecast that will set a target for the number of social value weeks the development will be expected to deliver.
- 1.5. A Social Value Strategy will then be prepared setting out the training and employment weeks to be delivered by the developer, which will be included within the development's S106 agreement.
- 1.6. At commencement, a Social Value Delivery Plan will be agreed detailing the delivery options that will be used and the Social Value outcomes that will be generated by the development to achieve the social value target.
- 1.7. During construction, regular monitoring reports will be submitted to the Council, showing progress against the agreed social value target.
- 1.8. The Council will provide support to developers and help them access local networks, providers and schools in order to successfully implement the SPD.

2 Consultation on the Draft Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning Document (the Draft SPD):

- 2.1 The Draft Employment and Skills SPD was reviewed by the Strategic Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2022. The views of this Committee and the SPD

documents were subsequently reported to Cabinet for consideration at their meeting on 19th April, where Cabinet approved the Draft Employment and Skills SPD for public consultation.

2.2 Public consultation on the draft document took place over a period of more than four weeks from 28 October up until the 28 November 2022. This is in line with the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) that stipulates a requirement to consult on a supplementary planning document for at least four weeks.

2.3 The Council received 16 responses in total from 16 consultees, which are summarised in the Employment and Skills SPD Consultation Report, attached as Appendix B. Each response received was individually reviewed and collated into tables, and an officer response added to the points raised. The tables also identify where the SPD has been revised as a result of the consultation comments received.

2.4 The revised SPD is attached as Appendix A for this Committee to consider. The main differences between this document and the previous draft SPD presented to this Committee in March 2022 are summarised below.

Section of document	Subject	Change
3	New Dacorum Local Plan	Paragraph added on progress on the preparation of the new Dacorum Local Plan.
3	Hemel Garden Communities	Information added on Hemel Garden Communities and the Spatial Vision document.
3	Wider Strategic Context	Content added on key Hertfordshire documents: South West Hertfordshire Economic Studies; Hertfordshire Strategic Economic Plan 2017-2030; Hertfordshire Skills and Employment Strategy 2021-2024; and Hertfordshire Local Skills Improvement Plan.
4	Dacorum district data comparison	Data on the number of economically inactive residents, level of qualifications attainment, and average wages updated to latest ONS data available, or latest and previous years data shown.
4	Impact of COVID-19	Explanation added on the impact of COVID-19 on young people’s employment and training.
4	Social Value Strategies	Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership added to the list of organisations and bodies a developer could liaise with during the preparation of a Social Value Strategy.

3 Options and alternatives considered

3.1 Do not proceed with formal adoption - there will be no additional benefit to residents secured from future housing and commercial development, some opportunities may be delivered at the discretion of the developer, however these would not be targeted, measured or recorded.

3.2 Publish the document as discretionary guidance without formal adoption – this would encourage applicants to submit a Social Value Strategy with the developer determining the need and requirements. This would deliver some additional benefit to residents, however there would not be

measures in place to ensure it was proportionate to the scale of development and tailored to meet local needs.

3.3 Take forward the SPD with the adoption of the new Local Plan – the timetable for adoption would follow the Local Development Scheme, and no additional benefit to residents would be secured from housing and commercial development in the short term.

4 Consultation

4.1 The following sections have been consulted on the work undertaken to date:

- Development Management;
- Strategic Planning;
- Economic Development;
- Hemel Garden Communities;
- Community Partnerships;
- Housing Development; and
- Housing Strategy and Policy.

5 Financial and value for money implications:

5.1 The Council received a grant of £15,000 from the Hertfordshire Community Wealth Building Fund to prepare the draft SPD.

5.2 The SPD will enable the Council to secure employment and skills opportunities for local residents from development that meets or exceeds a set commercial building area/number of residential units threshold. Requiring development to invest in the current and future workforce will have a direct impact on individuals, will improve the overall skills level of the Borough's working population enabling businesses to flourish and will in turn bring wider social and economic benefits to Dacorum.

5.3 The requirement for developers to prepare a Social Value Strategy will include the payment of a financial contribution (Social Value fee) to cover the Council's costs of providing advice and support to the applicant and undertaking the delivery, monitoring and reporting of social value.

5.4 Officers are considering the most appropriate model to deliver the SPD. The Council can choose to provide the resource to support developers directly or procure an external body (an Approved Delivery Partner) to manage the process. If the Council were to undertake this in house then it would most likely be delivered by the Economic Development Team. This could not be absorbed through current resources and would require an expansion of the existing service and to be self-funding through development contributions. If undertaken by an external partner the Council would need to procure this. It is important that an arrangement is in place by the time the Council formally adopts the SPD to ensure the measures can be delivered.

6 Legal implications

6.1 The Social Value Act (2012) requires public bodies to consider how the services they commission and procure might improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their local community. The Council has incorporated this objective into the Commissioning and Procurement Strategy (2019-2024) that seeks to deliver additional value to the community through the Council's contracts. Nationally, the range of activities that deliver social value is now widening and a growing number of Councils are looking to capitalise on this by integrating social value into their planning process. The most practical opportunity to achieve this is for a development to produce a Social Value Strategy.

6.2 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 do not require a Sustainability Appraisal to be carried out on SPDs. However, the potential requirement for a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and / or Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) based upon any environmental concerns introduced or influenced by the SPD must be considered. In response, an SEA / HRA screening assessment is underway. Once this process is complete, the SEA/HRA Screening Reports and responses from Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England will be published as supporting documents alongside the SPD, and the conclusions added to the SPD document.

7 Risk implications:

7.1 Given the long-term changes in employment and retail expected because of the pandemic and future automation, it is important that the Council has planning guidance in place to enable the local workforce to adapt and develop skills that will meet future needs. The SPD will ensure that residents gain additional benefits from major development and will help support the Borough's long-term prosperity.

7.2 Without these measures, there is the risk that jobs created through the construction and operation of new buildings are taken by workers from outside the Borough, and that the skills of the local workforce become misaligned with emerging employment sectors.

8 Equalities, Community Impact and Human Rights:

8.1 A Community Impact Assessment is annexed to this report as Appendix C. The types of positive outcomes to be delivered include:

- Social Value Strategies will be expected to demonstrate opportunities aimed at young people to help alleviate unemployment and build skills, such as through targeted recruitment, apprenticeships and work placement opportunities.
- Developers will be encouraged to set out how they would engage with local schools and support them to promote the skills and qualifications needed for employment amongst young people aged 11 to 16 years, and also to support the transition between school and work.
- The Social Value Strategy should consider providing opportunities for social enterprises, which have explicit social, economic or environmental aims.
- The activities of the Social Value Strategies will improve the economic wellbeing of individual residents in the Borough who may currently be impacted through having a low income, holding lower qualifications or being economically inactive.

8.2 Human rights – There are no Human Rights implications arising from this report.

9 Sustainability implications (including climate change, health and wellbeing, community safety)

9.1 The SPD will enable additional social benefits to be secured from planned growth through the delivery of skills, training and employment outcomes targeted at local residents, education providers and businesses. Given the likely level of growth expected over the new plan period and initiatives such as the Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter and Hemel Garden Communities, the impact of this new policy could be transformative to both individuals and the local economy.

10 Council infrastructure (including Health and Safety, HR/OD, assets and other resources)

10.1 None arising from this report.

11 Conclusions:

11.1 Dacorum is likely to see growth and investment over the coming decades, particularly in housing and employment development. There is the opportunity to draw added value from these developments to directly benefit the Borough's residents and economy by requiring development above a set threshold to prepare and implement a Social Value Strategy.

11.2 By introducing the SPD requirement, the Council can act on its crucial role in the social value agenda and create opportunities for skills and apprenticeships, delivering on the priorities of the Dacorum Economic Recovery Plan.