



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name and date of Committee	<b>CABINET – 12 OCTOBER 2022</b>
Report Number	<b>AGENDA ITEM NO 10</b>
Subject	<b>COMBE VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT (VDS)</b>
Wards affected	Stonesfield and Tackley
Accountable member	Cllr Carl Rylett Cabinet Member for Planning and Sustainable Development Email: <a href="mailto:carl.rylett@westoxon.gov.uk">carl.rylett@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Chris Hargraves, Planning Policy Manager Tel: 01993 861686 Email: <a href="mailto:chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk">chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To consider the Combe Village Design Statement (VDS) and agree that it should be subject to a 6-week period of public consultation prior to it being potentially adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.
Annexes	Annex A – Consultation Summary Report Annex B – Combe Village Design Statement (VDS) Annex C – Local Development Scheme (LDS) Addendum
Recommendation/s	<i>a) That the content of the report including the consultation summary report attached at Annex A be noted;</i> <i>b) That Cabinet agree that the Combe Village Design Statement attached at Annex B and prepared by Combe Parish Council, be published for a 6-week period of public consultation; and</i> <i>c) That Cabinet agree that the District Council's current Local Development Scheme (LDS) published in July 2022 be updated as per the LDS addendum attached at Annex C</i>
Corporate priorities	Taking forward the Combe VDS as a supplementary planning document would be consistent with a number of aspects of the current Council Plan (2021 – 2024) including healthy towns and villages, strong local communities and protecting and enhancing the environment.
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	The Combe VDS has already been subject to public consultation as summarised in the consultation summary report attached at Annex A. Subject to the agreement of Cabinet, the VDS will be the subject of a further 6-week period of statutory public consultation. Depending on the outcome of that consultation, the District Council will then be in a position to decide whether

	or not to formally adopt the Combe VDS as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. Combe Parish Council have prepared a Village Design Statement (VDS) the stated purpose of which is to *'provide design guidelines that can help to shape any future development so that it blends in with Combe's distinctive rural landscape and heritage'*.
- 1.2. Work on the VDS began in 2019 through a series of informal discussions and events, followed by a questionnaire survey and consultation on a draft version of the VDS.
- 1.3. The VDS was finalised in November 2021 and submitted to the District Council for consideration, with the Parish Council seeking a view on whether it would be possible for the VDS to be formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.
- 1.4. Since then a number of Officers have reviewed the document and all have been supportive of its content. As such, it is now suggested that the VDS should be taken forward through further public consultation, with a view to it then being formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

## **2. COMBE VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT (VDS)**

- 2.1. Members will be aware that the primary purpose of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted Local Plan.
- 2.2. In this instance, the Combe VDS if adopted as SPD would effectively provide additional guidance on the application of Local Plan Policy OS4 – High Quality Design more specifically in relation to development proposals that come forward within Combe Parish. In doing so it would sit alongside the District Council's overarching Design Guide which was adopted as SPD in 2016.
- 2.3. Annex A is a consultation summary report which provides an overview of the consultation which has been undertaken on the VDS to date and the key issues arising.
- 2.4. A copy of the Combe VDS is attached at Annex B. It is a comprehensive and well-written document which follows a logical structure, providing a detailed overview of the parish including its landscape setting, settlement pattern, green and built environment, including the public realm.
- 2.5. Building on this context, Section 10 of the VDS sets out a series of design guidelines including a number of general and specific principles.
- 2.6. The expectation is that these principles would be considered alongside the policies of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and the West Oxfordshire Design Guide (2016) when development proposals in Combe Parish are being considered.

## **3. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (LDS) - ADDENDUM**

- 3.1. The Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) provides information on planning policy documents that the Council already has in place and those it intends to prepare over the following 3-year period.
- 3.2. The Council's current LDS was recently published in July 2022, however it makes no reference to the preparation of a Village Design Statement SPD for Combe and so if it is to be taken forward as SPD a minor update to the LDS is needed to reflect that intention.
- 3.3. A suggested minor addendum to the July 2022 LDS is therefore attached at Annex C.

#### **4. NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1.** Subject to the agreement of Members, the next steps are for the Council to undertake a statutory 6-week period of public consultation on the Combe VDS and for the Council's current Local Development Scheme (LDS – July 2022) to be updated, as per the addendum attached at Annex C.
- 4.2.** Following the close of consultation on the VDS, Officers will consider the responses received and liaise with Combe Parish Council as appropriate in order to agree any necessary changes.
- 4.3.** A final version of the VDS will then be brought back before Members to consider whether or not it should be formally adopted as SPD. It is anticipated that this would be in the new-year.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1.** The report raises no direct financial implications other than some very modest costs to be incurred by the District Council in facilitating the proposed 6-week public consultation.

#### **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1.** The proposed route forward for the Combe VDS will ensure that all legislative requirements for adopting a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) have been met.

#### **7. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1.** The report raises no significant risks.

#### **8. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 8.1.** The report raises no specific implications for any particular equality strand.

#### **9. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1.** The Combe VDS recognises the importance of climate change with one of the general design principles contained therein being to ensure that new development has regard for community cohesion, sustainable living, biodiversity and the implications of climate change.

#### **10. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 10.1.** The alternative option would be for Members to decide that the Combe VDS should not be consulted upon with a view to becoming a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). It would then carry limited, if any, weight in terms of guiding future planning decisions within the parish.

#### **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1.** None.