



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	<b>EXECUTIVE – 12 JULY 2023</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 final version of the Combe Village Design Statement (VDS), following feedback from a 6-week period of public consultation, and to recommend to Council that it be formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
Annexes	Annex A – Consultation Summary Report Annex B – Combe Village Design Statement (VDS) – final adoption version (June 2023)
Recommendation/s	That the Executive resolves to: <i>a) That the content of the report including the consultation summary report attached at Annex A be noted; and</i> <i>b) That subject to any amendments the Executive may wish to make, that Council be invited to formally adopt the final version of the Combe Village Design Statement attached at Annex B as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).</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 (2023 – 2027) including putting residents first, enabling a good quality of life for all, creating a better environment for people and wildlife, responding to the climate and ecological emergency and working together for West Oxfordshire.
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	The Combe VDS has been subject to extensive public consultation. Attached at Annex A is a consultation summary report which sets out the comments received and how they have been taken into account.

## **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.** Given the wholehearted support of Officers of its content, Cabinet agreed in October 2022 that the draft be published for a further 6-week period of public consultation. This took place between Friday 3 February – Friday 17 March 2023, with a view to it then potentially 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: who was consulted; the main issues raised by respondents; and how those issues have been addressed in the final proposed adoption version of the SPD.
- 2.4.** A copy of the final proposed adoption version 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. SUBMISSION DRAFT CONSULTATION**

- 3.1.** As part of the formal process, and in accordance with the District Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), a statutory 6-week period of consultation took place (3 February – 17 March 2023), involving the notification of a range of stakeholders and making the document available online and at 15 deposit locations at local council offices and libraries.
- 3.2.** Eight organisations and individuals responded, two of which had no comment.
- 3.3.** The Consultation Summary Report includes a schedule of the responses. Officers have since liaised with Combe Parish Council and a number of changes have been made to the VDS, following consideration of the comments received.

### **4. NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1.** The Combe VDS will need to go through the formal adoption process. Copies of the document will be made available in accordance with legislative requirements including the publication of an adoption statement. Those who have responded at the formal consultation stage will be notified and sent a copy of the adoption statement.

### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1.** The report raises no direct financial implications.

### **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1.** The report raises no specific legal implications.

### **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 become 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.