

Decision Maker: **Executive**

Development Control Committee

Date: **24 March 2015**

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: **COUNCIL MOTION - PETTS WOOD AREA OF SPECIAL RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER**

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Chief Officer: Mark Bowen, Director of Corporate Services

Ward: Petts Wood and Knoll

1. Reason for report

1.1 At the Council meeting on 23rd February 2015 a motion was proposed by Councillor Simon Fawthrop and seconded by Councillor Douglas Auld on the Petts Wood Area of Special Residential Character (ASRC.) The motion was amended to refer the matter to the Executive for decision and passed by Council. This report is also passed for information to Development Control Committee. The full text of the motion is set out in section 3 of this report.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) **Development Control Committee is requested to consider the motion and pass any comments to the Executive.**
- (2) **The Executive is requested to consider the recommendation from Council on 23rd February proposing an updated statement in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) relating to the Petts Wood Area of Special Residential Character (ASRC) which will also form the basis of any descriptions in the Local Development Framework (LDF)**

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council:
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: No Cost:
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Not Applicable
 4. Total current budget for this head: £Not Applicable
 5. Source of funding: Not Applicable
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): Not Applicable
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not Applicable
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None:
 2. Call-in: Applicable:
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Not Applicable
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 At the full Council meeting on 23rd February 2015 a motion was proposed by Councillor Simon Fawthrop and seconded by Councillor Douglas Auld on the Petts Wood Area of Special Residential Character. With a slight amendment to reflect that any decision would have to be taken by the Executive, rather than the Council, the motion was referred to the Executive. The full text of the motion, as amended and as agreed, was –

Petts Wood Area of Special Character (ASRC)

Moved by Cllr Simon Fawthrop and seconded by Cllr Douglas Auld -

This Council recommends to the Executive that the existing statement in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) in relation to the Petts Wood Area of Special Character (ASRC) should be supplemented with the following updated statement which should also form the basis of any descriptions within the Local Development Framework (LDF) including any future reports to Development Control Committee. This supplement should take place with immediate effect, subject to any statutory or technical considerations, which should be expedited.

1.3 Petts Wood Supplement to the Descriptions in the UDP:

The original plans for Petts Wood date from the late 1920s and early 1930s. While Houses were built over a number of years, in a number of similar though varied styles, the road layout and plot sizes were established in an overall pattern. Today the layout remains largely intact. Within the overall area the Conservation Areas of the Chenies and Chislehurst Road already stand out.

The plots were originally designed on the garden suburb principle by developer Basil Scruby, with large plot sizes spaciouly placed. The characteristics of the Petts Wood ASRC include an open feel, predicated by low boundaries and visible front gardens, set back from the road; there is also spaciousness between the houses which is of a superior standard. This allows many of the trees and greenery which prevails throughout the area to be seen from the street scene giving the area its open and semi- rural feel in line with the garden suburb principle. This open and suburban aspect of the area underlines the special characteristic of the area. Development which erodes this special character will be resisted.

The separation between building and the rhythm and pattern of the houses adds to the special character. In many cases there is a much wider separation between houses than in other parts of the Borough which demands a higher degree of separation between buildings to maintain the special character, the openness and feel of the area. Where there are pairs of houses that complement the rhythm of the street scene there is also a prevailing symmetry between the houses. This symmetry can also be seen between neighbouring pairs. The plots are set out in such a way that the spacious character is one of a clear detached and semi-detached nature.

The front building and rear building lines are also of importance in defining the area. The buildings are of a 1930s design, for example some built by the distinguished designer Noel Rees, which adds to the character of the area. Whilst there have been some changes post war this design aspect of the area remains intact and future development should respect this characteristic. The front roof lines are also of a nature which enhances the characteristic of the area being largely untouched by roof extensions and conversions at the front.

The plot sizes and rear gardens are mostly of a size which is commensurate with the Garden Suburb principle and this characteristic also forms part of the amenity value which makes the area special.

When considering future development within the Petts Wood ASRC, the main focus will be on the impact of any proposed development on the ASRC, taking into account the design and spatial standards including the low density of existing development. Proposals which undermine the character, rhythm, symmetry and spatial standards of the area will be resisted. Likewise new dwellings proposed on gardens and infill will also be strongly resisted. In this context special is used in the dictionary sense to mean distinguished from others of the same category, because it is in some way superior or held in particular esteem.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The status of Development Plan only applies to policies that have been subject to the full development plan preparation process, such as inclusion in a ‘consultation draft’ Local Plan and if necessary the Examination in Public, and thereafter formal adoption. The Petts Wood Supplement has, therefore, not reached that Development Plan status as this time.
- 4.2 If approved by the Executive, this Petts Wood Supplement can be included in the next available and appropriate consultation draft Local Plan. It is expected that the Executive will make a separate decision at a future meeting on the contents of the draft Local Plan as a whole. The weight to be given to the contents of a draft Local Plan will generally increase if there are no objections and the more advanced the draft becomes.
- 4.3 In the meantime, the supplement is capable of being a material planning consideration when considering planning applications.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Whereas Council is empowered to make any final decisions on the adoption and amendment to the Local Plan this must be done following consideration by and the necessary recommendation from the Executive. The Executive is also the responsible body for much of the preparatory work and for agreeing policy which supports the Local plan .

Non-Applicable Sections:	Financial/Personnel
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	None