

# Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Urban Design guidance

Consultation Draft

Summary of Consultation

January 2010

### Urban Design Guidance - Understanding and using the document

- □ Presentation of draft Design Guidance: Jane Dann, Director, Tibbalds Planning and
- □ Workshops to explore how to use the design guidance
- □ Feedback from stakeholder groups

Stakeholder Workshop F1 29 September 2008 at 9:30am - 1pm Britannia Suite, Regent Theatre, Hanley For local authority and pathfinder officers in planning, highways, housing, and regeneration, and elected representatives

#### Stakeholder Workshop E2

8 October 2008 at 9:30am - 1pm Britannia Suite, Regent Theatre, Hanley For developers, architects, RSLs, amenity societies, police, transport operators, onment Agency, English Heritage, etc. (LA officers may also attend)





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#### for Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme

#### You can shape the future......

Tibbalds Planning & Urban Design and Urban Vision North Staffordshire are presenting a programme of consultation and training aimed at setting new standards of design quality for development proposals in Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme.

The Design Guide has been commissioned by the City Council, the Borough Council and Renew North Staffordshire, the housing market renewal pathfinder. The aim is to create a legally robust document, which is long lasting and provides a reliable benchmark for good design in the area.

Drawing on examples of good practice elsewhere, and the expertise of nationally renowned consultants Tibbalds Planning & Urban Design, the programme seeks to create a practical and inspiring document that will make the area a more attractive, better



Creating Design Guidance for Stoke-on-Trent & Newcastle-under-Lyme 21 April 2008 9:30am - 1pm at Newcastle-under-Lyme Civic Offices

- ☐ Introduction to the design guide: Hardial Bhogal, Chief Executive of Renew North Staffordshire
- ☐ The Oldham-Rochdale Experience: Dean Agget, formerly of the Oldham-Rochdale Pathfinder, on their experience of producing a design guidance Supplementary Planning Document.
- ☐ Workshop groups: What makes a good place?
- □ Next steps: Jane Dann, Director of Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design

#### For all stakeholders

#### Event B: Making Good Places: Design Issues in Stoke-on-Trent & Newcastle-under-Lyme



- ☐ Evidence gathering: examples of local good
- □ Presentation by Tibbaids: Analysis of findings
- □ Workshop groups: Breaking down the barriers

Stakeholder Workshop B1

13 May 2008 at 9:30am - 1pm Venue: Burslem School of Art For local authority and pathfinder officers in planning, highways, housing, and

Stakeholder Workshop B2

20 May 2008 at 9:30am - 1pm Venue: Burslem School of Art For developers, architects, RSLs, amenity societies, police, transport operators, Environment Agency, English Heritage, etc. (LA officers may also attend)

Stakeholder Workshop B3

10 June 2008 at 1:30 - 15:30pm Venue: Windsor Room, Stoke-on-Trent Civic Centre For elected representatives

#### Event C:

**Sheffield Inspirational Visit** 19 June 2008 8:30am - 5:30pm (departure details to be confirmed)

- ☐ Sheffield City Centre Master Plan
- ☐ Sheffield Urban Design Guidance
- ☐ The Gold Route outstanding city centre public realm

#### For all stakeholders





#### Design Strategy and Design Principles for Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme

7 July 2008 9:30am - 1pm Venue: Burslem School of Art

- □ Urban design vision for Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme - presentation of draft proposals by Tibbalds
- Workshops to evaluate the draft urban design vision and design principles
- □ Presentation by CABE the role of urban design strategies and visions in regenerating cities

For all stakeholders

Urban Vision programme of training/ consultation events

Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design, together with Urban Vision North Staffordshire, prepared and ran a joint programme of events, including an element of training and consultation for the Urban Design Guidance during 2008. The programme (see previous page) involved five events. The following text concentrates on the consultation elements of the programme and events directly related to the preparation of the Urban Design Guidance.

Urban Vision organised each session, identifying stakeholders, inviting participants and providing accommodation, catering and other facilities, registering attendance, preparing and collecting feedback responses, and identifying and inviting guest speakers. Urban Vision and Tibbalds both contributed to the programme for each session, leading different components and providing facilitators for group discussions.

# Event A: Creating Urban Design Guidance for Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent

# 21st April 2008, Newcastle-under-Lyme Civic Offices. Open to all stakeholders

Its purpose was to inspire the client agencies about the project and good design. It comprised a talk by Dean Aggatt on the Oldham & Rochdale experience of producing design guidance, emphasising:

- a. the importance and value of good design;
- b. thinking strategically about design; and
- c. the process of raising the profile of good design.

Following this talk, Tibbalds introduced the scope and programme for the preparation of the Urban Design Guidance and highlighted the next stage of consultation workshops.

#### 13th & 20th May 2008 Programme

- 9:30 Introduction to the project, Urban Vision
- 10:00 The Quality of Place: Good and bad design in North Staffordshire, Urban Vision
- 10.30 Initial Impressions, Tibbalds
- 10:50 Quality of Place, Group Discussions

  Break
- 11:40 Review of Current Practice, Group Discussions
- 12:00 Key Issues from Design Review, Urban Vision
- 12:15 Feedback & Significant Issues for the Design Guidance
- 12:50 Summary and next steps

Networking

# Event B: Making good places: Design issues in Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent

These workshops aimed to remind participants of the government's guidance on urban design principles, to share the initial impressions of the consultant team and through group discussions to find out the views and priorities of local stakeholders in relation to both the place and local practice.

Three workshop sessions were held, for

- a. Local Authority and Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Officers:
- Other stakeholders, such as local developers, RSLs, architects, representatives of statutory agencies such as the Environmental Agency, police etc and amenity societies; and
- c. Elected representatives of both Local Authorities.

#### Summary of key issues identified by workshops

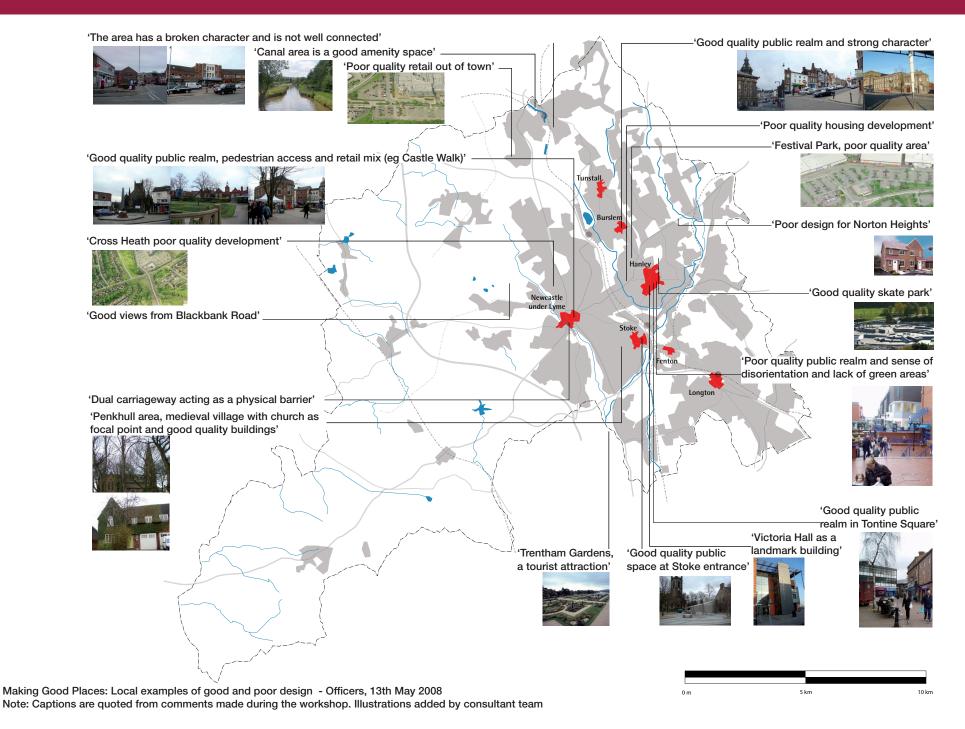
13th May 2008, Burslem School of Art. Local Authority and Pathfinder Officers.

# What are the key urban design issues that significantly influence the quality of place here?

- a. Major routes provide barriers and off the strategic roads ease of movement is poor.
- b. Pedestrian environment generally poor.
- Lack of character especially in residential development and a lack of contextual references.
- d. Town centres should be more welcoming, have distinctive character and with more coherence.
- e. Need to create better residential areas with design tool kits for each type.
- f. The car should be less dominant.
- g. Legibility, particularly views of towns and the landscape quality.
- h. Value the best of the old.
- i. Lack of cross authority policy.
- j. Transport corridors need to be dealt with more positively, and be better quality.
- k. More diversity of residential tenure and type, better integrated with their surroundings, and with centres and greenways.
- I. Craftsmanship, pockets of excellence, creating destinations within conurbation, mix of attractors, and special image/identity.

# Review of current practice locally: What is affecting design quality? What are the barriers?

- a. Good strategic interaction between partners.
- b. Tendency to accept mediocre development.
- c. Challenge to create design quality developer buy-in/ commitment queried.
- d. Need to address how redundant sites dealt with.
- e. More positive guidance required.



- Role of elected members willing to accept low quality.
- g. Role for stronger forums, panels etc.
- h. Pressure to process/ determine applications a time/ resource issue.
- i. What is working: Development involving historic environment – use same skills elsewhere; little things work well eg skate park, public art; some processes eg Urban Vision.
- j. Not working: public authorities need to improve advice given; quality of local architects – need to raise game; developers not free thinking enough; Planning Inspectorate not supportive; design and access statements not delivering enough.
- k. What is needed: better communication, design awards, more reviews.

### 20th May 2008, Burslem School of Art. Other stakeholders.

# What are the key urban design issues that significantly influence the quality of place here?

- a. Transportation links between centres need to be improved.
- Identity of centres investment going into Hanley, but each centre needs its own strong role.
- c. Poor quality public realm needs to be improved to attract/ retain people.
- d. Competing centres lack of clarity, nothing to distinguish them.
- e. Unique polycentric structure but poor accessibility, poor linkages, each has green edge and the urban form should relate to it.
- Lack of housing diversity, particularly at the higher end.
- g. Legibility routes through area, and between and within centres.
- h. Public realm need for high quality, better maintenance, and clearer use.

- i. Connectivity links between towns, use the canals and greenways better, connect the railway station to city centre.
- j. Legibility hard to understand where and what.
- k. Accessibility better connections between centres it's hard to move about.
- I. Identity centres need roles, reinforce them beyond the local.

# Review of current practice locally: What is working now? What is affecting design quality? What are the barriers?

- a. Use existing tool kits to improve design quality, for instance Building for Life.
- b. Win political support needs strong decisions and planning development grant impedes good design.
- c. Integrate design into all strategies too many poorly designed schemes "have got to happen".
- d. Awareness of design issues has increased in last 10 years – both developers and local authority.
- e. Conflict between aspirations for good design and need for economic development.
- f. Planning process is lengthy.
- g. Lack of strong policy framework.
- h. Leadership.
- i. Build on positives.
- j. Need for clearer plans.
- k. Lack of resources, skills in local authorities and inconsistency.
- I. Economic climate what is viable in this area.

#### 10th June 2008 Programme

- 1:30 Introduction to the project, Urban Vision
- 1:40 The Quality of Place: good and bad design in North Staffordshire, Urban Vision
- 2:10 Initial Impressions, Tibbalds
- 2:25 Review of current place and practice, Group Discussion
- 3:00 Key Issues from Design Review
- 3:25 Feedback & Summary of significant issues and priorities for design guidance

#### 10th June 2008, Burslem School of Art.

#### **Elected Representatives**

The 3rd workshop was a condensed programme for elected representatives.

This produced a very similar outcome to other workshops.

### Good design examples:

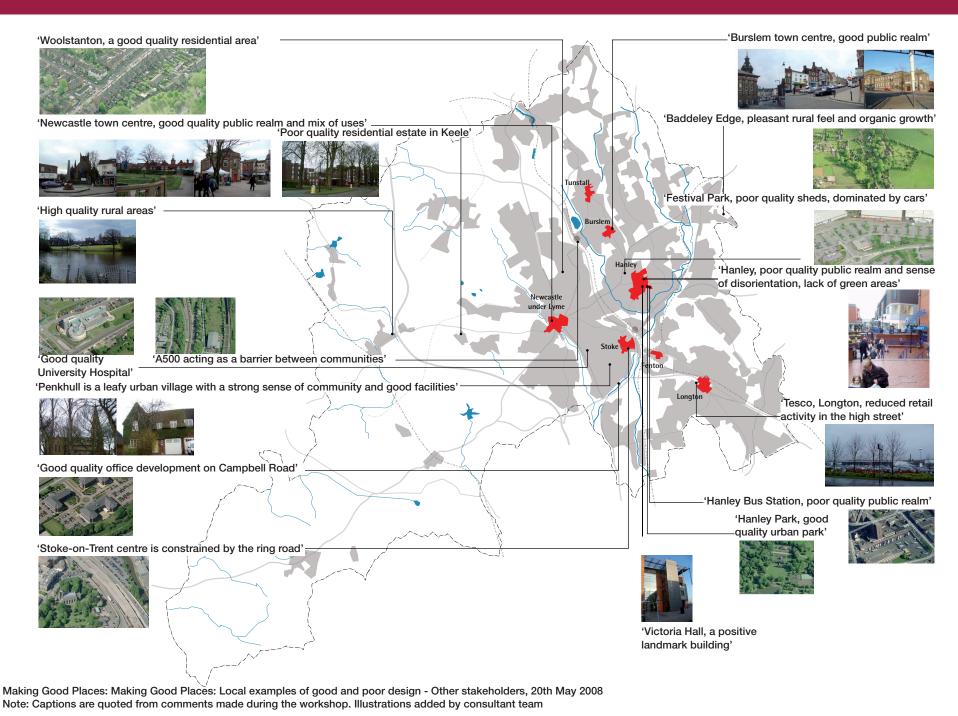
- a. The cultural quarter;
- b. Keele village;
- c. Gladstone Pottery; and
- d. The new Stoke Civic Offices as the only landmark on the A500.

### Poor design quality examples:

- a. Hanley Bus Station; and
- b. Tunstall High Street with new retail backing onto it.

# What are the significant issues to be addressed in the Design Guidance?

- a. Design Guide should be used bravely, insist on better quality design.
- b. Design Guide needs to raise the bar.



- c. Design Guide must be in plain English.
- d. Better use of canals links to town centre and parks.
- e. Reduce dominance of motor car and create/ encourage viable alternatives.
- f. Link new 'out of town' developments into town centres.
- g. Improve movement on conurbation scale better connected centres and links to suburbs.
- h. Respect local context show awareness of detail.
- Shed development must be fitted into high quality landscape.
- Developers should be required to build sustainably.
- k. Celebrate uniqueness of the area.
- I. Aim for coherent development not limited by land ownership constraints.
- m. Encourage wider range of socio-economic groups.
- n. Make most of heritage assets.

### Key issues of concern were:

- a. Improving linkages.
- b. Respecting context.
- c. Aiming for higher quality.

### **Event C: Sheffield Inspirational Visit**

This event was open to all stakeholders and organised and led by Urban Vision.

### 7th July 2008 Programme

- 9.45 Overview of progress including inspirational visit to Sheffield, Urban Vision
- 10.15 The benefits of Urban Design Strategies, Biljana Savic, CABE
- 10.45 Questions and open discussion
- 11.15 An urban design strategy for Newcastleupon-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent, Tibbalds
- 11.45 Workshop session
- 12.30 Feedback from workshop groups
- 12.50 Summary and next steps

## Event D: Design strategy and design principles for Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent.

7th July 2008, School of Art, Burslem. Open to all stakeholders.

### Stoke North group:

#### General

- Connect the core to the surrounding green spaces and increase dwell time of existing residential.
- b. Define purpose of street, hierarchy/high street.
- c. Out of town retail undermines town centres.
- d. Cars need to be considered in new development proposals.
- e. Existing redundant development doesn't have to be replaced by a new one but could be a new landscape area.
- f. Parking facilities/location and ownership (Local authority).
- g. Enforcement of contraventions needs to be more robust.

- h. Designing out issues in society and reducing crime/anti-social behaviour.
- i. Views-long views, topography, guidance to building heights.

#### Tunstall

- a. Retain existing community.
- b. Public art strategy.

#### Burslem

- a. Retain existing community and increase the affluence as a whole.
- b. Re-use of existing buildings.
- c. More 24 hour economy, stronger connections to Port Vale and link the public realm to arts and crafts theme.
- d. Burslem isn't an addition to the city centre.

#### Stoke Central group:

#### Stoke

- a. May link to areas of inspirational housing, 'the Villas' (on London Road).
- b. Language: use 'centres' not 'towns' to ID areas.
- c. Strengthen distinctive and memorable spaces, 'what does this mean?' say how, more specific.
- d. Lack of green in urban areas.
- e. Should it be linked to the city centre? Need for more specific role and high quality residential.
- f. Stoke isn't an addition to the city centre.

### City Centre

- a. Improve connectivity.
- b. Add 'aspirational'.
- Add to mix of uses leisure, entertainment, and niche uses.
- d. Need more people to create a critical mass.
- e. Connectivity, pedestrian and cycle, public transport.
- f. Strengthen commitment to greening centres.

- g. Getting away from the town idea to absorb the centres concept is crucial.
- h. Very good concept of separation and integration of urban and landscape.
- i. Strengthen section around distinctive and memorable spaces.
- j. Say be distinctive, not how to be distinctive (areas don't need to be detailed).

#### Stoke South group

- a. Lack of joined up thinking between partners and local authority departments.
- b. More coherent signage and legibility.
- c. Connections between the areas, issues on Victoria Road and 'not fit' for purpose.
- d. Need to clarify approach in 'shatter zones', location of urban and rural not clear.
- e. Define 'urban' housing by scale.
- f. Each centre should have sustainable level of development according to its size.
- g. Cycle ways should follow landscape network.
- h. Greater emphasis on sustainability and importance of maintenance.
- i. Make each centre distinctive with its own unique character and asset.
- j. Encourage small new business start-up units.

### Fenton and Longton:

- a. Encourage a better sense of place through the quality of the environment.
- b. Support local specialisms, like Sinnertons bike shop.
- c. Each centre must understand its role.
- d. Encourage events and facilities for visitors.
- e. Improve the use of Longton station.
- f. Improve approaches- at present many eyesores.
- g. Potential for enterprise/start-up units.

- h. Promote Longton as a centre for business and industry- the centre is still the biggest Pottery employer.
- Promote Fenton as an urban village and important connecting area, with possible recreational use and improvements for Victoria Road, the general landscaping and the gateways of the centre (where it starts and where it ends).

#### Newcastle-under-Lyme group:

#### Newcastle-under-Lyme

- a. Distinctive character, what do we mean by a 'focused landscape feel' and where would it be created?
- b. Ensuring the green space strategy fits in.
- c. Distinctive sub-characters, like Keele Science Park and University should be promoted.
- d. Need to unpick what we mean by University Town, as it is an economic character not a physical appearance.
- e. These need commitment. Be prepared to invest to realise the vision.
- f. Continuity- long-term vision, people need to understand it is for 20 years+.
- g. Successful Centres: Newcastle has already a strong identity (market town) - Reinforce this character with a 'City Centre' high quality public realm (innovative design).
- h. More emphasise on cohesive partnerships.
- Local authorities should be prepared to use CPO powers to carry plans through and maintain quality standards.
- j. Requires commitment to public funding/ownership.

- k. Partnership between private and public sector.
- I. Links to Lyme Valley and Apedale and other green areas.

### Kidsgrove

- a. RENEW/ Galleys Bank (look at RENEW's work.
- b. Not a village feel, it is a town.
- c. Historically and culturally linked to Cheshire (cross border vision).
- d. Rail network to be reinforced to improve Kidsgrove location, status and potential.
- e. Canal link is crucial and should be enhanced for Kidsgrove to become the gateway into North Staffordshire (threshold between North Staffordshire and Cheshire).

#### Other consultation with key stakeholders

Other consultation during the initial stages of work included briefings with representatives of the different members of the client group and a selection of key stakeholders, as agreed with Urban Vision, the client project manager. These took place via meetings, informal discussions or by telephone interviews.

#### **RENEW**

- a. Harmesh Jassal, Development Manager.
- b. Glyn Roberts, Development Director.
- c. Debbie Hope, Programme Manager.
- d. Seb Price, PRP, consultant to RENEW.

### Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council

- a. Trevor Carter, Community Strategy Manager.
- b. Guy Benson, Development Control Manager.
- c. Louise Wallace, Design and Conservation Officer.

### Stoke-on-Trent City Council

- Kevin Benfield, Development Control Manager North Team.
- b. Brian Davies, Planning Policy Manager.
- c. Paul Feehily, Head of Planning Policy & Development (apologies).

### North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership

- a. Tom Macartney, Managing Director.
- b. Rachel Laver.

#### **AWM**

a. Sally Evans, Partnerships Manager.

### Newcastle-under-Lyme Members

- a. Robin Studd, Design and Heritage Champion.
- b. Andrew Fear, Chair of Planning Committee.

#### Stoke-on-Trent Members

- a. Michael Barnes, Chair of Development Control Committee.
- b. Peter Kent Baguley, Design and Heritage Champion.

#### Representatives of other key stakeholders

- a. Phil Wootton, Hulme Upright Manning.
- b. Pat Redmond, Christopher Taylor Design.
- c. Mike Herbert, St Modwen Developments.
- d. Andy Perkin, Potteries Heritage Society.

#### 6th & 13th November 2008 Programme

- 9.45 Introduction and review of progress, Urban Vision
- 10.00 Presentation of draft guidance, Tibbalds
- 10.25 Using urban design guidance in making planning decisions, Geoff Wright, CABE Regional Representative (6 Nov only)
- 10.45 Questions and open discussion
- 10.55 Briefing for workshops, Tibbalds
- 11.20 Workshops testing examples of typical development proposals
- 12.20 Feedback from workshop groups
- 12.50 Summary

# Event E: Urban Design Guidance - Understanding and using the document

The final two workshops were set up to explore the draft guidance as it was emerging. Following an introduction of the guide, workshop sessions explored how to use the guide.

The first session was for Local Authority and Pathfinder officers and elected representatives. At this session Geoff Wright from CABE gave a talk on the use of urban design guidance in making planning decisions. The second workshop was primarily for other stakeholders, such as developers, architects, police, transport officers and EA, although some Local Authority officers attended as well. Formal feedback, set out below, was collected via feedback forms.

## 6th November 2008, School of Art, Burslem. Officers.

### How did you find the Design SPD?

- a. Very Useful/ helpful (6).
- b. Useful/Impressive/comprehensive (3).
- c. Overall good, needs some fine tuning (2).
- d. Legible, easy to follow, detailed.
- e. Useful but lengthy in hard copy format, but will be better as interactive CD.
- f. Document is very large accessibility and easy to use needs to be ensured (3).
- g. Document is technical maybe difficult for some (2).
- h. At times a lot of jargon is used (lay-person may not understand) (4).
- i. Useful introduction on how the document can be used to assess applications.
- j. Can't tell yet / need more time (3).

#### Any issues or comments?

- a. Headline requirements should be more emphatically presented, be more explicit and use 'must' rather than 'should'.
- b. Document is not for quick reference needs familiarity.
- c. List of questions, still allow ambiguity & subjective opinion may lead to inconsistency and dissatisfaction.
- d. Hyperlinks need more explanation.
- e. Need to read whole document (3).
- f. Rural section: useful and explained very well.
- g. Residential section: very general, can be open to interpretation.
- h. Level of detail is too high.
- i. Incorporation of vision, key strategic approaches should be avoided (left for core strategy).
- j. Conflict between masterplanning projects and guide might be a problem.
- k. Cross referencing would be useful and summary boxes.
- I. Needs to be careful not to stray into policy..
- m. Strategic subregional maps need to be clearer.
- n. Some points could be condensed (some principles are very similar) (2).

### Are you satisfied with the content?

- a. Yes (5).
- b. Yes, but important to integrate with Newcastle town centre SPD.
- c. Largely, but some repetition of statutory and adopted policy.
- d. Relatively, need to see more.
- e. Can't tell yet/ need more time (3).

#### Is anything missing?

- a. No.
- b. Retail section (3).
- c. Reference to masterplanning projects.
- d. More on town centres.
- e. More on sustainability, eco, renewables (4).
- f. Scale and height of buildings, particular at focal points.
- g. Specific guidance, eg separation distances.
- h. Relationship between dwellings.
- i. More clarity and detail needed for it to carry 'weight' in discussion with developers.
- j. A glossary of terms (2).
- k. Can't tell yet/ need more time (5).

### Do you feel confident using the Design SPD in an interactive format?

- a. Yes (12).
- b. Yes, with some changes and additional information.
- c. Not yet / can't tell (4).
- d. Developers may struggle (2).

# Do you think further training and support on the Design SPD would be of benefit to you?

- a. No (3).
- b. Yes (8).
- c. Yes for planning professionals, developers, members (7).
- d. Ongoing support would be useful.
- e. SPD needs to be accessible for all.

#### 13th November 2008, School of Art, Burslem. Other stakeholders

### How did you find the Design SPD?

- a. Very informative/useful (7).
- b. Excellent.
- c. Easy to read / easy to use reference (4).
- d. In limited time, very good.

- e. Enlightening and thought provoking.
- f. It was very dense (1).
- g. Too long, asks questions instead of providing answers.
- h. Found it difficult to access.
- i. Can't tell yet / need more time (2).

#### Any issues or comments?

- a. Small pocket document would be helpful.
- b. Cross reference to other documents (masterplans) important.
- c. Regarding materials, minimum distances, will existing appendix to city plan remain in place?
- d. Very generic, not very specific.
- e. More detailed SPD required on housing extensions, shopfronts.
- f. Duplication with other best practice documents (i.e. CABE) (2).
- g. Duplication with CSS, more focus on design issues.
- h. Layout a bit dense in places;
- i. To structure from macro scale to micro scale..
- Need to consider how document can be used in group discussion.
- k. Excellent to be involved this early (developer).
- I. 'Crib sheet" would be helpful (2).

### Are you satisfied with the content?

- a. Yes (8).
- b. Yes, follows Building for Life.
- c. Yes, provided that role and purpose is clearly set out.
- d. Broadly (2).
- e. No, detailed level missing.
- f. Can't tell yet/ need more time (3).

#### Is anything missing?

- a. Further 'plug-in' documents providing more detail (2).
- b. Sustainability/biodiversity (3).
- c. Mixed use/ retail (2).
- d. Evidence of synergy between SPD and other planning policies/documents.
- e. Related documentation to assist in strategic principles.
- f. Something up front to stress collaboration among stakeholder in design process.
- g. Best practice design process (2).
- h. Can't tell yet/ need more time (1).

### Do you feel confident using the Design SPD in an interactive format?

- a. No, prefer paper copy.
- b. Yes (12).
- c. Yes, due to its density may lead to more preapplication discussion.
- d. Yes, but hard copies useful for discussions.
- e. Developers may struggle.

# Do you think further training and support on the Design SPD would be of benefit to you?

- a. No, would prefer to spend time to feed into detailed SPD.
- b. No (4).
- c. Yes (7).
- d. Yes, for development control and policy officers.
- e. Possibly once it's in use (2).

#### **Design Review**

Design review has been held at two stages of the preparation of the Urban Design Guidance, these being:

- a. the strategic urban design vision and initial stages of work; and
- b. the draft detailed urban design guidance document.

The document has been revised in response to the points raised by the design review panel wherever possible.











This Urban Design Guidance was commissioned by RENEW, North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, and Advantage West Midlands.











Project-managed by Urban Vision North Staffordshire.



Produced by Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design.

