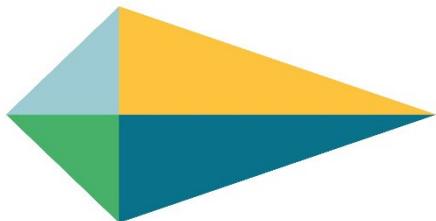


Initial Consultation Document

Custom and Self-Build Housing Supplementary Planning Document

Consultation Dates: 1st February to 15th March 2023



EASTSUFFOLK
COUNCIL

What is a Supplementary Planning Document?

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are produced to support the implementation of adopted planning policies, through the provision of additional detail or explanation that would not be appropriate to include within a Local Plan itself.

An SPD cannot create new or amend existing planning policies nor can it prescribe that particular areas of land be developed for particular uses; this is the role of the Local Plans. Once adopted, SPDs are material considerations in the determination of planning applications.

The Purpose of the Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD

The Custom and Self-Build Housing SPD is being produced to provide guidance on the consideration of custom and self-build housing development proposals, primarily in relation to the following policies contained in the Council's adopted Local Plans:

- SCLP5.9 (Self Build and Custom Build Housing) of the [Suffolk Coastal Local Plan \(adopted September 2020\)](#), and
- WLP8.3 (Self Build and Custom Build) of the [Waveney Local Plan \(adopted March 2019\)](#).

This Supplementary Planning Document will apply to the whole of East Suffolk, apart from the area within the Broads National Park, for which the Broads Authority is the local planning authority.

About this Consultation

This is the first stage of consultation and will inform the preparation of the SPD. The aim of this consultation is to gather feedback on what you think the SPD should include and address.

The proposed content of the SPD and a series of consultation questions are set out below.

Please respond to this consultation by **5pm Wednesday 15 March 2023**, via one of the following means:

- Complete the [online questionnaire](#);
- Email your response to planningpolicy@eastsoffolk.gov.uk; or
- Post your response to Planning Policy & Delivery Team, Riverside, 4 Canning Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 0EQ

Please note that by responding to this consultation you are accepting that your name and response will be available for public inspection and published online in accordance with the Town and County Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations (2012). View the [Data Protection Statement](#).

Next Steps

The scope and content of the SPD will be informed by consultation responses, after which a full draft of the SPD will be prepared. The draft SPD will be supported by Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Regulations Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment screening opinions and where necessary full assessments.

Public consultation will be undertaken on the full draft of the Supplementary Planning Document.

Custom and Self-Build Housing

Custom and self-build housing, as distinct from other forms of housing, offers a greater degree of customisation which can help meet occupants' needs and desires, and can lead to higher quality homes with improved energy efficiency standards. Custom and self-build housing can therefore deliver greater choice in the housing market and diversify housing supply, which as the [Letwin Review](#) identified can help speed up housing delivery.

Custom and self-build housing share the same legal definition, as set out in [section 1 of the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015](#), which can be broadly defined as housing whose initial occupants have had a primary input into its final design and layout, and been built or completed by or for those initial occupants. For self-build homes the future occupant will directly organise the design and construction of their home. For custom build homes the future occupant will work with a specialist developer to deliver their customised home from a choice of pre agreed design options. Custom and self-build projects can deliver homes for a single household or a group of households, and can also be provided as Affordable Housing.

As well as providing a legal definition for custom and self-build housing, the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 places three legal duties on local authorities:

- To hold a register of individuals who are seeking to acquire serviced plots of land for their own custom or self-build home ([section 1](#)),
- To have regard to the register when carrying out its functions relating to planning, housing, land disposal, and regeneration ([section 2](#)), and
- To grant enough planning permissions for custom and self-build housing to meet the demand on the register ([section 2A](#)).

In aiding the delivery of custom and self-build housing, both the [Suffolk Coastal Local Plan](#) (adopted 2020) and the [Waveney Local Plan](#) (adopted 2019) include specific policies that support such housing:

- [SCLP5.9 \(Self Build and Custom Build Housing\)](#)
- [WLP8.3 \(Self Build and Custom Build\)](#)

These policies establish that custom and self-build housing will be supported where in accordance with other relevant policies in the Local Plan and require that at least 5% of

dwellings on development proposals of 100 or more dwellings be custom and self-build dwellings. The policies also expect development proposals involving 5 or more custom and self-build dwellings to be developed in accordance with a set of design principles, often referred to as a design code. Other policies in the local plans such as SCLP5.4 (Housing in Clusters in the Countryside) and WLP8.7 (Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside) also provide opportunities for custom or self-build development.

The Government's [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) (2021) and [Planning Practice Guidance](#) (PPG), as material considerations in the determination of planning applications, set national policy and guidance relating to custom and self-build housing.

More information about custom and self-build housing in East Suffolk can be found [here](#).

Proposed Content of the SPD

Based upon the policies of the two Local Plans, evidence informing the Local Plan policies, and known issues, the following topics are proposed to be addressed in the SPD.

What is custom and self-build housing?

The SPD will explain what custom and self-build housing is and importantly what it isn't, as well as demonstrate the range of delivery models that meet the legal definition of custom and self-build housing.

Local and national custom and self-build housing planning policy and legislation

The SPD will set out a brief overview of local and national planning policy and legislation relating to custom and self-build housing, as well as any relevant guidance.

Affordable custom and self-build housing

The SPD will build on the guidance provided on affordable custom and self-build housing in the Council's adopted [Affordable Housing SPD](#).

Design Codes

Design codes can play an important role in the delivery of custom and self-build housing, in aiding a coherent pattern of development that responds to its context while allowing for an appropriate level of design flexibility required of custom and self-build housing. The SPD will provide expectations as to the approach taken to design codes.

Plot passports

Plot passports are concise and visual documents that provide prospective custom and self-build plot purchasers with the key design and development parameters that must be abided

by in the design and construction of a custom and self-build home on the plot. The SPD will provide guidance relating to the information expected to be provided by plot passports.

Phasing

Guidance will be included on how best to address the phasing of custom and self-build housing where it comprises part of a major development site, including the Garden Neighbourhoods and Garden Villages allocated in the Local Plans. It is recognised that delivery of custom and self-build plots alongside housebuilder areas requires careful consideration so the preparation of the SPD will set out to explore best practice in this respect.

Model conditions

Conditions are used to make development acceptable that would otherwise be unacceptable, as set out in paragraph 55 of the NPPF (2021). Model conditions can improve consistency in the use of conditions, but consideration must be given to the particular circumstances of each case and the need therefore to adapt model conditions accordingly. It is proposed that model conditions will be set out in the SPD.

Section 106 agreements

Section 106 agreements are legal planning obligations, pursuant to [Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#), that secure the way in which custom and self-build housing is provided.

It is proposed that model Heads of Terms (i.e. the content of Section 106 agreements) and model clauses are included in the SPD. Upon adoption of the SPD we plan to use these heads of terms as a default in all s106 agreements unless specific and exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

CIL is a charge levied on new development uses in East Suffolk, as specified in the [Suffolk Coastal](#) and [Waveney](#) CIL Charging Schedules, in order to help fund infrastructure necessary to support development. Advice will be provided on CIL exemption for custom and self-build housing.

Marketing strategy

In the context of custom and self-build housing, a marketing strategy sets out the approach to be taken to the marketing and sale of custom and self-build housing plots and homes in particular when they form a part of a larger development. It is proposed that the SPD provides guidance relating to the expected content and application of marketing strategies, in addition to the expectations set out in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (Appendix E) and Waveney Local Plan (Appendix 4).

Servicing plots

Custom and self-build housing plots, in order to be deemed serviced plots, must be serviced by electricity, water, and wastewater and have access to a public highway. It is proposed that the SPD provides guidance relating to serviced plots.

Neighbourhood planning / community led-housing

The bottom-up nature of some forms of custom and self-build housing lends itself to consideration through neighbourhood planning and community-led housing initiatives. As such, the SPD will look to provide guidance as to how neighbourhood planning and community-led housing groups can best facilitate the delivery of custom and self-build housing.

Case studies

It is proposed that the SPD sets out case studies of custom and self-build housing good practice, covering a wide range of custom and self-build housing models.

Recommended format of planning applications

There are a number of ways in which planning applications can be formulated (outline, full, hybrid). Each route to planning permission can impact on the commencement of development and CIL liability for example. For this reason, it is important to consider at the outset the implications of the chosen planning application format. The SPD will provide guidance on this matter.

Questions

1. Do you consider the proposed content of the SPD to be appropriate?
Yes/No
If no, please suggest how the proposed content of the SPD should be amended.
2. Are there any specific elements of the Local Plan policies that you consider require additional guidance in the SPD?
If yes, please explain what guidance is required.
3. Are there any elements of national policy on custom and self-build housing that you consider require additional guidance in the SPD?
If yes, please explain what guidance is required.
4. Are you aware of any good practice in existing SPDs from elsewhere that could be applied in East Suffolk?
If yes, please provide details.
5. Are you aware any good custom and self-build housing developments?
If yes, please provide details.
6. Do you have any other comments for us to consider in drafting the SPD?