

**14 AUGUST 2023**

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**HARTLEPOOL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION DRAFT DESIGN CODE**

**SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to seek Board approval of the draft Hartlepool Development Corporation (HDC) Design Code for publication for a period of public consultation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Hartlepool Development Corporation Board approves the publication of the draft HDC Design Code for a period of public consultation.

**DETAIL**

**Background**

1. The Hartlepool Development Corporation (HDC) was confirmed into statute on 27 February 2023. In line with requirements for the establishment of a Mayoral Development Corporation area, a period of public consultation was held on the proposal to establish HDC between July and August 2022. The consultation focused on inviting comment from all interested parties on the proposal to establish an area and the intention to take all powers available to HDC, including planning powers.
2. The Masterplan for HDC was approved by the Board on 22 May 2023. It sets out how HDC intends to accelerate the regeneration of Hartlepool, maximising the potential of its maritime past, manufacturing present and creative future. The masterplan was developed by ARUP, on behalf of HDC, who engaged with stakeholders including Hartlepool Borough Council, businesses, learning providers, transport providers and the voluntary and community sector.

## HDC Draft Design Code

3. Planning powers were conferred on to HDC on 1 June 2023. This gives HDC the powers to determine planning applications within the redline boundary area. Notwithstanding this, the Local Plan making powers remain with Hartlepool Borough Council and any development within the HDC redline boundary area must be in line with the Local Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
4. Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners (Lichfields) has been appointed to deliver the planning service on behalf of HDC, and has developed a draft Design Code for the HDC area (Appendix 1). The Design Code will sit as a supplementary document to the HDC masterplan. It is a delivery tool intended to proactively plan for better design, investing resources upfront to help streamline later processes. It is distinct from detailed design guidance, comprising a set of written and graphic rules that establish with precision the two- and three-dimensional design elements of a particular development or area.
5. A Design Code can influence design quality in two main ways. First, they provide a 'safety net' below which quality must not fall. They do this by providing the quality thresholds against which the quality of proposals can be judged. These should be comprehensive and provide a clarity for objective assessments to be made. Second, design codes can establish a 'springboard to excellence' by focusing creativity and inspiring those who design against them to strive for better design than they would otherwise do.
6. To be effective a Design Code needs to be based upon a specific design vision for a site or an area. As detailed above, the Board has approved a masterplan for the HDC area which sets out the aims and ambitions for HDC, along with high level details on the key projects to be delivered. The Design Code will be a delivery document to facilitate the delivery of the masterplan objectives, informed by the strategic policy and guidance context. The Design Code will thereafter be used by HDC in the achievement of its development management functions. It will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications within the HDC area.

## Public Consultation on the Draft Design Code

7. This report seeks Board approval to publish the draft Design Code for a period of public consultation. Subject to this approval, and any initial comments from the Board on the draft document, the Design Code will be published on the HDC webpage on 15 August 2023 and interested parties will be able to submit their comments on the draft document until midnight on 10 September 2023.
8. The Board will be provided with a summary of comments received on the draft Design Code, along with the final Design Code for approval, at their meeting on 25 September 2023.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

9. The purpose of this report is to seek Board approval to publish the draft design Code for a period of public consultation. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

10. Planning Powers were conferred on to HDC on 1 June 2023 giving HDC the power to determine planning applications within the redline boundary. Local Plan making powers still sit with the Council and any development within the HDC redline boundary area must be in line with the Local Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Design Code will be a supporting document of the HDC masterplan.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

11. HDC has procured Lichfields to develop a Design Code for the HDC area. The subject matter of this report is categorised as low risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

## **CONSULTATION & COMMUNICATION**

12. This report seeks Board approval to publish the draft Design Code for a period of public consultation. Subject to this approval, and any initial comments from the Board on the draft document, the Design Code will be published on the HDC webpage on 15 August 2023 and interested parties will be able to submit their comments on the draft document until midnight on 10 September 2023.
13. The Board will be provided with a summary of comments received on the draft Design Code, along with the final Design Code for approval, at their meeting on 25 September 2023.

## **EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

14. This report does not impact on groups of people with protected characteristics. The Design Code has been prepared following guidance in the National Model Design Code to ensure the creation of safe, inclusive and accessible communities.

**Name of Contact Officer: Julie Gilhespie**  
**Post Title: Group Chief Executive Officer**  
**Email Address: [julie.gilhespie@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk](mailto:julie.gilhespie@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk)**