



**REPORT TO:** Scrutiny and Overview Committee

21 May 2019

**LEAD OFFICER:** Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development

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## **Bourn Airfield Supplementary Planning Document – Draft for Consultation**

### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek agreement for the Draft Bourn Airfield Supplementary Planning Document and associated documents to be published for consultation.
2. This is a key decision and it was first published in the April 2019 Forward Plan.

### **Recommendations**

3. (i) That Scrutiny and Overview Committee consider and comment upon the report.  
(ii) That, subject to any comments the Committee may wish to make to Cabinet, Cabinet be recommended to:
  - a) Agree the content of the Draft Bourn Airfield SPD (Appendix 1);
  - b) Approve the draft SPD for public consultation in accordance with Regulation 13 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulation 2012 for a period of six weeks;
  - c) Approve the consultation arrangements set out in the Consultation Statement (Appendix 2);
  - d) Delegate authority to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development in liaison with the Deputy Leader to make editorial changes to the Draft Bourn Airfield SPD and supporting documents prior to the commencement of the consultation period in regard to minor amendments and factual updates.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

4. Following the adoption of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan in September 2018, the Council recommenced preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to support the delivery of Policy SS/7: New Village at Bourn Airfield. It is now recommended that the draft SPD is published for public consultation.

### **Background**

5. The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan was adopted in September 2018. Policy SS/7 allocates land for a new village at Bourn Airfield, and requires that a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is prepared to guide and support the delivery of the requirements of this policy. The policy allocates land to the south of the A428 based on Bourn Airfield for the development of a new village of approximately 3,500 dwellings. The final number of dwellings will be determined through a design-led approach and spatial framework diagram included in the SPD. These new homes are to be supported by a range of infrastructure and community facilities and services.

6. The majority of the land allocated by Policy SS/7 is subject to an option agreement with Countryside Properties (UK). An outline planning application was submitted in September 2018, with all matters reserved except for the principal highways junctions from the St Neots Road roundabout and onto the Broadway. There are some smaller areas that are outside the boundary of the application site as submitted, but still within the SPD area. These areas are primarily to the south of the allocated area and covering the area around Grange Farm. Both of these areas are outside the Major Development Site.
7. The existing employment area is owned by Diageo Holdings (the former Thyssen Krupp site) and an outline planning application has recently been submitted for its development for B1 business uses (S/1031/19/OL). The DB Group (formerly David Ball group) have stated that at this stage they intend to remain in this location, and are currently considering their future prospects and plans.
8. The SPD will become a material planning consideration in the determination of currently submitted, and subsequent, planning applications.

### **Considerations**

9. The Council has committed, via the recently adopted Local Plan, to prepare a Supplementary Planning Document to guide the delivery of Policy SS/7. The draft SPD has been prepared jointly with consultants Arup to provide a clear framework to assist decision making in delivering the new village at Bourn Airfield.

### **Engagement during preparation of the Draft SPD for consultation**

10. Two sets of engagement workshops were held during the preparation of the draft SPD. The first set of sessions were held in October / November 2018 and sought to re-introduce the SPD, the preparation of which had been paused whilst the Local Plan examination process was concluded and the Local Plan adopted. There was also an opportunity to share initial views on the key matters to be addressed. For each set of workshops a separate session was held for technical stakeholders, landowners / agents and community representatives. The second set of workshops, held in February 2019, discussed a draft Vision and set of Objectives, and raised a debate around the spatial alternatives that exist. An opportunity was also provided following all of the engagement sessions in February 2019 to comment in detail on the draft Vision and Objectives, in addition to options identified for the route of the high quality public transport route through the site. All responses received were passed to Arup and helped inform the final draft SPD.
11. A summary of the issues raised and the way in which the draft SPD has responded to them is included in the Consultation Statement (Appendix 2).

### **Structure and Content of the SPD**

12. The draft SPD establishes a Vision and Strategic Objectives for the new village. The Vision and the Strategic Objectives are further supported by a series of Guiding Principles and Key Spatial Fixes, which together inform the Spatial Framework for the delivery of the new village at Bourn Airfield. The SPD includes an analysis of the existing site context.

13. The SPD has been prepared to reflect the Council's aspirations towards achieving high levels of sustainability in terms of energy use, creating homes that are cheaper for residents to run, and meet overall aims to reduce energy use. Within the current parameters of national and local policy, the SPD seeks to achieve a development that will become an example of excellence and facilitate a move towards zero carbon lifestyles through an innovative approach to planning, design and construction.
14. The delivery of the new village is to be supported by improved transport infrastructure and services between Cambridge and Cambourne. This will consist of a high quality public transport (HQPT) route together with improved cycling and walking facilities delivered by the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP). Consultation on potential routes between Cambourne and Madingley Mulch closed on 31 March 2019. During the preparation of the draft SPD, officers have engaged with GCP colleagues to reflect the most appropriate alignment of the route through the new village based on the information available to date. A number of discussions were held with a range of stakeholders on the relative merits of alternative alignments. The overriding matter to address however, is the need for the route to be segregated to permit travel at around 55 mph for as much of the route as possible, whilst maintaining access to convenient bus stops. Given this need for segregation from other traffic and users between stops, this suggests that the implications in terms of a barrier effect across the development could be significant. It has therefore been determined that it would appear the most appropriate alignment for the route is to the north of site, away from the majority of built development and areas where people would be expecting to move around freely. Two stops have been located to serve the village centre, and the existing employment area and potentially residents of Highfields Caldecote.
15. The village will contain a network of green routes that provide opportunities for non-motorised vehicles to move around and through the settlement in a safe and attractive environment. There are also a number of new and enhanced bridleways providing connections through and around the village, and links onwards to nearby settlements at Cambourne, Highfields Caldecote and towards Bourn. These links also provide green routes to provide biodiversity gains.
16. Policy SS/7 states there will be at least two highways accesses to the north east and north west of the site. The north eastern access will be via the existing roundabout from St Neots Road. The SPD states that the layout of this junction must ensure segregated access and/or other priority measures for the Cambourne to Cambridge HQPT route. The north western access is shown on the Spatial Framework plan as a new priority alignment into the development from the Broadway which will ensure no access from the village southbound on the Broadway. This alignment can only be delivered if land that is currently within the control of Highways England following the construction of the A428 is made available as highways land to Countryside. The Council has received a recent indication that it could be possible to transfer this land, but the timeframes are currently unclear. To reflect this uncertainty at the current time, the Spatial Framework will be amended prior to consultation to show the two alternative arrangements which could exist, subject to land availability. Officers will continue to explore this matter in the coming weeks.

17. It was suggested at one of the community workshops that direct access from the new village onto the A428 trunk road should be explored. Officers have discussed this with Highways England. The advice received was there is no strategic need for a new junction and, with the Cambridge to Oxford Expressway elevating the status of the route, there will be a presumption against such a new junction. There are already a number of junctions along this section of A428, including existing junctions close by which are capable of serving the development. In design terms there is marginal room for a new junction and further junctions could create unnecessary weaving with traffic changing lanes, compromising traffic flow and safety. Notwithstanding the highway advice, a grade separated junction would be expensive to deliver, require extensive land take, and severely compromise the creation of a quality new village.
18. The new village will be landscape led, retaining and improving existing landscaping within and along all site boundaries including to the A428, along the Broadway and between the new village and Highfields Calceocote. Landscape buffers will be enhanced to provide visual and acoustic screening as necessary, but also the creation of habitat for native species. The new Runway Park will provide a significant stretch of open space within the development, which recognises the heritage of the site as well as at the same time as providing a valuable resource to residents and visitors.
19. A secondary school is required in the new village, in addition to the provision of two new primary schools. The secondary school is located to the north of the site, close to the A428. Concerns have been raised about this location close to a source of noise and air pollution. However, by locating the school near to one of the main access points it can be phased earlier in the delivery of the development, as the phasing will radiate from these main access points. Advice from air quality and noise experts within the Council has suggested that the impacts of the road could be mitigated by the detailed orientation and design of the buildings, in addition to the delivery of a significant landscape belt to the north of the new village and immediately south of the A428 which will provide a barrier to noise and air quality.
20. The SPD makes allowance for the full requirement of formal playing pitch provision, and at this stage does not reduce this amount to reflect any possibility that dual use of playing pitches provided as part of the school grounds may be achieved. The County Council support dual use of playing fields in principle, but at this stage cannot guarantee this position will be acceptable as there is no education provider in place as yet. The Council will continue to work on this matter with the County Council and the land promoters via the consideration of the outline planning application. If dual use agreements are entered into, some of the formal playing pitch space will not be required to ensure compliance with policy. The SPD is therefore flexible (see section 6.4 of the draft SPD) in setting out the requirements for playing pitch provision.

#### **Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal Screening Report**

21. There is a requirement to prepare a screening report to determine whether the SPD should be subject to a full SEA/SA process. To inform this position, the statutory consultation bodies have been invited to review an early draft of the SPD and highlight any key issues for consideration during the screening process.
22. At the point of submitting this report for committee, the views of the relevant bodies are still outstanding, but it is expected that they will be available to report to the meeting. The formal consultation on the SEA/SA Screening Report will take place in parallel to the consultation on the draft SPD.

## **Consultation arrangements**

23. The Consultation Statement for the Draft Bourn Airfield New Village is at Appendix 2. It is proposed that the statutory consultation period will commence on Monday 17 June 2019 for a period of six weeks, ending on Monday 29 July 2019. The public consultation will be carried out in line with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement, and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
24. It is intended that three public exhibitions will be held in Bourn, Caldecote and Cambourne towards the mid-point of the consultation period. Arrangements are currently being made, and Members will be updated.

## **Options**

25. Members may decide to:
  - a) Approve the SPD and consultation statement for public consultation without amendments;
  - b) Approve the SPD and consultation statement for public consultation with amendments;
  - c) Not agree to publish the SPD and consultation statement for public consultation.

## **Implications**

26. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

The allocation of the new village has been fully assessed as part of the preparation of the Local Plan (2018). There are no significant financial, legal or staffing implications for the Council.

### ***Equality and Diversity***

27. The draft SPD has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 3).

### ***Climate Change***

28. The draft SPD provides further guidance on how Policy SS/7 in the adopted Local Plan should be implemented. The SPD seeks to achieve a development that will become an example of excellence and facilitate a move towards zero carbon lifestyles through an innovative approach to planning, design and construction.

## **Consultation responses**

29. The draft SPD has been subject to engagement with members of the local community, key stakeholders and landowners. The details of this engagement and consultation are in the Consultation Statement (Appendix 2).

## **Effect on Council Priority Areas**

### **Priority 1 - Growing local businesses and economies**

30. The Bourn Airfield new village SPD addresses the existing employment area, seeking to create and enhance linkages to the new village. The new village will, in addition, include space for new business opportunities that are well linked to new housing by high quality pedestrian and cycle routes, which could provide opportunities for small businesses to thrive.

### **Priority 2 - Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in**

31. The Bourn Airfield SPD reflects policy in the adopted Local Plan that seeks the delivery of a range of housing types including affordable housing set within a thriving new community that makes appropriate provision for new facilities. By also delivering an example of excellence in sustainable development, homes will be cheaper to run for residents.

### **Priority 3 – Being green to our core**

32. The vision within the draft Bourn Airfield SPD reflects that Policy SS/7 requires an example of excellence in sustainable development by, inter alia "...facilitating a move towards zero carbon lifestyles through an innovative approach to planning, design and construction". This is further supported by the Strategic Objectives and the detail included in section 5 "Creating the Place". Net gain to natural capital is embodied within the SPD, with opportunities set out for increasing planting, habitats and achieving a biodiversity net gain across the new village.

## **Background Papers**

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

[South Cambridgeshire Local Plan \(September 2018\)](#)

[Statement of Community Involvement](#)

Appendices:

1. Draft Bourn Airfield New Village Supplementary Planning Document
2. Draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD Consultation Statement
3. Equality Impact Assessment

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