

<b>Report to:</b>	Joint Local Planning Advisory Group 27 February 2023
<b>Lead Members</b>	Lead Cabinet Member for Planning (South Cambridgeshire) – Cllr Dr Tumi Hawkins  Executive Councillor, Planning and Transport (Cambridge) – Cllr Katie Thornburrow
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

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## **Joint Local Planning Advisory Group Programme to Draft Local Plan – Fourth Session: Biodiversity and Green Spaces and Great Places**

### **Executive Summary**

1. Further member engagement is taking place to explore issues raised in the First Proposals feedback and help to inform development of the draft plan. This fourth session will be used to discuss feedback received on the Biodiversity and Green Spaces and Great Places chapters of the plan.

### **Key Decision**

2. No

### **Recommendations**

3. It is recommended that the advisory group:
  - a. offers views regarding issues raised in representations to the First Proposals in relation to Biodiversity and Green Spaces and Great Places chapters.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

4. The Joint Local Planning Advisory Group provides an appropriate forum for consideration of issues raised in representations and can help steer development of the local plan.

## Details

### Background

5. South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council are working together to produce a joint local plan for the Greater Cambridge area. Plan making so far has involved significant stakeholder engagement and two main stages of public consultation.
6. The Greater Cambridge Local Plan First Proposals consultation was held between 1 November and 13 December 2021. In June and July 2022 members of both Councils received reports on feedback received and the full consultation results were published. A [report on the consultation](#) and all the results are available on the Councils' local plan website. In summary:
  - Approximately 4,100 comments were made on the First Proposals, by 625 different respondents (this includes comments received online or input having been received by other means e.g. email)
  - The quick survey received 5,551 answers or comments from 598 unique respondents
  - 41 new sites were received
  - 172 sites had new information submitted which in some cases included revisions to site boundaries.
7. Comments registered on the Councils' online consultation system can be viewed on our First Proposals website: [Greater Cambridge Local Plan - First Proposals](#). Responses to the quick questionnaire have been collated into a spreadsheet. This is available on our local plan webpage: [Greater Cambridge Local Plan](#) ([greatercambridgeplanning.org](http://greatercambridgeplanning.org)). Site information can be found on the Call For sites pages on our local plan webpage: [Greater Cambridge Local Plan](#) ([greatercambridgeplanning.org](http://greatercambridgeplanning.org)).
8. Following consideration of development strategy updates by [South Cambridgeshire's Cabinet](#) and [Cambridge's Planning and Transport Scrutiny committee](#) in January and February 2023, the next key member decisions in relation to the local plan, to be made by South Cambridgeshire District Council's Cabinet and the Cambridge City Council Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Infrastructure following a Cambridge Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee, will be a report in summer 2023 to consider the Draft Local Plan and approve for public consultation.

### Approach to JLPAG Meetings

9. Leading up to the next member decisions on the Local Plan further member engagement will now take place to explore issues raised in the First Proposals feedback and help to inform development of the draft plan. This will be via the Joint Local Plan Advisory Group (JLPAG), which was set up with the purpose of enabling such discussion.

10. A series of meetings of JLPAG is now taking place on an approximately monthly basis. Three sessions took place in 2022, and two sessions have been planned for 2023. Further information on the approach to these meetings was reported to and considered at the first session on 3 October 2022.
11. The first session considered the topics of vision and aims, and climate change. The second session considered the spatial strategy and sites. The third session considered the topics of wellbeing and social inclusion. All sessions were livestreamed and the recordings are available to view here: [Browse meetings - Joint Local Planning Advisory Group \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

#### **Session 4: Biodiversity and Green Spaces and Great Places**

12. This session will consider the comments received relating to the Biodiversity and Green Spaces and Great Places chapters of the Local Plan. Summaries of the issues raised in representations are included as appendices to this report, with the full submissions available to view on the Councils' Local Plan website. The links in the section below show the relevant sections in the interactive version of the First Proposals.
13. At this session officers will provide a presentation setting out what the First Proposals suggested as the preferred policies, key feedback that was received, and the next steps officers are taking to explore the issues, moving towards development of the draft plan.
14. The Biodiversity and Green Spaces chapter of the Local Plan aims to ensure that developments support on and off-site enhancements for biodiversity, and to protect and link-up green spaces for nature, as well as provide more green spaces that are accessible to citizens.
15. The Great Places chapter of the Local Plan outlines how new development should deliver high quality design and make great places that people enjoy by enhancing local landscapes and raising climate ambition, whilst sensitively responding to the historic and built environment. Both policy groups attracted a significant number of comments from respondents. Below, the two policy areas are sub-divided to summarise what was proposed in the First Proposals consultation and hyperlinks are attached.

#### **Biodiversity and Green Spaces**

16. [Policy BG/BG: Biodiversity and geodiversity](#) – This policy will control the biodiversity impacts from development, including the approach to biodiversity net gain. It will also control development affecting sites of biodiversity and geodiversity importance. The policy will require development to achieve a minimum 20% biodiversity net gain.
17. [Policy BG/GI: Green Infrastructure](#) – This policy identifies the existing green infrastructure network and the strategic initiatives intended to enhance it and

addresses how development proposals should relate to green infrastructure. The policy will require all development proposals – appropriate to its type, scale, and location

18. [Policy BG/TC: Improving Tree Canopy Cover and the Tree Population](#) – This policy will preserve and protect Greater Cambridge's tree canopy cover, the tree population, and hedgerows amongst other things.
19. [Policy BG/RC: River Corridors](#) – This policy will control development that has an impact on river corridors of the River Cam. The policy will require development located along the River Cam and its tributaries to protect, enhance and restore natural features.
20. [Policy BG/PO: Protecting open spaces](#) – The policy will identify and protect open spaces, including village greens, parks, sports and recreation areas, allotments, community orchards and Protected Village Areas, and Local Green Space.
21. [Policy BG/EO: Providing and enhancing open spaces](#) – This policy will set out how new development should provide new and enhanced open space to meet the needs it generates. Open space and recreation provision will be required to be provided by new development, appropriate to the scale and location of the development. Provision will be onsite where appropriate, if not, financial contributions will be sought to help improve off site facilities.

## **Great Places**

22. [Policy GP/PP: People and place responsive design](#) – This policy will set a strategic vision for achieving high quality design in Greater Cambridge for both urban and rural areas. The policy will require all development proposals to demonstrate how they will sustain and enhance the unique qualities of the area and positively respond to the subtleties in the different landscape and settlement forms.
23. [Policy GP/LC: Protection and enhancement of landscape character](#) – This policy will set out how development should address landscape character and features in Greater Cambridge.
24. [Policy GP/GB: Protection and enhancement of the Cambridge Green Belt](#) – This policy will set the framework for consideration of development proposals in the Green Belt and if it supports the established local purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt. Enhancement of the Green Belt, such as for recreation and biodiversity, will also be supported.
25. [Policy GP/QD: Achieving high quality development](#) – This policy will set out the requirements for high design quality to be achieved by new developments, and alterations and extensions to existing development. It sets requirements for development proposals to demonstrate how they are designed with communities

in mind, create local connections, are climate-positive, and contribute and respond to local character.

26. [Policy GP/QP: Establishing high quality landscape and public realm](#) – The policy will set out the requirements for the quality of design of landscape and public realm proposals. Developers will be required to demonstrate how their proposals enable inclusive design of routes, enhance connectivity, respond to climate-change pressures, and integrate with local character.
27. [Policy GP/HA: Conservation and enhancement of heritage assets](#) – This policy will control development that involves or affects Greater Cambridge's historic buildings or structures, its historic places and historic shopfronts.
28. [Policy GP/CC: Adapting heritage assets to climate change](#) – This policy will set out how the environmental performance of heritage assets should be balanced against the need to protect and enhance the character and value of that asset.
29. [Policy GP/DND: Designated and Non-Designated Heritage Assets](#) – In their representations to last round of consultation, Historic England recommended that this policy be included. This policy will control development that involves or affects designated and non-designated heritage assets across Greater Cambridge.

### **Policies which were in Great Places that have been moved**

30. [Policy GP/PH: Protection of public houses](#) – This has been moved to the Wellbeing and Social Inclusion chapter and was discussed at JPLAG session 3.

### **Policies which have been added to Great Places**

31. [Policy H/HD: Housing density](#) – This has been moved from the Homes Chapter into Great Places and was discussed previously at JLPAG session 3.

### **Options**

32. There are no decisions being sought by this report, although Members views are invited.

## **Implications**

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

### **Financial**

34. There are no direct financial implications.

### **Equality and Diversity**

35. There is no decision to be made as part of this report. The development plans will each be subject to Equalities Impact Assessment at each stage during their development.

### **Climate Change**

36. There is no decision to be made as part of this report. Notwithstanding, development plans provide an opportunity to address the aspects of the environment that can be influenced by the planning system. These aspects will be considered by a range of evidence including via a Sustainability Appraisal as the plans are prepared. One of the big themes for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan identified in The First Proposals is climate change. Evidence has been produced to inform the plan, including a study on how the plan can assist with the journey towards net zero carbon.

37. This session also has a particular focus upon how biodiversity can be protected and enhanced.

### **Health & Wellbeing**

38. There is no decision to be made as part of this report. Notwithstanding, the vision and policies of the emerging Local Plan seek to improve wellbeing and support social inclusion.

### **Consultation responses**

39. One of the main purposes of this series of meetings is to further explore the significant amount of consultation feedback received to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan First Proposals.

## **Background Papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

[Terms of Reference of the Joint Local Planning Advisory Group](#)

[Greater Cambridge Local Plan – First Proposals consultation 2021](#)

[GCLP First Proposals Consultation Report 2022](#)

[Current Greater Cambridge Local Development Scheme](#)

[Agenda for Joint Local Planning Advisory Group \(session 1\) on Monday 3 October 2022 \(moderngov.co.uk\).](#)

[Agenda for Joint Local Planning Advisory Group \(session 2\) on Monday 24 October 2022 \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

[Agenda for Joint Local Planning Advisory Group \(session 3\) on Monday 21 November 2022 \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

Development strategy updates considered by [South Cambridgeshire's Cabinet](#) and [Cambridge's Planning and Transport Scrutiny committee](#) in January and February 2023.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Summaries of Representations and Responses – Biodiversity and Green Spaces Chapter

Appendix B: Summaries of Representations and Responses – Great Places Chapter

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