

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO:	Council	27 September 2007
	Cabinet	27 September 2007
AUTHOR/S:	Executive Director / Planning Policy Manager	

NORTH WEST CAMBRIDGE AREA ACTION PLAN: PREFERRED OPTIONS/ DRAFT AREA ACTION PLAN

Purpose

1. To recommend to Cabinet to agree:
 - 1) The Preferred Options for the development of North West Cambridge in the form of a draft Area Action Plan as set out in Volume 1 (**attached**).
 - 2) The supporting documentation recording the development of the Preferred Options as set out in Volume 2 (**attached**).
 - 3) That any editing changes be delegated to the Growth and Sustainable Communities Portfolio Holder in conjunction with the Executive Director.

(Any changes which arise as a result of this matter being considered by Cambridge City Council's Environment Scrutiny Committee on 25th September will be reported to the meeting.)

Executive Summary

2. Following consideration of the responses to the consultation on Issues and Options, this report presents a draft Area Action Plan together with its supporting documentation to facilitate and enable a coordinated approach to the development of North West Cambridge through the Area Action Plan. The Preferred Options for the development have been set out in two volumes for clarity. Volume 1 takes the form of a draft Area Action Plan (AAP) whilst Volume 2 records how each Preferred Option was chosen. Volumes 1 and 2 are appended to this report.
3. Council is asked to consider the recommendations set out in this report for consideration by Cabinet immediately following the Council meeting.

Background

4. The North West Cambridge Area Action Plan is being prepared jointly with Cambridge City Council. Meetings of Council on 17 July 2007 and Cabinet on 3 August 2007 considered a report on the development site footprint (where a number of site options were presented), responses to representations and preferred approaches to the Area Action Plan (AAP) for North West Cambridge. These matters had been considered by the City Council's Environment Scrutiny Committee on 10th July 2007. The recommended responses to representations on all issues and options were set out along with the recommended preferred approaches that derived from them in respect of

the options which were the subject of consultation. The preferred approaches have guided the development of the Preferred Options and Draft Area Action Plan.

Considerations

Site Footprint and the Green Belt

5. At the meeting of the Joint Member Reference Group on 29th June 2007, a further site option, subsequently referred to as Option E, emerged following discussions initiated by the Cambridge City Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth and was recommended by the Group to the two Councils. The outer boundary of Option E is similar to Options A and B. However, it varies from those options in its treatment of the strategic gap; this is retained at 200m immediately south of Huntingdon Road but then extends into a larger central open space in a similar fashion to 10.1. Just south of this central green space it then narrows to 100m as it runs towards Madingley Road.
6. The meeting of Cambridge City Council's Environment Scrutiny Committee on 10 July 2007 agreed the responses to the Issues and Options document and preferred approach to the Area Action Plan but raised concerns regarding Option E and subsequently the City Council explored whether it was possible to put it forward as the Preferred Option whilst expressing support for Option 10.1. Having taken legal advice, the City Council concluded that this was not possible and, accordingly, the City Council's Executive Councillor subsequently decided that option E should be taken forward.
7. South Cambridgeshire District Council held an Extraordinary Meeting on 17 July 2007 where the recommendation of site Option E was agreed alongside the responses to the Issues and Options document and preferred approach to the AAP. These decisions were agreed by Cabinet on 3 August 2007.
8. Further background on the Site Footprint and Green Belt issue can be found in Volume 2 in the section titled 'Draft AAP Policy NW4: Site and Setting' which will put before the public an appraisal of all of the options which have been considered.

Draft Area Action Plan (Volume 1)

9. For reasons of clarity and conciseness, Volume 1 takes the form of a draft plan which includes policies and their reasoned justification. It covers the main elements of the plan which will guide development, with sections on:
 - Vision, Objectives and Development Principles
 - Site and Setting
 - Housing
 - Employment
 - Travel
 - Community Services and facilities
 - Recreation
 - Natural Resources
 - Delivery
 - Monitoring.

10. Volume 1 also includes sections on standards for car and cycle parking and open space and recreation.
11. Volume 1, as the draft AAP, includes plans comprising:
 - The Proposals Map
 - A Concept Plan
 - A Preferred Highways Option Concept Diagram.
12. In drawing up the draft plan, account has been taken of national, regional and local policy, Issues and Options representations, local circumstances and the available evidence base as recorded in Volume 2.
13. The draft AAP has been informed by the binding Inspectors' Reports into the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework, which have emphasised a need for conciseness and in the case of the Northstowe AAP, clarified the level of policy detail appropriate for an Area Action Plan for a large development.
14. Of particular note are the following Preferred Options:

NW1 Vision

The proposed vision provides for a new University quarter, which will contribute to meeting the needs of the wider city community, and which will embody best practice in environmental sustainability. Development will be of the highest quality and support the further development of the University, Cambridge and the Sub-Region as a centre of excellence and a world leader within the fields of higher education and research, and will address the University's long-term development needs to 2021 and beyond. A new local centre will act as a focus for the development and will also provide facilities and services for nearby communities. A revised Green Belt and a new landscaped urban edge will enhance the setting of the City and maintain the separate identity of Girton village.

NW2 Development Principles

This policy sets performance goals for development to attain, states that planning permission will not be granted where there would be unacceptable adverse impact on matters of importance and serves to protect amenity and health interests.

NW4 Site and Setting

This policy identifies the development footprint in accordance with prior decisions. It includes a strategic gap from Huntingdon Road and through the development, which widens out to provide a large central open space with high amenity value, and narrows to the south of the open space to ensure integration and accessibility between the two parts of the development either side of the strategic gap.

NW5 Housing Supply

This policy identifies a dwelling number range consistent with the evidence base and requires development to take account of changing evidence of housing need and to provide for Lifetime Homes. This gives 2, 000- 2, 500 dwellings, including 50% affordable housing for University and College key workers.

NW11 Sustainable Travel

This policy seeks to ensure that no more than 40% of trips arising in NW Cambridge are made by car. The transport Preferred Options would not prevent implementation of the emerging transport strategy for the Cambridge area currently being promoted by the County Council as part of their TIF bid.

NW14 Madingley Road to Huntingdon Road Link

This policy requires a new route to be developed linking Madingley Road and Huntingdon Road which will be designed as part of the development and its design will be based on low vehicle speeds. It will give priority to provision for walking and cycling and public transport, including safe and convenient crossings for pedestrians and cyclists, in order to encourage travel by more sustainable modes.

NW24 Climate Change and Sustainable Design & Construction

This policy requires development to accommodate predicted climate change effects and achieve sustainable design.

NW26 Surface Water Drainage

This policy and subsequent policies seek to ensure the implementation of an integrated water strategy to reduce downstream flood risk and minimise water use.

NW32 Phasing and Need

This policy requires need to be demonstrated before development and for phasing to be determined through the masterplanning process.

NW33 Infrastructure Provision

This policy requires the provision of infrastructure, services and facilities to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms.

Sustainability Appraisal

15. The draft policies have been subject to a Draft Final Sustainability Appraisal. It is a statutory requirement that a sustainability appraisal be undertaken as an integral part of drawing up the Plan. The Sustainability Appraisal, which incorporates a Strategic Environmental Assessment as required by European legislation, is being carried out by consultants to enable an independent assessment to be made of the emerging policies.
16. The recommendations of the SA are set out in a table at **Appendix A**, together with a Council Response, which identifies where the AAP has been amended in response to the SA and **Appendix E** includes a copy of the Draft Final Sustainability Appraisal.

North West Cambridge Joint Member Reference Group

17. The Joint Member Reference Group met on Monday 10th September 2007 to discuss the Draft Area Action Plan and supporting documentation. At the meeting a number of minor changes were endorsed, the most significant being to policy NW14 and its supporting text. These are intended to clarify that the Madingley Road to Huntingdon Road link will be designed as part of the development, based on low speeds and to give priority to walking, cycling and public transport.

Supporting Documentation (Volume 2)

18. Volume 2 (the Development of Preferred Options), records how each Preferred Option was chosen. The Preferred Options form the basis of the draft policies in Volume 1 and is an important element of the Councils' evidence base and audit trail for the development of the policies.
19. Volume 2 sets out for each policy area:
 - The Options which have been the subject of consultation
 - Any new Options arising from the Community Involvement (this applies only to the site and setting section)
 - A summary of the results of Community Involvement
 - A summary of the Initial Sustainability Appraisal of the Options
 - The Councils' response
 - Any changes resulting from the Draft Final Sustainability Assessment report on the emerging Preferred Options
 - How it performs against the Tests of Soundness as set out by Regulations
 - Conclusions and identification of the Preferred Option
20. Key supporting documents which have been taken into account in the preparation of Volumes 1 and 2 are attached as appendices to this report with the exception of the North West Cambridge Green Belt and Landscape Study (David Brown and Associates) which was circulated to members at the Cabinet of 13th July 2006. The appended documents comprise the NW Cambridge Transport Study (**Appendix B**), the Junction Access Study into Huntingdon Road (**Appendix C**) and the Site Footprint Assessment (**Appendix D**). The purpose of Volume 2 is to inform the public how the Council's reached their conclusions on the content of the Draft Area Action Plan.

Next Steps

21. Public participation will take place for 6 weeks between 22nd October and 3rd December 2007 and will meet the requirements of the statutory regulations and the adopted City Council Statement of Community Involvement. The following public exhibitions are planned:

Tuesday 30th October 2007, Girton Pavilion

Thursday 8th November 2007, Ante Room, New Hall

Tuesday 13th November 2007, University Sports Pavilion, Wilberforce Road

All exhibitions will run from 2:00pm to 8:30pm. A publicity leaflet will also be distributed locally.
22. The AAP and SA will be available for Inspection at the main offices of both Councils and on-line. At Issues and Options stage 70% of representations were made electronically.
23. The intention is to submit the AAP to the Secretary of State in June 2008. It is anticipated that a public examination would be held in November/December 2008 with a view to a binding Inspector's Report being received in May 2009.

Options

24. The Preferred Options have been derived from some 45 different Options published for public participation in the Issues and Options Report. The Preferred Options take into account the responses to the public participation, the Sustainability Appraisal and the supporting documents.

Implications

25	Financial	The cost of preparing the AAP to adoption will require budgetary provision by each Council
	Legal	As set out in the main body of the report
	Staffing	The continued involvement of staff from both Councils is required to progress the AAP
	Risk Management	There are no direct implications
	Equal Opportunities	There are no direct implications

Consultations

26. The North West Cambridge Area Action Plan Preferred Options build upon continuing joint working with Cambridge City Council and extensive public participation and consultation with key stakeholders. There has also been a continuing dialogue with the University as the landowner and developer of the site.

Effect on Annual Priorities and Corporate Objectives

27. Taking the AAP forward will have a significant affect on all the Council's annual priorities and corporate objectives, especially growth areas and sustainability.

Conclusions

28. The North West Cambridge AAP is intended to enable the future growth of Cambridge University over the long-term, which is an objective of local, regional and national importance, and to maintain and enhance the quality of the setting of Cambridge which is a key purpose of the Cambridge Green Belt. The quality and amenity of the resulting development is accorded a high priority in the AAP, as is the achievement of a sustainable community, which will minimise its impacts upon climate change. The Preferred Options have taken account of national, regional and local planning policy, Issues and Options representations, local circumstances and the available evidence base

Recommendations

29. Council is asked to recommend to Cabinet to agree:
- 1) The Preferred Options for the development of North West Cambridge in the form of a draft Area Action Plan as set out in Volume 1 (attached).
 - 2) The supporting documentation recording the development of the Preferred Options as set out in Volume 2 (attached).

- 3) That any editing changes be delegated to the Growth and Sustainable Communities Portfolio Holder in conjunction with the Executive Director.

Background Papers:

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- North West Cambridge AAP, Issues and Options report September 2006
- North West Cambridge Green Belt and Landscape Study 2006
- North West Cambridge Transport Study 2007
- Junction Access Study into Huntingdon Road
- Site Footprint Assessment (Cambridge City Council/South Cambridgeshire District Council)

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Appendices

Volume 1 – The draft North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (**attached pages 9-89**), plus the following additional plans:

- Concept diagram (**page 91**)
- Pre-submission Proposals' Map (**page 93**)
- Highway Option 1 (**page 95**)
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Volume 2 – The Development of the Preferred Options (**attached pages 97-220.**)

Due to their size, the appendices below have not been printed, but are available on the Council's website using the following link (click on the '27 September 2007' meeting):

<http://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.asp?Committeeld=680&J=3>

In addition, a hard copy of each appendix will be placed in the Members' Room and can be made available upon request – please contact Democratic Services, telephone 01954 713016, e-mail democratic.services@scambs.gov.uk

Appendix A – North West Area Action Plan SA Recommendations and Responses

Appendix B - NW Cambridge Transport Study

Appendix C - Junction Access Study into Huntingdon Road

Appendix D - Site Footprint Assessment

Appendix E – Draft Final Sustainability Appraisal