

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a special meeting of the Council held on
Friday, 21 January 2005 at 9.40 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor RF Bryant – Chairman
Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Dr DR Bard, RE Barrett, JD Batchelor, NN Cathcart, Mrs A Elsby, R Hall,
Mrs SA Hatton, Mrs JM Healey, Dr JA Heap, Mrs HF Kember, RMA Manning,
RB Martlew, MJ Mason, DC McCraith, Mrs JA Muncey, Dr JPR Orme, A Riley,
NJ Scarr, Mrs GJ Smith, Mrs HM Smith, Mrs DSK Spink MBE, JH Stewart,
RT Summerfield, JF Williams, Dr JR Williamson and NIC Wright

Officers: Jonathan Dixon Senior Planning Officer (Economic Policy)
Caroline Hunt Principal Planning Officer (Housing)
Michael Monk Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport)
Claire Spencer Senior Planning Officer (Transport Policy)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors JP Chatfield, Mrs SJO Doggett,
SM Edwards, Mrs EM Heazell, SGM Kindersley, R Page, Dr SEK van de Ven and SS Ziaian-
Gillan.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following personal interests were declared:

Councillor Dr DR Bard	As his pension provider was the University Superannuation Scheme, one of the joint funders of the Monsanto site
Councillor Mrs HF Kember	As an ordinary member of English Heritage, the National Trust and the Wildlife Trust
Councillor RMA Manning	Owner of land on which a telecommunications mast is situated, for which he is paid rent

2. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman informed Members that Cambridge Water would be giving a presentation before the 24 February 2005 meeting of full Council, outlining their ability to deliver water to new settlements. The Planning Policy Manager was arranging this presentation at the request of Members.

3. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (LDF) - CORE STRATEGY AND RURAL CENTRES

This second part of the meeting gave Council the opportunity to consider the Core Strategy as it related to Housing (and supporting Urban Capacity Study), Economy and Tourism, Services and Facilities, Recreation, Papworth Hospital, The Natural Environment, Energy, Protecting South Cambridgeshire's Landscapes, Cultural Heritage and Travel.

3 (a) **Housing and Urban Capacity Study**

Land Supply and Windfall Allowance (CS19 and CS20)

Further housing allocations in villages were not required as Council had agreed on 20 January 2005 that additional capacity at Cambourne would be sufficient to satisfy housing land supply needs.

Whilst locating housing and employment in close proximity to help reduce travel to work were aims of the Plan, it was acknowledged that people did not always wish to live and work in the same area. The Structure Plan made allowance for some small-scale general employment opportunities to take advantage of local skills, and local employment opportunities were key criteria for the identification of Rural Centres.

Contrary to some representations, it was felt that the windfall allowance had not been overestimated, although the allowance would be monitored and managed, and could be adapted as necessary in future reviews of the Core Strategy. As agreed on 20 January 2005, windfalls within Rural Centres' frameworks could be brought forward into the LDF with no development ceiling.

The allocation at Highfields Caldecote referred to the residue of land left for development from the original site; this would be clarified in the final document.

Members noted that the rate of construction, rather than land supply, often slowed development pace.

Densities (CS22)

Densities from the adopted Structure Plan and PPG3 had been included in CS22. It was confirmed that the 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) minimum required in the Structure Plan allowed for the provision of gardens. Officers confirmed that CS22 provided for densities below 30 dph in very special circumstances that required a different treatment. This would be included in the wording of the policy in the draft Core Strategy.

Proposals for major developments would be considered in Area Action Plans, but it was likely that there would be, potential for higher with densities in the new settlements and on urban extensions to Cambridge than in existing villages. Although historically development had at low density on village edges, the LDF sought the most sustainable form of development, which could include higher densities on village edges where appropriate, subject to a suitable edge treatment to the village. Apartments could also be constructed in higher density areas.

Parking allocations would be considered in the travel chapter, but developments of at least 40 dph would be sought in areas with good access to public transport.

Members commented on the use of quality landscaping and design, and constructing smaller houses and apartments to look like 4 or 5 bedroom houses to give the impression of lower densities in higher density areas.

Market Housing (CS23 – CS26)

CS26 required a 50% District-wide target for market housing for 1 and 2 bedroom properties as a single category without prescribing how many of each size of dwelling should be provided within that percentage. The actual provision would be market-driven, although the Development and Conservation Control Committee would decide what was appropriate to local circumstances on a case-by-case basis. The policy aimed at being flexible while still requiring developers to provide a suitable proportion of smaller dwellings. The LDF would not be able to specify minimum interior room sizes and the

reference to “bedroom size” would be clarified to refer to the number of bedrooms in the property. Northstowe and the Cambridge edge developments had separate targets in the Area Action Plans.

Separate Building Control legislation governed sound insulation between houses and such issues therefore could not be included in the LDF. Members were encouraged to contact the Building Control section if they had specific questions about lifetime housing standards and other building regulations.

Affordable Housing (CS27 – CS33)

The draft Core Strategy would address situations where developers parcelled land into smaller packages to avoid meeting affordable housing requirements. Density policies would guide the appropriate number of dwellings on a site, which should reduce the amount of applications for fewer houses per site than could be accommodated.

Caution was urged on introducing a policy requiring affordable housing to be required based on density, as it was considered that the proposed 50% target was challenging but still reasonable. Councillor NJ Scarr, seconded by Councillor Mrs SA Hatton, proposed that the distinction between larger and smaller villages be abolished and the threshold of two or more dwellings be applied district-wide. Officers explained that the Council had successfully introduced in the 2004 Local Plan a minimum threshold of more than 10 dwellings in villages of 3,000 or more population, while the national requirement was for a minimum of 25 dwellings, or 15 in areas of high need. Members were encouraged to roll forward into the LDF the tested and approved 2004 Local Plan policy, as changing the policy was high-risk and could result in the Inspector applying the national thresholds, thus reducing affordable housing provision in South Cambridgeshire. The Housing Corporation did not appear to have different funding regimes available based on village sizes. Officers explained that the national policy was being reviewed imminently and, if this enabled thresholds to be reviewed, they would be as part of the preparation of the Core Strategy, having regard to Members' views. In view of the risks of changing the accepted policy, Councillors Scarr and Mrs Hatton **WITHDREW** their proposal. It was confirmed that a 50% affordable housing target had been suggested for the Northstowe Area Action Plan.

It was important to have a suitably flexible policy to take account of the changing situation in light of conflicting signals from the government on affordable housing funding. There could be some exceptional circumstances where a 50% affordable housing requirement would not be appropriate on a particular site, for example on a very small site in a smaller village, in which case the Council may accept a financial contribution to help fund affordable housing elsewhere. It was unlikely that the Inspector would approve a policy of accepting a financial contribution to affordable housing on sites of a single dwelling.

Councillor Mrs GJ Smith, seconded by Councillor RB Martlew, proposed that, subject to the matter being examined, any developers building housing below the threshold of more than 10 dwellings be required to make an appropriate contribution to affordable housing, the contribution to be kept in a ring-fenced account to be used for RSL or other affordable housing providers. Members were reminded that government consultation had been conducted previously on a similar “roof tax”, to which the Council had been strongly opposed. Councillor Dr DR Bard cautioned that, if implemented, the Cambridgeshire County Council may wish to enact a similar tax requiring a contribution to education and Councillor Mrs DSK Spink reminded Members that RSLs received central government funding through the Housing Corporation, so the Council would have no control over directing the funding, assuming that the central government allowed the Council to retain its own funding pot. As government consultation on revisions to its

affordable housing policy was due on 24 January 2005, Councillors Mrs Smith and Martlew **WITHDREW** their motion and officers agreed to consider the strategy in light of the government consultation.

In situations where existing housing was demolished and replaced by new build, the net figure was considered when imposing affordable housing requirements, therefore a site where one house had been demolished and replaced by two new dwellings, the net change was one property, which was too low for affordable housing requirements.

Existing policies for exception sites outside the village framework in areas with a high level of need would be rolled forward into the draft Core Strategies and were in line with government policies of 100% affordable housing to meet local needs.

With higher percentages of affordable housing, it was important to have a mix of tenure in affordable housing provision and to distribute affordable dwellings within sites.

CS30 would be amended to refer specifically to "2 or more dwellings".

Conclusion

Council **AGREED** the following recommendations, subject to issues raised during discussion:

- (a) To confirm the Preferred Approach to housing objectives (CS19);
- (b) To confirm the Preferred Approach to roll forward the existing housing allocations made in the 2004 Local Plan (CS20);
- (c) To confirm the Preferred Approach to densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare and at least 40 dwellings per hectare in more sustainable locations (CS22);
- (d) To confirm the Preferred Approach for the target for the mix of house sizes, based on the number of bedrooms, in market housing:
 - 40% 1 and 2 bedroom : 30% 3 bedroom : 30% 4 or more bedrooms for Northstowe to address locally identified housing needs whilst not compromising the development of a balanced community in a new town (CS23); *[This decision was subsequently overturned by full Council on 1 February 2005 in favour of a 50 : 25 : 25 ratio]*
 - 50% 1 and 2 bedroom : 25% 3 bedroom : 25% 4 or more bedrooms for development district-wide (primarily in villages) to address the high level of need for 1 and 2 bedroom properties identified in the Housing Needs Survey (CS26);
- (e) To confirm the Preferred Option for the target of Affordable Housing at approximately 50% of all dwellings proposed (CS27);
- (f) To confirm the Preferred Approach of requiring Affordable Housing to be provided as set out in the 2004 Local Plan, i.e., a threshold of more than 10 dwellings in settlements over 3,000 population and 2 or more dwellings elsewhere (CS30);
- (g) To confirm the Preferred Options for funding Affordable Housing:
 - To pursue CS32 District-wide, negotiating a lower proportion of Affordable Housing if there were insurmountable subsidy issues; and
 - To pursue CS33 for small sites, negotiating a contribution to Affordable Housing to be provided elsewhere.

3 (b) Economy and Tourism

Officers explained that the bullet points in the Preferred Approach to CS35 would be expanded in the final LDF and agreed to review the wording used regarding the agricultural contribution to the economy in line with PPS7. The 2004 Local Plan policy

concerning the special status of the Imperial War Museum at Duxford would be rolled forward into the LDF. Strategies regarding the redevelopment of farm buildings for other use would be carefully worded.

It was confirmed that the LDF could support the tourism industry of South Cambridgeshire, but could not be more specific.

Council **AGREED** the options for employment (CS35 – CS43), subject to the re-wording as discussed.

3 (c) Services and Facilities

Dual Use (CS44)

The strategy set out the objective that there was a benefit to using existing facilities more widely, but officers agreed to speak with the Community Services section about specific reference to Dual Use, and to include a reference that the current Dual Use funding policy was changing. It was important to explore other financially viable models other than the existing Dual Use scheme and officers agreed to consider the wording of the sections referring to larger villages without secondary schools but still in need of central facilities.

Security during daytime community use was a Community Services issue, not part of the LDF.

Health and Social Care (CS46)

Officers agreed to speak with Councillor RE Barrett, the Council's Member on the Cambridgeshire County Council Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee, about the wording of the health provision policy.

Retail Hierarchy (CS46)

Traffic and parking issues would be considered through the Development and Conservation Control Committee. The retail hierarchy was consistent with government policy and it was noted that PPG6 was being reviewed. Development policies would ensure that the scale of a retail area was in scale with its location. The Northstowe shopping centre would be carefully modelled in the Masterplan.

Applications for New Retail Development (CS47)

Studies had shown that the Cambridge area did not need more large supermarkets and sub-regional shopping areas, except at Northstowe and in the Cambridge East area. Small-scale retail development was welcomed.

Telecommunications (CS48)

Officers agreed to utilise the most current planning guidance on the inclusion of health and safety implications of telecommunications masts in the strategy, especially with regards to their placement near primary schools, when drafting the LDF.

Public Art (CS50)

The Senior Planning Officer (Economic Policy) confirmed that public art would be encouraged and sought through negotiation, but would not be an absolute requirement, in accordance with the Council's adopted Public Art Strategy. Any public art would be done in consultation with, and with the support of, the local community, and the included items such as street furniture, iron gates, street signs or other similar features.

Council **AGREED** the following recommendations, subject to the issues raised during discussion:

- (a) The objectives for services and facilities (CS44), with the inclusion of health and social care;
- (b) The Preferred Approach for the protection of village services and facilities, with the inclusion of recreation and sports facilities (CS45);
- (c) The retail hierarchy for the District (CS46); and
- (d) The Preferred Approach to encourage developers to provide public art as part of their development (CS50).

3 (d) Recreation

A mixed response had been received to the open space standards and it was recommended to continue with the Preferred Approach of a standard higher than the NFTA. The standard for informal open space of 0.4 hectares was in addition to the currently agreed open space provisions and accorded with government guidelines; PPG17 said that robust needs studies were required when defining open spaces, which included informal areas, children's play areas and sports areas. Planning Policy and Community Services officers were working together on safety and design issues towards production of a Supplementary Planning Document.

The requirement in CS52 for all new dwellings to contribute towards the provision or improvement of open space was meant to redress the historic lack of recreation provision from previous developments and the Council was seeking land provision where possible rather than a financial contribution. Officers would develop a form of words to indicate that Parish Councils were under no obligation to accept the maintenance of new open spaces.

Council **AGREED** the following recommendations, subject to issues raised during discussion:

- (a) The Preferred Approach for open space standards (CS51);
- (b) The option that new developments be required to contribute to the provision of strategic open space (CS54); and
- (c) To note the findings of the Recreation Study and Annex.

3 (e) Papworth Hospital

Councillor NIC Wright, Local Member, strongly supported the preferred option (CS55) that the current functions remained on site, but recognised that government guidance was that the LDF could not require the current use of the Papworth Hospital site to continue, therefore the LDF needed to prepare for the possibility of the current functions at the Hospital relocating. Officers' advice was that the LDF could continue to press the Council's view that the cardio-thoracic unit remained on site, but it was understood that the Health Authority would undertake formal consultation later in 2005 on relocating the cardiovascular surgery unit to the Addenbrooke's site.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport), the Council's representative on the Papworth Hospital Site Usage Group, explained that the Group was considering the potential alternative uses of the existing site. The development of Addenbrooke's would be considered as part of the proposals in Cambridge City Council's area for the Cambridge Southern Fringe and the Addenbrooke's 2020 Vision depended on the M11 link road being in place.

Members noted that the Council had given permission for 1,000 houses to be built in Papworth Everard on assurance that the Hospital would not be moving and that the Council had previously resolved to support the Hospital remaining in Papworth Everard.

Council **AGREED** that, whilst it was inappropriate for a Local Development Framework policy to dictate to the health authorities whether the current activities continue on the Papworth Hospital site, a policy should be included within the LDF to guide a mixed development and set the criteria against which any redevelopment proposals should be tested, this policy to be augmented by a Supplementary Planning Document.

3 (f) **St Mary's Church, Gamlingay**

Councillor Mrs A Elsby, Local Member, confirmed that the proposed allocation for an additional graveyard at Gamlingay was in the centre of the village near the existing cemetery, making it easy for people to travel on foot between the two. It was not proposed to develop the entire site all at once, and ecological works had not been marked on the map.

Council **AGREED** the Preferred Approach for Land Allocations for Community Facilities (CS59): St Mary's Church, Gamlingay.

3 (g) **The Natural Environment**

There was general support for the natural environment objectives and it was recommended that the Core Strategy include a policy on habitat creation. Members queried whether biodiversity could be enhanced through development and it was explained that new habitats could be provided on development sites, and that releasing farmland for development could increase biodiversity, especially through gardens.

Council **AGREED** the natural environment objectives (CS60) and that the Core Strategy include a policy on habitat creation.

3 (h) **Energy**

Officers explained that a number of the District Council's assessments in Appendix 1 incorrectly referred to affordable housing thresholds: this had been caused by a software error and would be corrected. The amended schedule of responses would be re-issued to those who had made representations.

The Preferred Approach for development of renewable energy sources (CS61) was a criteria-based policy, which would set out all the factors to be considered when reviewing renewable energy provision, rather than being directed at particular types of provision. This robust approach would be applicable to current and future renewable energy technologies and any applications would be tested on a case-by-case basis. The policy sought to take a holistic approach to landscape character. Officers confirmed that the Green Belt was a spatial tool rather than a landscape tool, and would likely be covered by separate criteria in the policy.

The Preferred Approach to ensure that at least 10% of the energy needs of larger developments be met by renewable energy technologies (CS62) was broadly consistent with the emerging Regional Plan. However, consistency was sought with the emerging Cambridge City Local Plan and a revision to the threshold for residential development was proposed from 50 dwellings down to 10 dwellings. This was equivalent to the 1,000 m² threshold for commercial development.

Officers were in the early stages of consultation with Cambridgeshire Horizons whether Northstowe could have its own energy supply company (ESCO) and a study was proposed to be undertaken.

Energy from waste could not be classed as renewable and would be considered by Cambridgeshire County Council as the waste planning authority.

Officers advised that in response to representations from GO-East, CS63 was proposed to be revised to ensure that it did not seek to amend requirements of Building Regulations, whilst encouraging developers to strive for greater energy efficiency.

Council **AGREED** the following recommendations, subject to issues raised during discussion:

- (a) To confirm the Preferred Approach for developing renewable energy sources (CS61) through development of a criteria-based policy, including visual and noise impact;
- (b) To confirm the Preferred Approach that at least 10% of the energy needs of larger developments be met by renewable energy technologies (CS62), and that the threshold for providing renewable energy should be lowered from 50 dwellings to 10 dwellings; and
- (c) That the Preferred Approach for all new development would be to require developers to maximise energy efficiency through sustainable design and construction and to encourage developers to strive to achieve energy efficiency standards above the minimum Building Regulations' standards in force at that time (CS63).

3 (i) **Protecting South Cambridgeshire's Landscapes**

The Preferred Approach for Landscape Character Areas (CS64) was a 2004 Local Plan policy and a similar policy would be developed for the LDF.

Concern was expressed at the Preferred Approach for River Valleys (CS67) as it was important to remember that drains served a function to remove water not to provide wildlife habitats. The Council's Land Drainage Manager and Ecology Officer worked closely to achieve a balance between both issues and both would be consulted on the final wording of the policy.

The proposed actions for the Preferred Approach for Flood Risk (CS68) acknowledged a catchment approach.

The Environment Agency would provide expert advice on sustainable drainage systems (CS69) and had some funding available for flood risk assessments. Members asked that the policy specify that the design of sustainable drains should be for ease of maintenance.

Light pollution issues (CS70) could only be considered in cases requiring planning permission. Environmental Health should be consulted where situations arose with security lights being left on overnight.

Council **AGREED** the following recommendations, subject to issues raised during discussion:

- (a) To confirm the Preferred Approaches for Landscape Character Areas, Natural Areas, Biodiversity and River Valleys (CS64 – CS66), with further guidance to be set out in Supplementary Planning Documents;
- (b) To confirm the Preferred Approach for flood risk (CS68), including the need to consider flooding on a catchment basis not just within the floodplain; and
- (c) That the Preferred Approach for sustainable drainage systems (CS69) would be to seek such systems only where they are practicable.

3 (j) Cultural Heritage

In response to some representations received, officers would re-word the section on archaeological heritage. Conservation areas would be assessed through a process separate from the LDF.

Council **AGREED** the recommendations as set out in the Appendix.

3 (k) Travel

In response to representations received, officers would introduce a new policy to address Rights of Way and to link new paths to existing routes.

Although members felt that minimising the amount of car parking provided in new developments (CS78) would not reduce reliance on private vehicles without better public transport, the policy reflected government guidance in PPG13. Councillor Mrs DSK Spink, Local Member, reported the difficulties experienced in School Lane, Cambourne, with cars parked on what had become a major road since the opening of the Caxton By-Pass. Officers explained that the objective was aspirational, but would try to re-word it to reflect that minimisation of car parking would be sought only in locations where suitable alternative modes of travel existed.

Councillor RMA Manning, seconded by Councillor JA Muncey, proposed the removal of the sixth bullet point in CS78, "to minimise the amount of car parking provided in new developments, compatible with its location, to reduce over-reliance on the car". Members were reminded that the bullet point was an objective, not a policy, and that the reduction of car parking would be done only where it was appropriate and compatible with its location and public transport provision, such as in Northstowe, Cambridge East and Cambridge Southern Fringe. The motion was **LOST** by 9 votes to 10.

The Cycle Provision Prioritisation (CS82) was queried, with the reduction of the cycleways budget, and it was confirmed that the option referred to new cycleway provision through s106 agreements.

With regards to Aviation-Related Development Proposals (CS87), it was confirmed that Waterbeach and other sites were now back in consideration for the relocation of Marshall's. The Development and Conservation Control Committee would consider the proposed wind farm at Boxworth when the application was received, including the impact on nearby aviation sites and the airfield relocation.

Council **AGREED** the recommendations as set out in the Appendix, subject to the re-wording agreed during discussion.

The Meeting ended at 5.26 p.m.
