

1. Executive Summary

(Note: Partial summary. Complete version to follow in Part 2.)

1.1. The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) provides information on the progress the Council is making in preparing its planning policy documents and how well it is doing in terms of delivering the overall development strategy and implementing the policies included in the Local Development Framework (LDF). The Executive Summary highlights the headline results of this year's AMR.

a. Progress against the Local Development Scheme

1.2. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) adopted by the Council in March 2011 set out the timetable that the Council was progressing during the monitoring year, and the commentary set out in Chapter 3 (and summarised below) shows progress against this timetable.

1.3. The LDS included the Council's intention to prepare a new **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan**, which would incorporate a review and update of the Core Strategy, Development Control Policies DPD and Site Specific Policies DPD. Preparation of the new **Local Plan** has progressed largely in accordance with the timetable and public consultation on issues and options for the district took place between July and September 2012.

1.4. Given the close functional relationship between Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, the Council is working collaboratively with Cambridge City Council as part of the duty to co-operate. The need to coordinate with the City Council on cross boundary issues has led to the Council revising its intended plan making process to include a second public consultation on issues and options in January – February 2013. This consultation will include two parts:

- Part 1 – joint consultation on the development strategy for the wider Cambridge area, site options for development on the edge of Cambridge on land currently in the Green Belt, and site options for a community stadium; and
- Part 2 – consultation on matters specific to each local authority, for South Cambridgeshire this includes possible new site options for development and possible changes to village frameworks and designations to protect village character.

1.5. This additional round of public consultation has had some implications on the timetable for later stages of preparing the **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan**.

1.6. The LDS also set out the intention at that time to continue to separately prepare a **Gypsy & Traveller DPD**. However, progress on the preparation of the **Gypsy & Traveller DPD** slipped due to delayed progress and agreement on an updated Cambridgeshire Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment, undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council on behalf of the Cambridgeshire local authorities, which is a key evidence base study for this plan. The slippage meant that there was no longer an advantage in progressing the two plans separately and therefore a

revised LDS was adopted in January 2012. This revised LDS set out the Council's intention to include any policies and proposals for Gypsy and Travellers within the **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan**.

b. Monitoring the Local Development Framework policies and Sustainability Appraisal objectives

- 1.7. The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) includes over 90 core and local output indicators to measure the performance of the Council's adopted planning policies, and almost 50 significant effect indicators to measure change in the district against the objectives set out in the Council's Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (January 2006) and to look at the wider effects of the Local Development Framework (LDF) on the district.

Housing

- 1.8. ***Housing completions and housing supply.*** The development strategy for South Cambridgeshire is one of supporting the economic success of the Cambridge area through continued jobs growth, with housing provision at a level, and of a quality, to allow for the economic prospects to be met. To reduce the amount of commuting in the longer term, the aim is also to achieve a better balance between jobs and homes in and close to Cambridge.
- 1.9. In the last monitoring year, 696 net additional dwellings were completed in South Cambridgeshire; this is 4 dwellings more than the number predicted in the housing trajectory included in the Annual Monitoring Report 2010-2011 and is an increase in the number of net additional dwellings completed compared to the previous 3 years (610, 595 and 655 dwellings). It continues a pattern of housebuilders and landowners predicting with some accuracy the number of completions which will be achieved albeit not necessarily from the sites they anticipated. Completions at Cambourne and Orchard Park have fallen in the last year compared to the previous year, but this shortfall has been balanced by an uplift of housing completions on historic rural allocations at Longstanton, Papworth Everard, Girton and Waterbeach, and on rural exceptions sites.
- 1.10. The Council has made provision for a significant supply of housing land: extant planning permissions could provide 3,070 dwellings (as at March 2012); sites where the Council has resolved to grant planning permission could provide a further 221 dwellings; and sites allocated for housing will provide another 13,782 dwellings. Together, land is identified in plans and planning permissions for a total of 17,073 dwellings.
- 1.11. The monitoring period for the AMR precedes the National Planning Policy Framework and so the Planning Policy Statements were still in force. Government policy in **PPS3: Housing** and the **National Planning Policy Statement** for 2011-2012 was that Councils should have a rolling five-year supply of housing land. Despite having sufficient deliverable land supply to provide 4,531 new homes over the next 5 years, the Council has a shortfall in five-year housing land supply against the Core Strategy

target to 2016 (2.3 years supply), primarily because we are now close to the end of the plan period of 2016 which compounds the impact of the shortfall. However, against the 'Medium' target option for the new **Local Plan**, the Council has 4.1 years of housing land supply, based on existing housing allocations and planning permissions. Additional housing allocations will be identified during the plan making process to ensure that the Local Plan meets the chosen target.

- 1.12. **Gypsy & Traveller pitches:** 11 new permanent Gypsy & Traveller pitches were completed in the last monitoring year and 1 new temporary Gypsy & Traveller pitch was granted planning permission. A further 24 permanent pitches were under construction at 31 March 2012 (and are now completed).
- 1.13. **Housing completions on previously developed land (PDL):** In the last monitoring year, 29% of dwellings completed were on PDL and the cumulative percentage is still below the target of at least 37% as required by **Core Strategy Policy ST/3**. It had been anticipated that the percentage would increase when the major developments at Northstowe and Cambridge East, which would involve the reuse of PDL, started delivering towards the end of the plan period, however, this is now unlikely to happen in the near future as progress on the major developments has been delayed. In the last monitoring year, completions at Cambourne, Orchard Park, historic rural allocations at Papworth Everard and Longstanton, and on affordable housing exception sites at Barrington, Hauxton and Willingham, have contributed to the significant proportion of completions on 'greenfield' sites.
- 1.14. **Housing density:** Over the last 13 years, the average net density of dwellings completed on sites of 9 or more dwellings has fluctuated, although there is a general upward trend. It is expected that the average net density of new housing developments will increase in future monitoring years as the major developments on the edge of Cambridge and Northstowe are implemented with higher housing densities reflecting their urban character. Orchard Park has achieved net densities of over 50 dph on a significant number of completed parcels. Over the last 13 years, the completed parcels at Cambourne have achieved an average net density of 30.0 dph. In general, lower densities have been achieved at Lower Cambourne (an early phase in the construction of the settlement), and higher densities have been achieved at Upper Cambourne (a more recent phase that is still being completed). Great Cambourne includes a mixture of densities, with higher densities achieved on parcels located in and around the village centre, where there is good access to services and facilities.
- 1.15. **Affordable housing:** The availability of housing that is affordable to local people is a major issue in the district, especially as median house prices in the district have risen from 4.9 times median earnings to 7.9 times median earnings in the last 12 years. In the last monitoring year, 192 new affordable dwellings were completed; this amounts to 25% of all new dwellings completed. This is a fall compared to the high of 41% achieved in 2009-2010 and is a reflection of the changing housing market conditions and availability of funding for affordable housing developments.
- 1.16. In the last monitoring year social rented affordable housing has been the majority tenure of affordable dwellings completed, although on individual schemes the mix of

affordable tenures is determined by local circumstances. Affordable housing exception sites provided 90 new affordable dwellings in the last monitoring year to meet identified local need in Barrington, Hauxton, Landbeach, Whaddon and Willingham.

- 1.17. In the last two monitoring years, 40% of dwellings permitted on sites of two or more dwellings, where **Development Control Policy HG/3** was applicable, were affordable. This meets the target of 40% set by the policy. The affordable dwellings secured were a mixture of onsite provision and financial contributions that have been converted into notional units that will be provided offsite.
- 1.18. **Housing development by settlement category:** The development strategy for the district was changed by the adoption of the Core Strategy, which focuses the development proposed in a few major developments on the edge of Cambridge and the new town of Northstowe, and provided for more development within the village frameworks of the largest villages. Between 2006 and 2011, this change in development strategy could be seen to be gradually taking effect with an increase in the proportion of completions on the edge of Cambridge and at the Rural Centres, which includes the new settlement of Cambourne, and a decrease in the proportion of completions in the smaller and less sustainable villages. This trend has not continued in the last monitoring year, due to the completion of 76 close care flats at Girton and the completion of the first 62 dwellings on phase 3 of a large development at Longstanton which delivered a bypass for the village. Completions at Orchard Park and Cambourne have also fallen compared to previous years.
- 1.19. **Housing quality:** All new development has an impact on its surroundings and the predominantly rural character of the district makes it particularly important that new development is sensitively located and designed to a high quality. The Council has assessed 42 developments completed in the last three monitoring years against the original Building for Life standard. Of the 18 schemes that were completed in the last monitoring year, three developments have achieved 'Gold' standard by scoring well on a variety of aspects, including their design, character and layout, and integration of public spaces, pedestrian routes and car parking. Five have been assessed at a 'Silver' standard. Nine schemes have been assessed as 'Average' tending to score weakly on aspects such as their character and treatment of streets and parking. One scheme has been reported as 'Poor' due to low levels of connectivity, character, and design. All 42 developments have performed poorly in the use of advanced construction techniques and technologies and environmental performance, and many did not do well in terms of their future adaptability.
- 1.20. The Building for Life scheme is a useful tool for gaining an indication of the quality of new developments. However, it has certain limitations that may not give a true impression of the quality of a scheme. The scoring system is not a sophisticated tool and can potentially score schemes down where evidence is not available at the time of assessment. In the case of a number of the schemes scoring as 'Average' this monitoring year, there has not been documentary evidence available to demonstrate a positive performance against a criteria and therefore they have been scored down. However, the Council is not complacent about development quality and is taking measures to improve performance.