

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leader and Cabinet

27 June 2013

AUTHOR/S: Director of Planning and New Communities

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE LOCAL PLAN AGREEING THE DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

Purpose

1. Cabinet is invited to consider and agree the Proposed Submission South Cambridgeshire Local Plan covering the period to 2031 for public consultation, as recommended by the Planning Policy and Localism Portfolio Holder at her meetings of 21 March, 11 April and 11 June 2013, together with the necessary supporting documents, and also to agree the consultation arrangements.
2. This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area of the District comprising two or more wards. It was first published in the 12 March 2013 Forward Plan.

Recommendations

3. Cabinet is recommended to:
 - (a) Agree Proposed Submission South Cambridgeshire Local Plan for consultation, including the evidence base listed in the plan (**Appendix A** attached separately);
 - (b) Agree the Proposed Submission Policies Map (**Appendix B** attached separately);
 - (c) Note the Draft Final Sustainability Report (Appendix C);
 - (d) Note the Duty to Cooperate Statement (Appendix D);
 - (e) Agree the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Memorandum of Cooperation (attached at **Appendix E**);
 - (f) Note the Statement of Consultation (Appendix F);
 - (g) Agree the consultation arrangements set out in paragraph 13;
 - (h) Agree that the Proposed Submission Local Plan housing target and plan period be used to calculate 5-year housing land supply pending adoption of the plan;
 - (i) Agree that any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes be made in consultation with the Planning Policy and Localism Portfolio Holder.

Reason for recommendation

4. The Council is in the process of preparing an updated Local Plan for the District that will plan for the needs of the district to 2031 and ensure an up to date development plan to provide a framework for decisions on planning applications as required by the National Planning Policy Framework. Following detailed consideration of issues and

options and extensive public consultation, the Proposed Submission Local Plan and its supporting documents have now been prepared and the next stage is to agree the Proposed Submission Local Plan for consultation. It is proposed that consultation on a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Preliminary Charging Schedule will take place alongside the Local Plan consultation (see separate report on this agenda).

Proposed Submission South Cambridgeshire Local Plan

5. Two stages of issues and options consultation have been undertaken, in summer 2012 and early 2013 with a further consultation on the option of a football stadium at Sawston between end March and early May 2013. Approximately 31,000 comments were received to the three consultations.
6. The representations have been considered and addressed in an audit trail that is included in the draft Final Sustainability Report, showing the process from evolution of the issues and options through public consultation to the approach taken for the Local Plan. To help inform the process of moving from consultation on Issues and Options to a draft Local Plan, a series of four workshops have been held to which all District Councillors were invited. The workshops were not part of the decision making process but provided a forum to discuss the representations received to the Issues and Options consultations and gave all members the opportunity to engage in the development of the Local Plan.
7. The draft Local Plan chapters have been considered at a series of three meetings of the Planning Policy and Localism Portfolio Holder, together with sustainability appraisal of the draft policies and relevant evidence base documents. The Portfolio Holder has recommended to Cabinet that the draft Local Plan be agreed for consultation with a limited number of changes that have been incorporated into the Proposed Submission Local Plan contained at Appendix A and its draft Policies Map at Appendix B. The Plan has been prepared taking account of a significant body of evidence proportionate to the issues facing the district, which is listed in the Plan.
8. The Proposed Submission Local Plan contains the following chapters:
 1. Introduction
 2. Spatial Strategy
 3. Strategic Sites
 4. Climate Change
 5. Delivering High Quality Places
 6. Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment
 7. Delivering High Quality Homes
 8. Building a Strong and Competitive Economy
 9. Promoting Successful Communities
 10. Transport and Infrastructure

Policies Map (previously known as the Proposals Map)
9. The Local Plan provides for the full objectively assessed needs of the district for 22,000 jobs and 19,000 homes as identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The development strategy carries forward the major sites from the

Local Development Framework (adopted 2007-2010), with the exception of Cambridge Airport which is no longer available in the plan period and is safeguarded in the Plan for longer term development if it becomes available. The Northstowe reserve is allocated in the Local Plan to provide flexibility in the delivery of Northstowe (although no additional homes will be provided), and new strategic sites proposed are:

- A new town north of Waterbeach for 8,000 to 9,000 homes, 1,400 of which by 2031
- A new village based on Bourn Airfield for 3,500 homes, 1,700 of which by 2031
- A major expansion of Cambourne for a fourth linked village of 1,200 homes, all of which by 2031.

10. The Plan also clarifies that development in the rural area will be limited, with allocations for jobs and housing focused on Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres. The Plan includes rural settlement policies providing for windfall development for different categories of village consistent with the level of local service provision and quality of public transport access to Cambridge or a market town. The village housing allocations included in the plan are:

- Sawston, Dales Manor Business Park – 200 homes
- Sawston, Land north of Babraham Road – 80 homes
- Sawston, Land south of Babraham Road – 260 homes
- Histon & Impington, Land north of Impington Lane – 25 homes
- Melbourn, Land off New Road at the rear of Victoria Way – 65 homes
- Gamlingay, Green End Industrial Estate – 90 homes as part of mixed use development with the remainder of the site being developed/redeveloped for business development
- Willingham, Land east of Rockmill End – 50 homes
- Comberton (in Toft Parish), Land at Bennell Farm – 90 homes, with the affordable housing provision to meet the affordable housing needs of the villages of Toft and Comberton proportionate to the level of need in each village, with football pitch and changing facilities for Toft village, and community car parking that is also available for overspill parking for Comberton Village College.

11. Since the last of the Portfolio Holder meetings the whole draft Local Plan has been brought together and some minor editing revisions have been included in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to ensure a consistent and clear document. A small number of more material changes have also been included in the draft Local Plan to the policies for the new strategic sites following discussion with the Portfolio Holder. These have been made in light of on-going discussions with the promoters of the strategic sites and with key stakeholders since it was first made public in mid-May that the Council was minded to include them in the Proposed Submission Local Plan. It is important to include the most robust site boundaries and policies in the Proposed Submission Local Plan at this stage in view of the intention to move directly to the Submission stage following consultation and therefore the aim is to minimise the risk of the Council wanting to make any changes to the plan that would require further consultation and delay the examination and adoption of the plan. The more material changes can be summarised as:

- Policy SS/2: Land between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road (NIAB2 & 3) – the site boundary and land to be removed from the Green Belt has been defined on the Policies Map and it made clear in the policy that the final number of homes will be informed by a design-led approach subject to ensuring sufficient space between the development and the A14 for a noise bund, preserving important landscape features and all water management features necessary to serve all parts of the development.
- Policy SS/5: Waterbeach New Town – minor refinements to the northern boundary of the Major Development area shown on the Policies Map following a site visit with the promoter and English Heritage in order to ensure appropriate protection of the setting and views to and from Denny Abbey Listed Building and Scheduled Monument. The policy wording has been amended to make clear that the final number of homes will be determined in the proposed Area Action Plan having regard to the appropriate built area of the town to ensure the setting of Denny Abbey and views to and from the nationally important heritage asset. It also makes clear the need for the town to be screened by strategic landscaping and for all developed and formal open space uses to be within the Major Developed area.
- Policy SS/6: Bourn Airfield New Village – revisions to the policy to provide for development to start one year earlier and for no more than 1,700 homes to be built in the plan period compared with 1,400 in the version considered by the Portfolio Holder. This reflects the reduction in capacity to Cambourne West (see below) and compensates for the majority of that reduction whilst retaining an element of flexibility, still being a year later in the housing trajectory than it might otherwise be. The policy also emphasises the need for green separation from Caldecote Highfields.
- Policy SS/7: Northstowe Extension – this policy was not included in the draft chapter considered by the Portfolio Holder in error. The policy allocates the reserve land identified in the Northstowe Area Action Plan and will provide flexibility but will not increase the number of homes beyond the 9,500 homes included in the development framework plan approved as part of the first phase of development.
- Policy SS/8: Cambourne West – further consideration has been given to the appropriate site boundary and capacity of the site in light of concerns raised by the promoter. The recommendation is that the site boundary previously agreed by the Portfolio Holder remains the appropriate one to ensure that the fourth linked village sits comfortably in its setting and retains a green foreground and long views across the open area which will remain to the west of Cambourne between the A1198 and A428. The importance of keeping land open in this locality was previously identified by the inspector who dismissed an appeal for one of the new town options considered in the run up to the approval of the original Cambourne outline planning permission because of its prominence in the wider landscape. Topography and the development pattern of Cambourne suggest that more of the Major Development area will need to remain open or be used for water management features and therefore the capacity has been reduced from a total of 1,500 dwellings, including the land in the business park, to

1,200 dwellings. The reduced capacity is compensated for by bringing development at Bourn Airfield forward a year, development having been held back in the housing trajectory by two years to provide flexibility and ensure a 5 year supply of housing land.

12. The Proposed Submission Local Plan for consultation is supported by a draft Final Sustainability Report (Appendix C) that assesses each of the policies in the plan both separately and holistically, and also assesses the cumulative impacts of the plan as a whole. The Report also provides the audit trail for the development of the policies contained in the draft Local Plan – the links between national and local planning policy, the evidence base, the results of public consultations and the policies and proposals included in the Proposed Submission Local Plan.
13. Joint working has, and continues, to take place with neighbouring authorities. In particular there has been close joint working with Cambridge City Council given the close functional relationship between the two Districts. The new Duty to Cooperate introduced in the Localism Act requires local authorities and other key stakeholders to cooperate on strategic matters in plan making. The Duty to Cooperate Statement contained at Appendix D demonstrates how the Council has complied with this legal requirement.
14. Joint working is also taking place with the County Council on a Transport Strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire that is being prepared in parallel with the Local Plans of both Councils and will be an important part of the evidence base for the Proposed Submission Local Plan. The draft Transport Strategy was agreed for consultation on 18 June and this will take place alongside the Local Plan consultation.
15. Responding to the introduction of Neighbourhood Development Plans also under the Localism Act, the Local Plan includes a number of Parish Council proposals where there is clear local support, as an alternative to the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans, including the Station area at Histon and Impington, some open space proposals and a significant number of Local Green Space proposals. Some Parish Council proposals did not demonstrate sufficient local support to include their proposals in the Proposed Submission Local Plan, in particular Cottenham, Little Gransden and Whaddon. The Parish Councils would now have the option to make representations to the Local Plan or to prepare their own Neighbourhood Plans and seek to gain local support for their proposals such that their plan could be adopted.
16. A number of other issues consulted on have not been included in the Plan, in particular a site for a Community Stadium and a Sawston Football Stadium, where exceptional circumstances have not been demonstrated to justify making an exception to Green Belt policy.
17. A requirement of the Proposed Submission process is to demonstrate that consultation with the public and stakeholders that has taken place in the preparation of the draft Local Plan. Significant consultation has taken place as set out in paragraph 3 and has helped to develop the policies in the Local Plan and this is included in the Statement of Consultation that will accompany the Local Plan (Appendix E).

18. If Cabinet agree the Proposed Submission Local Plan, with its supporting documents, it will be subject to a further round of public consultation between 19 July and 30 September 2013. Exhibitions have been arranged that focus on areas where the Local Plan proposes change and to provide a geographic spread across the district. Some exhibitions close to the administrative boundary with Cambridge City Council will be joint exhibitions attended by officers of both Councils. The County Council is undertaking consultation at the same time on its draft Transport Strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire and a display will be provided at all our exhibitions with County officers attending as many exhibitions as possible, subject to resources given some dates where the City Council is also holding exhibitions. Discussions have taken place with the Highways Agency about using the Local Plan exhibitions for part of its consultation on the upgrade of the A14 – those discussions are on-going and are hoped to include our advertised exhibitions along the route. The exhibitions are included in the current edition of South Cambs Magazine distributed end of May/early June and posters will be sent to Parish Councils, libraries and known local groups with an interest in planning matters. A further article will be included in the autumn edition of South Cambs Magazine in the closing weeks of the consultation with a questionnaire to help make it easy for people to give their views on the plan at this key formal stage. The exhibitions are:

Sawston, Spicers Pavilion, Cambridge Rd	19 July
Linton Village College, Cambridge Road	22 July
* Trumpington Pavilion, Paget Road	22 July
Comberton Village Hall, Green End	24 July
Waterbeach Primary School, High Street	25 July
Great Shelford Memorial Hall, Woollards Lane	26 July
*Cherry Hinton Village Hall,	26 July
Bar Hill Village Hall, The Spinney	29 July
Cambourne, The Hub, High Street	30 July
* Meadows Community Centre, St Catharines Rd, Cambridge	31 July
Sawston, Spicers Pavilion, Cambridge Rd	02 Sept
Caldecote Village Hall, Furlong Way	03 Sept
Gamlingay Village College, Station Road	04 Sept
Histon & Impington Recreation Ground, New Road, Impington	05 Sept
Melbourn, All Saints Community Hall, Station Rd	09 Sept
Swavesey Village College, Gibraltar Lane	10 Sept
* Joint exhibitions with Cambridge City Council	

19. Following the consultation, representations will be registered and considered, including whether there is a need to make any minor modifications prior to full Council being asked in early/spring 2014 to agree the Local Plan for Submission to the Secretary of State for examination. Any significant changes would require a further round of public consultation and delay the Local Plan. During the examination stage, an independent planning inspector will consider the 'soundness' of the Local Plan including holding a series of public hearings. This is anticipated in summer/autumn 2014. This will involve the inspector considering whether it is:

- (a) **Positively prepared** – based on a strategy to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements; including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development
- (b) **Justified** – the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives
- (c) **Effective** – deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working where appropriate; and
- (d) **Consistent with national policy** – enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the NPPF.

20. Following this, the Inspector will produce a report of findings, and if found to be sound, potentially with modifications, the Council can formally adopt the Local Plan, anticipated to be early in 2015 if no modifications are required. The Cambridge Local Plan will proceed through an identical process which will allow for any dependencies between the two plans to be considered.

5-Year Housing Land Supply

21. The Council has not had a 5-year supply of housing land for some time against its adopted Local Development Framework due to the effects of the recession and limited time remaining before the 2016 end date of the Plan. Despite having over 5,000 deliverable homes in its housing land supply, this has put the Council at risk of speculative development proposals that do not accord with our plans and there is therefore an imperative to progress the Local Plan as quickly as possible. It is considered that the new evidence of objectively assessed housing need provided by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, and the policies included in the Proposed Submission Local Plan that it underpins, provide the most up to date assessment of housing needs in South Cambridgeshire and should form the basis of the calculation of the Council's housing land supply requirement as required by the National Planning Policy Framework pending the adoption of the new Local Plan.

Options

22. The Council carried out detailed assessment of issues and options for the plan and two stages of public consultation on those options as an integral and fundamental part of preparation of the plan. The Proposed Submission Local Plan includes the preferred options resulting from that process.

Implications

Financial	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, the cost of preparing a Local Plan is significant but is included in the Medium term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and has been budgeted for over the duration of its preparation. Preparing one single Local Plan rather than three separate Development Plan Documents (Core Strategy, Development Control Policies and Site Allocations) and a separate Gypsy and Traveller DPD will mean that cost and time savings can be achieved.
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Legal	There are no direct legal implications of this report.
Staffing	Staffing implications for the final stages of the Local Plan preparation are still under review. Additional temporary staff resource was brought in to help with preparing the timely preparation of the Local Plan.
Risk Management	The preparation of the Local Plan is a major project for the Council. Full project and risk management procedures are being employed.
Equality and Diversity	There are no direct equal opportunities arising from this report.
Equality Impact Assessment completed	Yes An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the Sustainability Report.
Climate Change	The Sustainability Appraisal considers the implications of the draft Local Plan for climate change.

Consultations

23. A wide range of consultation has been undertaken in preparing the Proposed Submission Local Plan and further consultation is proposed, as detailed in this report and set out in the Statement of Consultation at Appendix E.

Consultation with Children and Young People

24. This has been as part of the extensive and wide ranging consultation undertaken on the Local Plan.

Effect on Strategic Aims

25. **Aim 1:** "We will listen to and engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure that we deliver first class services and value for money". Consultation provided the opportunity for all stakeholders in the future of South Cambridgeshire to influence the policies and proposals for new Local Plan before the Council makes any decisions and in particular including specific engagement with parish council and including a number of parish council-led proposals.
26. **Aim 2:** "We will work with partners to create and sustain opportunities for employment, enterprise and world leading innovation." The draft Local Plan responds to forecasts for the growth of the local economy and proposes additional employment sites.
27. **Aim 3:** "We will make sure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding and sustainable quality of life for our residents." The Council has a duty to secure sustainable development. This lies at the heart of the draft Local Plan and covers all three aspects of sustainability – economic, social and environment. The Plan has a focus on sustaining and enhancing the qualities of South Cambridgeshire

that in national surveys consistently identify the District as one of the best places to live in the UK.

Conclusions/Summary

28. Following detailed consideration of issues and options and extensive public consultation, the Proposed Submission Local Plan and its supporting documents have now been prepared. They have been considered and endorsed by the Planning Policy and Localism Portfolio Holder who has recommended to Cabinet that it agrees the documents for public consultation in summer 2013.

Background papers

- Planning Policy and Localism Portfolio Holder reports and minutes from the meetings on 22 March, 11 April and 11 June 2012 Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation documents July 2012 & January 2013
- Consultation for a Football Stadium option at Sawston March 2013
- Localism Act 2011
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007-2010

Appendices

- A: Proposed Submission South Cambridgeshire Local Plan for consultation (includes list of evidence base)
B: Proposed Submission Policies Map
C: Draft Final Sustainability Report
D: Duty to Cooperate Statement
E: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Memorandum of Cooperation
F: Statement of Consultation

Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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