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4 July 2006

To: Members of the Conservation and Design Advisory Group – Councillors
Mrs PM Bear, AN Berent, RF Bryant, NN Cathcart, Mrs SJO Doggett,
Mrs A Elsby, Mrs JM Guest, R Hall, Mrs SA Hatton, Mrs CA Hunt,
SGM Kindersley, RM Matthews, EJ Pateman, JA Quinlan, RJ Turner,
Dr SEK van de Ven and NIC Wright
and to Councillor JA Hockney (Conservation, Sustainability and Community
Planning Portfolio Holder)

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **CONSERVATION AND DESIGN ADVISORY GROUP**, which will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER** at South Cambridgeshire Hall on **WEDNESDAY, 12 JULY 2006 at 10.00 a.m.**

Yours faithfully
GJ HARLOCK
Chief Executive

AGENDA

PAGES

PROCEDURAL ITEMS

1. **Election of Chairman**
2. **Appointment of Vice-Chairman**
3. **Apologies**
4. **Declarations of Interest**
5. **Minutes of the previous meeting** 1 - 4
To authorise the Chairman to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2006.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6. **Support for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership Co-Ordinator** 5 - 10
7. **Proposed Cambridgeshire Archaeology Partnership** 11 - 16
8. **Biodiversity Strategy** 17 - 20
Copies of the Strategy will be available for Advisory Group Members and an electronic version can be viewed by following this link:
www.scambs.gov.uk/biodiversitystrategy

9. **A Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region** 21 - 28
The Summary Report can be viewed by following this link:
www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk/Document_links.asp?sec_id=811

The PDF document amounts to 8194KB

10. **Conservation Design Guides** 29 - 32

INFORMATION ITEM

11. **Dates of future meetings**

At its meeting on 25th January 2006, the Conservation Advisory Group (as it then was) confirmed a programme of future meetings (Wednesdays except where indicated) of which the following remain:

- 13 September 2006
- 7 November 2006 (Tuesday)
- 17 January 2007
- 14 March 2007
- 16 May 2007
- 11 July 2007
- 12 September 2007
- 14 November 2007

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Conservation Advisory Group held on
Wednesday, 26 April 2006 at 10.00am

PRESENT: Councillor SJ Agnew – Chairman
Councillor NN Cathcart – Vice-Chairman

Councillors:	RF Bryant	Mrs A Elsby
	R Hall	Mrs CA Hunt
	Dr JPR Orme	EJ Pateman
	Mrs DSK Spink MBE	Dr JR Williamson
	NIC Wright	

and Councillor Mrs JM Healey (Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder),

Councillor SGM Kindersley was in attendance, by invitation.

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors Mrs P Corney, Mrs S Doggett, JH Stewart and R Turner sent Apologies for Absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In connection with Minute no. 6 (Teversham Conservation Area Design Guidance), Councillor Mrs CA Hunt declared a personal interest by virtue of being a member of Teversham Parish Council and of being acquainted with each of the respondents referred to individually in the Appendix attached to the report. She also declared a personal interest by virtue of owning the former shop referred to at Point 2 of the representation from the owner of 1 Thulborn Close, Teversham.

3. MINUTES - 8 MARCH 2006

The Conservation Advisory Group authorised the Chairman to sign, as an accurate record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2006.

4. THATCH AND THATCHING IN SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the outcome of the public consultation exercise for the Draft Council Policy on Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire.

The Conservation and Design Manager distributed a list of additional consultation responses received subsequent to publication of the agenda, and copies of a leaflet entitled *Fire in Thatch*, published by the National Society of Master Thatchers Ltd. Public opinion had been positive.

Members discussed what advice the Council should give in relation to the use of log burners, and in the context of buildings insurance. They agreed that the Council should write to owners of thatched buildings, highlighting the safety issues identified by the National Society of Master Thatchers, and include an article on the subject in the next edition of the *South Cambs Magazine*.

In response to a Member's question, the Conservation and Design Manager undertook to establish the likely cost of producing the Council's guidance document.

The Vice-Chairman urged officers to promote and encourage the sourcing of appropriate thatching materials locally.

The Chairman noted with gratitude the degree of officer time spent on addressing this issue.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder presents the draft document to Cabinet to seek its approval and adoption as Council Policy, subject to the incorporation of the changes outlined in the Appendix attached to the report as supplemented by the further responses distributed at the meeting.

5. **BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY**

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the outcome of public consultation on the draft South Cambridgeshire District Council Biodiversity Strategy.

The Ecology Officer distributed an addendum to the Appendix, containing significant, responses to consultation, received subsequent to dispatch of the agenda. Members noted that the comments from Cambridgeshire County Council's Environment and Policy Service were based on new guidance from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, issued during the consultation period. They agreed that, as a result, the Ecology Officer would need to liaise further with partner organisations in order to revise the draft Strategy, if such revision was made necessary by the new guidance. The Chairman regretted the delay this would cause, but it was essential that the final document reflected the aspirations of the District Council, including protection of those smaller parcels of land which, argued DEFRA, did not warrant such protection.

The Conservation Advisory Group agreed that it would be useful if example Planning Conditions relating to biodiversity could be publicised on the Council's website.

Members supported the Ecology Officer's suggestion that wording be added to the Strategy so as to state that, on all major housing developments, 50% of dwellings should have features such as a bird, bat, or insect box provided in close association with the property and that, on all other sites, suitable provision should be negotiated. The Ecology Officer said that, in some cases, this might result in a greater provision of biodiversity features.

The Conservation Advisory Group **DEFERRED** making a recommendation to the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder, and instructed officers to present a revised draft of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Biodiversity Strategy to a future meeting of the Conservation Advisory Group incorporating additional amendments and revisions as agreed during the consideration of this matter at the current meeting.

6. **TEVERSHAM CONSERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDANCE (INCORPORATING CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS)**

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the outcome of the public consultation exercise relating to the Teversham Conservation Area Design Guidance (incorporating a Character Appraisal and Management Proposals).

Members supported officers' recommendations in connection with the representation from Teversham Parish Council.

Members supported officers' recommendation in connection with the representation from the owner of no. 8 High Street, Teversham, namely that no change should be made to the draft Guidance as far as it affected that property.

Members supported officers' recommendations in connection with the representation from the owner of no. 1 Thulborn Close, Teversham, namely that no change should be made to the draft Guidance as far as it affected that property.

Members supported officers' recommendation in connection with the representation from the owner of no. 10 Church Street, Teversham, namely that no change should be made to the draft Guidance as far as it affected that property.

The Chairman thanked the Conservation Area and Design Officer for his efforts in dealing with this matter.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder uses her delegated powers to confirm the revised boundaries for the Teversham Conservation Area, and presents the draft Design Guidance to Cabinet to seek its adoption as Council Policy, subject to the incorporation of the changes outlined in the Appendix attached to the report.

7. BAITS BITE LOCK CONSERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDANCE (INCORPORATING CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS)

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the outcome of the public consultation exercise relating to the proposed revised Baits Bite Lock Conservation Area, together with the draft Conservation Area Design Guidance incorporating a Character Appraisal and Management Proposals.

Councillor Mrs CA Hunt reported that Horningsea Parish Council had welcomed the proposed revisions.

The Chairman thanked the Conservation Area and Design Officer for his efforts in dealing with this matter.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder uses her delegated powers to approve the revised boundaries for the Baits Bite Lock Conservation Area and presents the Design Guidance to Cabinet to seek its adoption as Council Policy.

8. SWAVESEY CONSERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDANCE (INCORPORATING CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS)

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the outcome of the public consultation exercise relating to the Swavesey Conservation Area Design Guidance (incorporating a Character Appraisal and Management Proposals).

The Chairman thanked the Conservation Area and Design Officer for his efforts in dealing with this matter.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder uses her delegated powers to confirm the revised boundaries for the Swavesey Conservation Area and presents the draft Design Guidance to Cabinet to seek its adoption as Council Policy (incorporating the changes outlined in the appendix attached to the report).

9. SOUTH CAMBS. NATURAL HERITAGE AWARDS 2006/07

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on proposals for the South Cambridgeshire Natural Heritage Awards scheme for 2006-07.

The Chairman encouraged all Members of the Council to promote the scheme locally, and to assist in identifying potential candidates for awards.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder confirms the launch of the 2006-07 Natural Heritage Awards, in line with the criteria and timetable set out in paragraphs 6 and 8 of the report.

10. PROPOSED CAMBRIDGESHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY PARTNERSHIP

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report suggesting that South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council enter into a Service Level Agreement to create a countywide archaeology partnership supporting specific archaeology work.

Those present discussed the possible resource implications for the District Council, and the anticipated role of developers. There was a general feeling that, as Cambridgeshire County Council was statutorily responsible for archaeological matters, it was inappropriate to form an opinion on this issue at this stage, especially in view of the District Council's financial situation post-capping.

Members **DEFERRED** making any recommendation to the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder, and instructed officers to arrange for the County Archaeologist to present a more detailed proposal to the July 2006 Conservation Advisory Group meeting enabling them to explore all options and the implications for budgets from 2007-08 onwards.

11. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Conservation Advisory Group noted that the next meeting of the Conservation Advisory Group would be held on 12 July 2006.

The Meeting ended at 12.35 p.m.

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Conservation and Design Advisory Group 12th July 2006
 Conservation, Sustainability &
 Community Planning Portfolio Holder

AUTHOR/S: Conservation and Design Manager

**SUPPORT FOR THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH BIODIVERSITY
 PARTNERSHIP CO-ORDINATOR**

Purpose

- To advise members of the Conservation and Design Advisory Group on the role and success of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Co-ordinator and seek support for the continued development of the partnership into 2007/08.

A presentation will be made on the work of the Partnership by Ms Fabiola Blum, the Co-ordinator for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. Quality, Accessible Services	The Biodiversity Co-ordinator supports the natural heritage conservation objectives of the Council by working with the Ecology Officer to develop and promote biodiversity enhancement initiatives. In addition she is available to advise and respond to enquiries relating to biodiversity issues raised from the public.
Village Life	The conservation and enhancement of biodiversity directly contributes to the quality of life within the villages. The rural feel of many villages is primarily created by the surrounding biodiversity.
Sustainability	The maintenance of biodiversity is a fundamental component of sustainable development.
Partnership	The county wide Biodiversity Partnership is an example of an effective and established environmental project which has helped enhance the work of the Council in promoting biodiversity enhancement.

Background

- The role of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Co-ordinator was created in 1996 when the countywide Biodiversity Partnership came into being.
- The 45 local Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP), including 26 Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) and 19 Species Action Plans (SAPs) were subsequently produced and launched in 2000 to focus attention on local habitats and species requiring particular actions. South Cambridgeshire District Council has been an active partner in the BAP process since its inception. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership represents the local delivery of a national commitment to biodiversity, stemming from the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992.

5. The Partnership's mission statement is to further biodiversity within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with a strategic and coordinated approach through the implementation of Biodiversity Action Plans.
6. Core Services covered by the partnership are implementing, monitoring and reviewing the BAPs, securing funds for co-ordination and projects and promoting biodiversity within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area.
7. The Biodiversity Co-ordinator's role is to facilitate and support the work of the Biodiversity Partnership. In particular, the Biodiversity Co-ordinator will:
 - a. Maintain an overview of the implementation of the BAP by liaising with partner organisations;
 - b. Support the organisations involved in the delivery of the Species and Habitat Action Plans;
 - c. Publicise the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough BAP and the activities of the Partnership;
 - d. Engage new individuals, groups and organisations in the implementation of the BAP and be a first point of contact for enquiries regarding the countywide BAP process;
 - e. Maintain appropriate links with regional and national biodiversity initiatives, in particular, the East of England Biodiversity Forum;
 - f. Undertake periodic progress reviews and prepare status reports, using the national Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS), in liaison with BARS champions;
 - g. Demonstrate the value of BAP engagement to potential funders and promote their involvement in the biodiversity process.
8. For its successes, the partnership was awarded with three Green Apple awards during the last ten years, for the *Biodiversity Checklist*, the *Farmers Biodiversity Pack* and the *50 year Biodiversity Vision Map*. The Vision Map has been incorporated into the Structure Plan and now into the South Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Strategy.
9. Recent successes of the partnership during the last year include:
 - a. Establishment of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biological Records Centre (at the Wildlife Trust, Cambourne).
 - b. Mapping of water vole populations through the Water Vole Recovery Project
 - c. Completion of the Cam Valley Sustainable Farming Project.
 - d. Delivering a training workshop, for planning officers, about LDF and biodiversity.
 - e. Re-surveys of County Wildlife Sites in all districts, either funded by the districts through planning delivery grants or through the Biodiversity Partnership.
 - f. Input of all BAP actions and targets into BARS (Biological Action Reporting System), which forms the basis for the ongoing reporting.

Considerations

10. The Biodiversity Partnership is an established steering group comprised of local authorities and environmental organisations which steer and fund the work of the group and coordinator.

11. Partner's contributions to the Biodiversity Partnership post and projects in 2006/2007 are outlined below.

Partner Organisation.	
Cambridgeshire County Council	7,500
Huntingdon District Council	5,390
South Cambridgeshire District Council	5,520
East Cambridgeshire District Council	0
Cambridge City Council	0
Fenland District Council	3,000
Peterborough City Council	3,000
Forestry Commission	500
Environment Agency	6,000
English Nature	15400
Total	46,310

12. The Biodiversity Partnership plans to hold a 10 year celebration event on September 26th 2006 to showcase its successes, to secure the continued support and raise the profile of the partnership.
13. The Biodiversity Partnership sets out to write a 10 year strategy, including a Funding, Communication and Monitoring strategy, in consultation with the partner organisations. A vision for the next 10 years will be communicated at the 10 year celebration and will form the basis of the 10 year strategy.
14. The Biodiversity Partnership will review targets and actions in the BAPs and will also devise a reporting structure for the BAP actions through a system of designated champions.
15. A more structured approach to grant aid via the partnership's project fund has recently been established to focus on BAP targets and priority actions and to ensure that a range of different project types is funded, across different SAPs and HAPs. The Council is eligible to apply to this grant fund.
16. The Orchard Phase 1 survey which took place during the last year has highlighted the decline in traditional Orchards in the county. South Cambridgeshire District has several traditional orchard sites, e.g. in Cottenham, Over, Melbourn, Meldreth, Rampton and Girton. The second phase of the survey, taking place over the next two summers will assess the biodiversity value of the remnants of traditional orchards.
17. Nature In Your Neighbourhood, a community involvement project during 2002-2004 that was initiated by the Biodiversity Partnership supported local groups at Lolworth, Litlington Pit and Little Shelford. These groups are still active today, looking after Lolworth Wildflower Meadow, Litlington Chalkpit and surrounding grassland and Little Shelford Recreation Ground and Village Pond.

Options

18. The Conservation & Design Advisory Group are requested to either:
- a) Express support for the continued development of the partnership and recommend that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio holder continues to support, where possible, the current level of funding allocation into 2007/08 for the Biodiversity Partnership as an effective and value-for-money partnership initiative.

or

- b) Recommend that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio holder further reviews the level of funding for the Biodiversity Group in the light of the forthcoming budget proposals.

Financial Implications

19. The Council support for the Biodiversity Partnership (which funds the Co-ordinator's post) is taken from the annual revenue allocation for *Biodiversity Partnership*, within the Conservation & Design budget. Current financial allowance of £5,520 provides for the continued support of the post in 2006/07, with the expectation that similar support would continue into 2007/08.

Legal Implications

20. None specific. Support for the Biodiversity Partnership is discretionary.

Staffing Implications

21. None specific.

Risk Management Implications

22. The Council has identified the need to strengthen biodiversity conservation through its own Biodiversity Strategy. The support of the Co-ordinator is still needed in order to ensure a consistent approach with the County plan.

Consultations

23. None specific.

Conclusions/Summary

24. Members will be aware of the increasing need for biodiversity conservation, to deliver an enhanced quality of village life. The Biodiversity Partnership and the Co-ordinator continue to provide an effective lead in the conservation of the county's biodiversity. The Biodiversity Co-ordinator's role is considered to provide an invaluable strategic service disseminating both national and regional information and supporting the implementation of district level initiatives.
25. PPS9: *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation* makes reference to local biodiversity partnerships and the how they can be effective in deciding county BAP priorities and objectives that the planning system can contribute towards. Furthermore, within the supporting document to PPS9, *A Guide to Good Practice*, the Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Partnership receives a specific mention for the *Biodiversity Checklist* that it produced in 2001 as an innovative and effective contribution to development control and the enhancement of biodiversity.

Recommendation.

26. That the Conservation & Design Advisory Group expresses support for the continued development of the Biodiversity Partnership and recommends that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio holder maintains, where possible, the current funding allocation into 2007/08 for the Biodiversity Partnership as an effective and value-for-money initiative.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Planning Policy Statement 9: *A Guide to Good Practice*. ODPM, 2006

Contact Officer: Rob Mungovan – Ecology Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713402

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SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO:	Conservation & Design Advisory Group Conservation, Sustainability & Community Planning Portfolio Holder	12 th July 2006
AUTHOR/S:	Conservation & Design Manager	

PROPOSED CAMBRIDGESHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY PARTNERSHIP

Purpose

1. To consider the proposed development of a formal 'Service Level Agreement' with the County Council to create a county wide archaeology partnership to support specific countryside archaeology work. This would require a potential new funding allocation to be established from 2007/08.

Adrian Tindall, the County Archaeologist, will make a presentation on this item at the meeting.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2.	Quality, Accessible Services	The proposal seeks to enhance the archaeology service available to the Council by creating a service level agreement, tied to a set of agreed performance indicators relevant to South Cambs.
	Village Life	Archaeological sites make a significant contribution to the heritage and character of many of the villages.
	Sustainability	The proposal will support the sustainable development of the area while ensuring the preservation and management of heritages assets.
	Partnership	The scheme will be a partnership with the County and the 5 districts.

Background

3. Members will recall considering an outline report on this issue at the 26th April 2006 meeting at which it was decided to invite the County Archaeologist to present a more detailed proposal to the 12th July 2006 meeting to enable the exploration of detailed options and the implications for budgets for 2007/08 onwards.
4. At present the Council is supported by the County Council on archaeological issues. The work of the archeologists is outlined below.

Considerations

5. ***Cambridgeshire Archaeology Service***
Cambridgeshire Archaeology Service works in partnership with others to protect, record, enhance and promote the county's archaeology and historic environment. It consists of two teams: the *Historic Environment Team*, which maintains the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record and provides planning and countryside

advice; and the *Archaeological Field Unit* which carries out archaeological fieldwork and provides a programme of outreach and learning.

6. The County Archaeologist now proposes that a form of 'Service Level Agreement' should be developed, tied to an agreed set of performance indicators, to ensure that the Historic Environment Team can support the council in meeting its historic environment objectives beyond 2007. This would be based on an annual payment based on the known archaeological resources in the district and the degree of development pressure it faces.
7. The projected sum would be of the order of £25,000 per annum divided pro-rata between the five district Councils. In South Cambs. the contribution would amount to £7,500. The funding source could be the Planning Delivery Grant if this was considered appropriate and finance was available.
8. The support for the service would be considered on an annual basis commencing in 2007/08 and would have an impact on the revenue budget or Planning Delivery Grant Budget.
9. ***The role of the Historic Environment Team***
The Historic Environment Team has for many years worked in informal partnership with the District Council to protect, record, enhance and promote South Cambs. archaeology and historic environment. This includes :
 - i. Advising on around 120 development proposals and 30 archaeological contracts each year in South Cambridgeshire, in line with government planning guidance. Recent and current projects include the new settlements at Cambourne, Northstowe and Longstanton West, infrastructure schemes such as the Huntingdon-Cambridge Guided Busway, and road schemes such as the Papworth By-Pass and A428 improvements. The team also advises on archaeological policies in the local development framework.
 - ii. Maintaining and managing the Historic Environment Record (HER) of nearly 15,000 sites, monuments and finds in the county, of which around 5,000 sites are in South Cambridgeshire. The HER responds to over 1,000 enquiries each year from planners, developers, utilities, archaeological contractors, researchers and the general public. The HER is expanding to embrace all aspects of the historic environment, including historic buildings, registered parks and gardens, industrial and 20th century remains. It also curates the archive of finds from archaeological fieldwork in the county.
 - iii. Advising farmers and landowners on the protection, management and enhancement of archaeological sites and monuments in the countryside. This includes advice on Environmental Stewardship and Woodland Grant schemes, and active enhancement and interpretation of sites such as Bartlow Hills Roman burial mounds, Fleam Dyke Anglo-Saxon earthwork and the medieval castle at Giants Hill, Rampton.
 - iv. Working in partnership with English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund, central government, district councils and community groups on projects to enhance our understanding and management of Cambridgeshire's historic environment. These have included projects to survey Cambridgeshire's historic towns, characterise its historic landscape and map its archaeological finds.

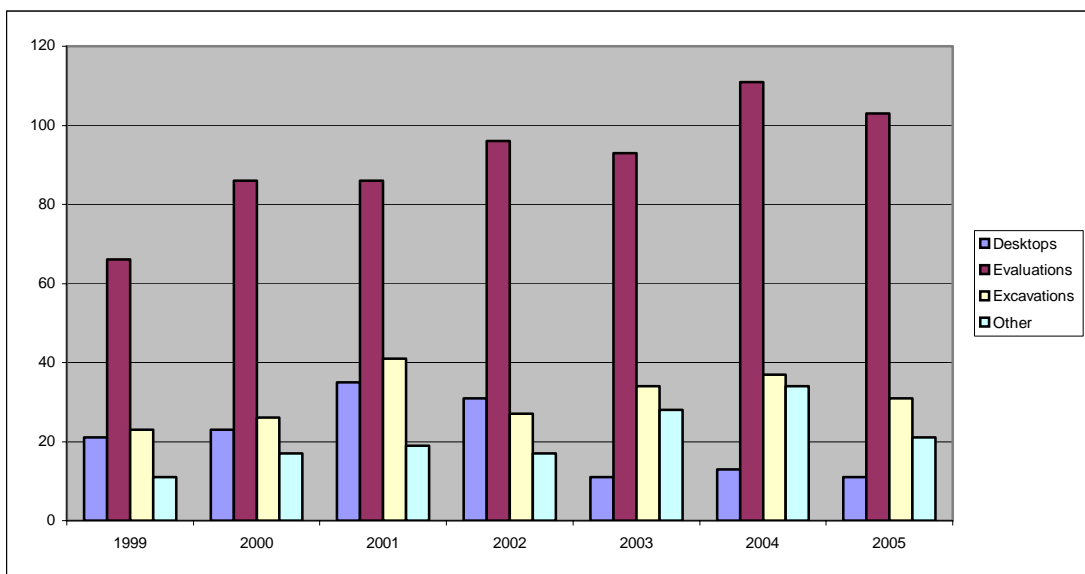
- v. Contributing with national and regional bodies to the government’s historic environment agenda, including the proposed Heritage Protection Review, PPG15/16 Review, HELM, and statutory HERs.
- vi. Contributing to the Archaeology Service’s highly successful Outreach and Learning programme.

10. **The need for change**

In recent years the Growth Agenda has led to a steady escalation in the workload of the Historic Environment Team. Cambridgeshire is the fastest growing shire county in England, and Regional Planning Guidance points to an unprecedented scale of development within the sub-region by 2021.

11. This has been reflected in a proportionate increase in the demand for specialist information and advice on the impact of development on Cambridgeshire’s historic environment:

Figure 1: archaeological work in Cambridgeshire, 1999-2005



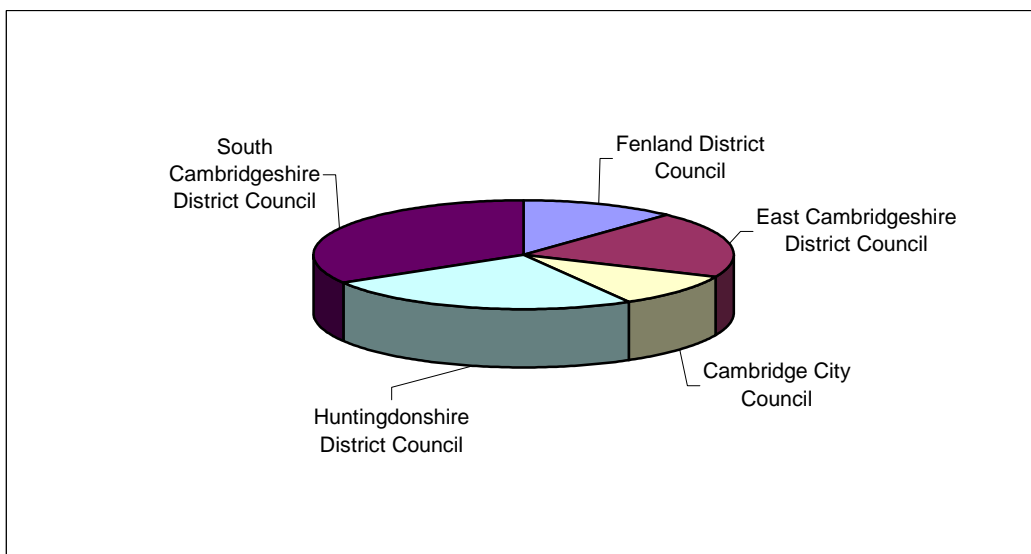
12. In parallel with this, the government is strongly promoting its agenda for more integrated management of the historic environment through
- (a) Creating a unified Register of Historic Sites and Buildings of England, with a simplified and devolved consent procedure
 - (b) Amalgamating PPGs 15 and 16 into a single PPS on *Planning for the Historic Environment*
 - (c) Formulating national Performance Indicators for the Historic Environment
 - (d) Requiring local authorities to establish and maintain, or have access to, an Historic Environment Record
 - (e) Supporting local authorities through HELM and Historic Environment Champions.
13. Over half of the Historic Environment Team’s work is undertaken on behalf of district partners, but without any financial support from them in return. In the face of the pressures described above, it is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain the present level of service without a more formal financial arrangement with district partners.

14. **Possible funding options**

There appear to be two options for sustaining the present level of service to the District Council: recharging fees pro rata, or delivering the service through a Service Level Agreement. Recharging has the advantage to the district of greater flexibility, but an SLA would allow more effective budgetary planning, simpler administration and longer-term security. For these reasons an SLA would be the preferred option.

15. During 2005/6 the five Cambridgeshire districts were approached with a proposal to form a Cambridgeshire Archaeology and Planning Partnership (CAPP). This would take the form of a Service Level Agreement, tied to a set of agreed performance indicators, in return for an annual payment based on the known archaeological resource and the degree of development pressure it faces, and perhaps funded from a source such as the Planning Delivery Grant.

Figure 2: archaeology and development, by district



Options

16. The Conservation & Design Advisory Group are requested to consider the following :
- To support in principle the concept of developing a service level agreement with the County Council and district partners, and recommend that the Conservation, Sustainability & Community Planning Portfolio Holder allocates appropriate funding sources for 2007/08 subject to the identification of suitable and sustainable resources and without compromising other key Conservation & Design objectives.
 - To decline to support the concept of developing a service level agreement with the County Council and district partners, stating the reasons for this option.

Financial Implications

17. At present there is no revenue contribution made to the archaeology service. Cambridgeshire Archaeology Service is seeking a total contribution from the districts of £25,000 per annum, commencing in April 2007. In South Cambridgeshire, the *pro rata* contribution would amount to £7,500 per annum.

18. Such an arrangement would be extended to include other partners who call upon the expertise of the Historic Environment Team, including County Council departments and services, Diocesan Advisory Committees, neighbouring local authorities, and so on.
19. As well as sustaining the present service, it would allow enhancements such as the provision to partners of digital GIS datasets and upgrades, a more accessible and compliant HER, active membership of planning and infrastructure groups, and a regular and more formal reporting procedure.
20. This archaeology service is highly valued, however, without additional resources, it is becoming increasingly difficult to justify and sustain the level of service currently provided without some form of supplementary support.
21. The proposed Service Level Agreement would have an impact on the revenue budget or Planning Delivery Grant budgets, anticipated to be an average annual cost of around £7,500. SCDC's contribution would be greater than some of the other districts due to the greater number of archaeological sites and the extent of the development agenda.
22. Funding may be available through the Planning Delivery Grant if an appropriate Service Level Agreement can be developed and approved by all 5 districts.
23. SCDC currently provides *capital* funding of £3,500 to the County to maintain Scheduled Monuments, under the "Monument Management Programme".
24. Members will be aware that the budgetary process for 2006/07 has yet to commence. The comments of the Finance Section will be reported at the meeting.

Legal Implications

25. None the proposed Service Level Agreement would be discretionary.

Staffing Implications

26. The proposed Service Level Agreement would support a dedicated countryside archaeological post, based at the County Council.

Risk Management Implications

27. It is important that a full range of archaeology support is maintained in the light of the huge development agenda in the district. Funding however, needs to be sustainable and secure.

Consultations

28. Further consultation will be undertaken with the other districts and heritage bodies in the event of the support for the concept. It is hoped to determine the reaction to the proposed new county-wide partnership at a meeting of the Development Control Forum in September 2006 to enable budgets to be developed for 2007/08.
29. Further consultation with the Finance Department will be reported at the meeting.

Conclusions/Summary

30. It is evident that it is important to ensure that the level of archaeological support available to the district, both in terms of development control advice and the management of scheduled sites should not diminished. This is particularly the case as it will have a significant role to play in delivering the new development agenda. The development of specific targets and indicators tied into a Service Level Agreement could ensure the better targeting and maintenance of the service for the benefit of the district.

Recommendations

31. That the Conservation & Design Advisory Group area recommend that the Conservation, Sustainability & Community Planning Portfolio Holder :
- (a) supports *in principle*, the concept of developing a 'Service Level Agreement' with the County Council and district partners, to develop and maintain the countryside archaeological service,
 - (b) authorises officers to attempt to identify suitable and sustainable funding resources, potentially including the Planning Delivery Grant which may be allocated without compromising other key Conservation & Design or portfolio objectives.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Letter from County Archaeologist – 4th January 2006.

Contact Officer:

Adrian Tindall –County Archaeologist, Cambridgeshire County Council.
Nick Grimshaw - Conservation & Design Manager.
Telephone: (01954) 713180

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO:	Conservation and Design Advisory Group Conservation, Sustainability & Community Planning Portfolio Holder	12 th July 2006
AUTHOR/S:	Conservation and Design Manager	

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

Purpose

1. To present to members of the Conservation and Design Advisory Group the amendments made following detailed consideration of the public consultation exercise for the draft South Cambs. Biodiversity Strategy and to seek support to recommend the draft to Cabinet for adoption as Council Policy.

Copies will be available for Members and can be viewed on the web site at:
www.scambs.gov.uk/biodiversitystrategy

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2.	Quality, Accessible Services	The Biodiversity Strategy will be fundamental to the delivery of high quality planning services.
	Village Life	The Strategy will have a significant impact upon the enhancement of village life by ensuring that new development seeks to conserve and further enhance biodiversity.
	Sustainability	The Strategy will be fundamental to the achievement of sustainable development by seeking the conservation of priority species and habitats.
	Partnership	The Strategy outlines the current extent of external and internal partnerships. The Strategy will act as a catalyst for the forging of further partnerships.

Background

3. On the 26th January 2005 the Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the developing *Biodiversity Strategy* that was to be statement of the Council's policy in respect of the preservation and enhancement of the district's biodiversity.
4. A further version of the Strategy was presented to the Group on the 27th April 2005 where the content and vision of the document was considered.
5. A final pre-consultation draft of the Strategy was presented to the Group on the 14th December 2005 for consideration and comment prior to its final draft production and undertaking of the consultation exercise.
6. Following printing of the draft Strategy, it was issued for public consultation via Members, all parish councils and selected conservation bodies and development organisations on the 10th March 2006. It was also published on the Council's website. The consultation period closed on 14th April and a report was presented to the Group on the 26th April 2006. A number of comments were received after the end of the consultation period, most significant were those received from the County Council relating to Local Sites.

7. In April 2006 Defra produced its guidance *Local Sites: Guidance on their Identification, Selection and Management*. This guidance conflicted with the approach that was previously presented within the Strategy. It was agreed that it was not desirable to adopt an approach that was not consistent with the latest Government guidance as it would inevitably lead to confusion at a later date. Thus the section of the Strategy on Local Development Control Principles was re-written.

Considerations

8. All relevant comments from consultees have been incorporated and tables published upon the SCDC website. The version of the Strategy presented now incorporates a significant change to Local Development Control Principle BS3, and has resulted in the merging of previous principles BS3 and BS4. The concept of Local Biodiversity Areas has been removed and the Government recommended 'Local Sites' approach adopted (albeit that a Local Sites Partnership for Cambridgeshire is yet to be established).
9. The dates within the SC Biodiversity Action Plan have been set back by one year (where appropriate) to account for the latest set of delays and to keep the document up-to-date.
10. All minor typos have been incorporated.
11. The Strategy is now considered suitable to be put forward for consideration as Council Policy and copies have therefore been distributed for consideration by members of the Conservation & Design Advisory Group. It will also be placed on the Council's web site.
12. The input of the Planning Policy team will be required with respect to technical issues relating to S106 funding contributions before the Strategy can be proposed as Supplementary Planning Guide (SPD). This will be addressed at a later date.

Options

13. The Conservation & Design Advisory Group are requested to either:
 - a) Recommend that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio holder presents a report on this matter to Cabinet seeking adoption of the South Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Strategy as Council Policy.or
 - b) To require officers to bring a further revised version of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Biodiversity Strategy to a future meeting of the Conservation & Design Advisory Group incorporating additional amendments and revisions as agreed during the consideration of this matter by the group at their meeting on 12th July 2006.

Financial Implications

14. The production of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Biodiversity Strategy will be funded from existing departmental resources. While a limited number of reference copies will be produced, publication will largely be by via the website.

Legal Implications

15. The South Cambs. Biodiversity Strategy is to be adopted as Council Policy in the short term. Following adoption of the new LDF (due March 2007) the Strategy will be

reviewed and cross-referenced to the relevant policies contained within the LDF. A sustainability appraisal will be prepared and the revised Strategy (together with the sustainability appraisal) will then be issued for further public consultation prior to adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Staffing Implications

16. None specific.

Risk Management Implications

17. The Council has identified the need to strengthen biodiversity conservation and to produce detailed biodiversity guidance for the development control process in accordance with PPS9: *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation*. Failure to complete the publication and adoption of the Strategy may result in a lack of clear guidance and missed opportunities for biodiversity conservation.

Consultations

18. The draft South Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Strategy was issued for wide consultation as detailed in the report presented to the Group on the 26th April 2006.

Conclusions/Summary

19. Members will be aware of the increasing need for biodiversity conservation and to deliver an enhanced quality of village life. The establishment and adoption of appropriate planning guidance on biodiversity is fundamental to the achievement of a high quality development.
20. It is perhaps relevant to note that PPS9: *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation* provides a significant steer for the planning guidance section of the Strategy and has been particularly well received by English Nature and the RSPB.
21. The Strategy will be an integral part of the emerging policy framework for the Council and will consequently have a major role to play in conserving biodiversity across the district.

Recommendations

22. The Conservation & Design Advisory Group are requested to express support for the Strategy and recommend that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder presents the *South Cambs. Biodiversity Strategy* to Cabinet to seek its approval and adoption as Council Policy.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Planning Policy Statement 9: *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation*. ODPM, 2005 Report to the Conservation Advisory Group 26th April 2006, together with appendices of the consultation exercise.

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SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO:	Conservation & Design Advisory Group. Conservation, Sustainability & Community Planning Portfolio Holder	12 th July 2006
AUTHOR/S:	Conservation & Design Manager	

A GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY FOR THE CAMBRIDGE SUB REGION

Purpose

1. To present to Members the Green Infrastructure Strategy and seek support for Cabinet to adopt or endorse these documents to enable the development of the projects as appropriate.

A copy of the Summary Report will be distributed for members with the agenda and a presentation on the strategy will be made at the meeting. It can be viewed on line at : www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk/Document_links.asp?sec_id=811

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2.	Quality, Accessible Services	<p>The Green Infrastructure Strategy is one of the 4 'Quality of Life' Strategies which are expected to have a key role to play in the planning and delivery of the new communities.</p> <p>It is proposed that the strategy will be incorporated into a Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, linked to the Local Development Framework, later in 2006/7.</p> <p>The strategy will help focus the Council's work on the delivery of enhanced and better connected biodiversity and improved access to the countryside, both of which are included as actions in the Community Strategy and are fundamental to planning policy.</p>
	Village Life	<p>The strategy will develop a cohesive network of green spaces which will enhance the opportunities for informal recreation and biodiversity provision and thereby enhance the quality of life in the existing villages and help mitigate the demands of communities in the new developments.</p>
	Sustainability	<p>The provision of a cohesive network of green spaces is fundamental to the achievement of sustainability not only by means improved access to the countryside but also by creating new strategic greenspaces which will help mitigate for climate change.</p>
	Partnership	<p>The development of the strategy has been achieved by a successful partnership of public and its delivery will be reliant upon this being developed to include the private sector.</p>

Background

3. The Green Infrastructure Strategy report is a fundamental part of the drive to create a series of new communities in the Cambridge Sub Region, in accordance with the approved Structure Plan. It sets out an exciting and realistic vision for using planned

development to enhance and extend our network of large scale green spaces, protected sites, nature reserves and greenway linkages.

4. The strategy was completed by external consultants and managed and funded through a steering group involving a wide range of partners. South Cambridgeshire District Council has been a key funding partner on the study as this Council (along with Cambridge City Council) is the local authority area most affected by major growth in the Sub Region.
5. The vision is to create a “Green Infrastructure” for the sub-region which is described as :

“the sub-regional network of protected sites, nature reserves, greenspaces and greenway linkages. Green Infrastructure should provide (where possible) multi-functional uses, i.e wildlife, recreational and cultural experience, as well as delivering ecological services, such as flood protection and microclimate control. It should also operate at all spatial scales from urban centres though to open countryside”.

Considerations

6. The main objective of the Green Infrastructure Strategy is to create a cohesive and imaginative plan for the provision of large-scale Green Infrastructure for the Cambridge Sub-region over the next 20 years. The purpose is to complement and support housing growth, and to ensure a good quality of life for all existing and new residents for the next 20 years and beyond.
7. The provision of appropriate levels of green infrastructure are acknowledged by the Government as a key priority for the successful implementation of the growth areas, to accommodate and counteract major urban development.
8. The **strategic objectives** which underpin the Green Infrastructure Strategy are :
 - (a) The provision of improved linkages between existing and proposed Green Infrastructure resources.
 - (b) Multi-functionality of greenspace in and around settlements.
 - (c) Creation of enhanced access for all, and by sustainable, means to promote a healthier lifestyle.
 - (d) The enhancement of landscape appropriate to the distinctive patterns of Cambridgeshire.
 - (e) Biodiversity enhancement reflecting and protecting existing resources.
 - (f) Development of prominent landmark projects to provide a focus for the strategy.
9. The strategy sets out the following **Strategic Recommendations** which are summarised and presented for consideration and approval below.

Enhancement of existing habitats.

- R1 - Promote all existing river corridors as focal features for biodiversity and access enhancement and creation.
- R2 - Promote the extension/creation of enhanced biodiversity linkages between ancient woodland clusters.
- R3 - Promote the extension/creation of traditional fen habitats, inc. wetland, meadow and wet woodland with seasonal flooding.
- R4 - Identify/promote opportunities to enhance linkages of chalk habitats.

R5 - Protect acidic heath habitats, encourage restoration and enhance linkages with sites to the west on the Greensand Ridge and to the east to the Breckland.

Creation of new biodiversity corridors.

R6 - Promote development of 'green bridges' over major physical barriers

R7 - Create new strategic biodiversity and access corridors linking main settlements and green hubs.

Provision of new major greenspaces to serve existing and new populations.

R8 - Create a range of new strategic, accessible greenspaces in association with planned major development.

R9 - Develop existing and create new orbital and strategic recreational routes to the countryside in association with existing and planned development.

Enhancement of the recreational access network.

R10 - Promote enhanced and new waterway links within the Fens to provide improved access by water.

R11 – Promote biodiversity and landscape enhancements in rural areas, particularly along the Strategic Rights of Way.

R12 – Promote and improve the network, status and quality of strategic/published routes.

R13 - Promote the provision of river bridging points in key parts of the Rights of Way network.

Provision of Landmark Projects as a catalyst for delivery.

R14 - Support the creation and development of Landmark Projects to focus delivery of the Green Infrastructure Strategy and encourage linkage with recreational and historic/cultural sites and projects.

10. The **spatial development** and delivery of the Green Infrastructure Strategy is essentially composed of three components : (a) corridors; (b) sites and (c) areas. These are outlined below :

(a) *Corridors*

The first part of the development of the strategy is the creation of a 'green grid', which is the network of routes across the area. The Ouse Valley and Ouse Washes are the most prominent features but the other rivers (such as Cam, Rhee, Shep), streams, drains, etc are also a key part of the network. The new corridors have been identified to provide linkage between biodiversity clusters and also provide enhanced public access.

(b) *Sites*

More than 20 significant sites are included in the strategy, comprising both existing major sites (such as Wimpole Hall, Wandlebury, Denny Abbey & Farmland Museum) and new facilities in close proximity to urban expansions (such as the country parks at Northstowe and the Southern Fringe/Monsanto).

(c) *Areas.*

Initiatives which relate to the wider agricultural landscapes are also included and aim to enhance the local landscape character and biodiversity interest.

11. A series of potential project have been identified to address the delivery of each strategic recommendation. These are prioritised in the report (*refer to Table A – Page 25*). The projects have been developed to build upon existing initiatives that are currently being developed, to create a complementary programme of initiatives.

12. The highest **priority initiatives** with the most direct impact relevance to South Cambridgeshire are summarised in the table below.

Green Infrastructure Strategy recommendation	Project Name	Lead Delivery Organisation.	Current status <i>(June 2006)</i>
R1 - Promote all existing river corridors as focal features for biodiversity and access enhancement and creation.	Fen Drayton Lakes	RSPB	Implementation. Growth Area Funding approved – 2006-08
R1 - Promote all existing river corridors as focal features for biodiversity and access enhancement and creation.	River Rhee Enhancement	Environment Agency, SCDC.	Project concept being developed.
R1 - Promote all existing river corridors as focal features for biodiversity and access enhancement and creation.	Cam Valley Project – Cambridge to Ely.	Farmland Museum, English Heritage Nat. Trust, SCDC	Project outline developed for GAF bidding round.
R2 - Promote the extension and creation of enhanced biodiversity linkages between ancient woodland clusters.	Forest of South Cambridgeshire	Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust.	Implementation. Growth Area Funding approved – 2006-08
R3 - Promote the extension and creation of traditional fen habitats, inc. wetland, meadow and wet woodland with seasonal flooding.	Wicken Fen Vision	National Trust	Implementation. Growth Area Funding approved 2004-06 & 2006-08
R3 - Promote the extension and creation of traditional fen habitats, inc. wetland, meadow and wet woodland with seasonal flooding.	Chalk landscapes enhancement – south east of Cambridge.	Devils Dyke Steering Group	Project outline developed for GAF bidding round.
R7 - Create new strategic biodiversity and access corridors linking main settlements and green hubs.	Guided busway corridor	CCC, SCDC, Wildlife Trust.	To be implemented subject to Planning Permission & final funding approval.
R7 - Create new strategic biodiversity and access corridors linking main settlements and green hubs.	Northstowe, Cottenham to Denny Abbey/Farm Museum & Wicken fen corridor.	Farmland Museum, English Heritage, SCDC Farm,	Project outline to be developed - along with landscape strategy for Northstowe.
R7 - Create new strategic biodiversity and access corridors linking main settlements and green hubs.	Wimpole Hub – Cobbs Wood Demonstration Farm	National Trust	Project concept being developed.
R7 - Create new strategic biodiversity and access corridors linking main settlements and green hubs.	North west Cambridge settlements link - Cambourne	CCC, SCDC	Project concept being developed.
R8 - Create a range of new strategic, accessible greenspaces in association with planned major development.	Gog Magog Countryside Project	Cambridge Pres. Society & Wildlife Trust.	Project outline developed for GAF bidding round.
R8 - Create a range of new strategic, accessible greenspaces in association with planned major development.	Northstowe new settlement. Landscape buffers to existing villages, water park & country park	Developers & SCDC	Project outline developed - along with landscape strategy for Northstowe.
R8 - Create a range of new strategic, accessible greenspaces in association with planned major development.	Coton Countryside Reserve	Cambridge Pres. Society.	Implementation. Growth Area Funding approved – 2004-06

R8 - Create a range of new strategic, accessible greenspaces in association with planned major development.	Cambridge Southern Fringe & Monsanto site – strategic open space on enhanced Cam corridor	Developers & SCDC	Project outline developed - along with landscape strategy for Southern Fringe..
R8 - Create a range of new strategic, accessible greenspaces in association with planned major development.	Northern Fringe of Cambridge enhanced access to land east of Fen Rd.	Developers & SCDC, CCC	Project to be developed - along with landscape strategy.
R8 - Create a range of new strategic, accessible greenspaces in association with planned major development.	Northern Fringe – Arbury Camp – enhanced linkage to west of Histon Rd	Developers & SCDC, CCC	Project implementation to be developed - along with landscape strategy.
R9 - Develop existing and create new orbital and strategic recreational routes to the countryside in association with existing and planned development.	Create cycleway, bridleway along route of Guided Busway	CCC	To be implemented subject to Planning Permission & final funding approval.
R11 – Promote biodiversity and landscape enhancements in rural areas, particularly along the Strategic Rights of Way.	New strategic access corridor from Wilbrham Fen and Fleam Dyke to Icknield Way	CCC, Wildlife Trust, Eng.Nature, Eng.Heritage	Project to be developed - along with strategic landscape strategy.
R11 – Promote biodiversity and landscape enhancements in rural areas, particularly along the Strategic Rights of Way.	Chalk grassland project – Roman Road & Fleam Dyke	CCC, Wildlife Trust, Eng.Nature, Eng.Heritage	Project on-going and under further development - along with Linear Sites Project.
R13 - Promote the provision of river bridging points in key parts of the Rights of Way network.	River Cam Crossing at Upware to aid east-west connection from Wicken Fen to Denny Abbey & west	Nat Trust, EA, SCDC, Sustrans CCC	Project on-going and under further development
R13 - Promote the provision of river bridging points in key parts of the Rights of Way network.	Additional crossing of R.Ouse at Needingworth, Church End	CCC	Project to be developed- along with strategic landscape strategy.
R14 - Support the creation and development of Landmark Projects to focus and encourage linkage with recreational and historic/cultural sites and projects.	Bridge of Reeds link to Wicken Fen Vision	National Trust	Project on-going and under further development.

13. Members will recognise that a number of the above key projects have previously been considered by the Conservation Advisory Group and have already received support, including some funding support. It is considered appropriate that the group continues to act as a forum to examine and develop SCDC support for the priority projects, hence the need to consider the strategy as a whole and gain Council adoption.
14. The Green Infrastructure Strategy is referred to in the **Local Development Framework** documents and the proposal is to incorporate it into a Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document later in 2006. The objective is to ensure the long-term commitment to the strategy to enable its cohesive realisation.
15. It is considered important that the strategy is properly recognised by the local authority as being vital to the successful and sustainable delivery of the growth areas. This will strengthen its status and help attract external funding to secure delivery.

Officers in each of the local authorities in Cambridgeshire are in the process of presenting the strategy to Elected Members for their approval.

Options

16. The Conservation & Design Advisory Group is requested to consider the Green Infrastructure Strategy and either :
- (a) Recommend that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder and the Cabinet support the proposed adoption of the Strategy as Council Policy and authorises officers to continue to work with partners to secure its long-term delivery.
- Or
- (b) Declines to recommend that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder and Cabinet support the proposed adoption of the Strategy as Council Policy, outlining the reasons for this option.

Financial Implications

17. The delivery of the Green Infrastructure will be achieved by a wide range of options and opportunities for funding. These include : direct developer's funding; provision of suitable sites or local facilities by developer as a fundamental contribution in order to meet basic planning needs. Funding has also to date been made available from the Government's "Growth Area Fund". It is clear that S.106 packages will not on their own meet all the demands identified and the strategies.
18. Therefore, it is important to identify a balanced programme of prioritised initiatives for which funding from a variety of sources will need to be drawn over the life of the strategy. Crucially the Council's encouragement and support is required to enable the various lead partner organisations secure necessary funding.
19. It is not expected that the Council will sign up to any financial commitment to the delivery of the strategy at this stage. It is important though that it commits through officer time, member support and Planning Policy development, to work in partnership towards the achievement of the component projects.

Legal Implications

21. No legal implications at this stage, support for the strategy is discretionary.

Staffing Implications

22. SCDC staff have been involved in the development of the strategy and its component projects. This is expected to continue and may increase if assistance is required with developing funding bids.

Risk Management Implications

23. The main risk is to the successful delivery of the growth areas if these Strategies are not taken into consideration and delivered.

Consultations

24. Wide consultation with stakeholders has taken place with each of the studies. Each individual component project will be subject to further consultation, including presentation to C&DAG if appropriate.

Conclusions/Summary

25. Sir David Trippier (Chairman of Cambridgeshire Horizons) and Jonathon Porrit (Chairman of the UK Sustainable Development Commission) jointly launched the Green Infrastructure Strategy on 9th June 2006. In launching the strategy they laid great emphasis on the *fundamental necessity* of achieving the delivery of the long-term strategy, as a key component of the growth agenda (rather than as an optional addition to housing development).
26. It was stressed that the enhancement and provision of space to accommodate both the movement of wildlife and community recreation is essential to ensure that the demands of development does not compromise existing quality of life or negate the attractiveness of the area for future communities. The Green Infrastructure Strategy is, therefore, one of the basic strategic tools to help positively manage this development process. Members are thus requested to support the adoption of the strategy.

Recommendation.

27. That the Conservation & Design Advisory Group expresses support for the development of the Green Infrastructure Strategy and recommends that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder and the Cabinet support the adoption of the Strategy as Council Policy, and authorises officers to continue to work with partners to secure its long-term delivery.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Quality of Life Programme : "Green Infrastructure Strategy" - Cambridgeshire Horizons – 2006.

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SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Conservation and Design Advisory Group
Conservation, Sustainability & Community Planning Portfolio Holder

AUTHOR/S: Conservation & Design Manager

12th July 2006

CONSERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDES

Purpose

1. To request that members of the Conservation and Design Advisory Group establish a small task/finish sub-group to meet with officers in order to review emerging drafts for new Conservation Area Design Guides over the coming year.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. Quality, Accessible Services	The Conservation Area Design Guides will be used as local design guides and, therefore, assist in achieving the Council's aim of improved development standards and the delivery of a high quality planning service. The completion of Conservation Area Appraisals, which inform the Design Guides are now a Best Value Performance Indicator for all district councils.
Village Life	The Conservation Area Design Guides will have a significant impact on the enhancement of village life by ensuring that new development in historic environments is both appropriate to its context and of demonstrable quality.
Sustainability	The Conservation Area Design Guides will provide a valuable resource in ensuring the delivery of new sustainable development.
Partnership	The Conservation Area Design Guides will be a useful resource for both the District Council and the relevant Parish Councils.

Background

3. Last year the, then Conservation Advisory Group, appointed a task/finish sub group comprising the Chairman, Vice-chairman and three other members to meet with David Grech, the Conservation Area and Design Officer and Shona Smith, Conservation Assistant. The purpose was to review the draft appraisals prepared by consultants on behalf of SCDC for the Conservation Areas at Fen Ditton, Bates Bite Lock, Swavesey, Horningsea and Tevesham, together with a draft appraisal for the proposed new Conservation Area at Little Gransden (the latter being prepared in house).
4. The outcome of this process resulted in a number of modifications being requested from the consultants' prior to embarking on public consultation on these new appraisals. There is a need to re-establish this group to look at the Conservation Areas Design Guides that will be prepared over the course of the coming year.

Considerations

5. In the current year it is proposed to bring forward a further set of new Conservation Area Design Guides. It is hoped that funding will be available from within the Planning Delivery Grant to enable external consultants to again be appointed to assist in the preparation of the appraisals, though it is also planned to produce some appraisals 'in house'.
6. In order to avoid unnecessary delays in preparing these appraisals for public consultation it is desirable to have a small working party of members who can meet with the officers at mutually agreed times to consider the emerging draft appraisals. The consideration will include examining any recommendations for revising the boundaries of the Conservation Areas as well as the clarity and completeness of the documents and then presenting results to the Conservation & Design Advisory Group for recommendation to the portfolio holder and subsequent presentation to Cabinet for adoption as policy.

Options

7. The Conservation & Design Advisory Group are requested to either :
 - a) Establish a small task/finish sub-group to meet with the officers to consider the emerging Conservation Area Appraisals;
 - or
 - b) To require officers to bring all emerging draft appraisals to the full Conservation & Design Advisory Group for consideration at their next appropriate meeting.

Financial Implications

8. The production of the Conservation Area Design Guides is now a Best Value Performance Indicator, and, therefore, failure to sustain the programme will mean that Government set targets are not met and this may affect the funding of Planning Delivery Grant. It is proposed to meet the programme initially by commissioning consultants to provide the Design Guides using Capital funding from Planning Delivery grant. Confirmation of capital funding allocation will be reported to the meeting.

Legal Implications

9. The Conservation Area Design Guides will include Management Proposals and Design Guidance tailored for each individual Conservation Area and are to be eventually adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in support of the Local Development Framework and the statutory Local Plan.

Staffing Implications

10. Members will be aware of the demands on the Conservation & Design Service resulting from the new development agenda, as well as the new targets emerging from Government to enhance delivery of such services. Given current staff resources the achievement of both conservation targets and the development agenda is only possible by making the best use of available skills, and in the short-term purchasing the Design Guides as completed tools from consultants.

Risk Management Implications

11. The preparation of up-to-date Conservation Area Design Guides and Management Proposals has been selected by Central Government as a Best Value Performance Indicator. Requiring all draft appraisals to be tabled for consideration by the full Conservation & Design Advisory Group may result in delays in their production, resulting in the Council failing to meet the declared targets for new Conservation Area Design Guides in the current year. This might in turn impact on future Planning Delivery Grant allocations to this Council.

Consultations

12. Following consideration by the sub-group and officers, the revised draft appraisals will be brought to the next appropriate meeting of the Conservation and Design Advisory Group to seek their agreement to undertake a consultation exercise on the draft appraisals. This process will include the local District Council Member(s), the relevant Parish Council, appropriate amenity bodies, department colleagues, as well as members of the public residing within the relevant Conservation Areas.

Conclusions/Summary

13. Establishing a small task/finish sub-group to meet with officers basis is considered to be the most effective way of progressing the production of appraisals, while at the same time ensuring the emerging drafts are subject to adequate scrutiny.

Recommendations

14. The Conservation and Design Advisory Group is requested to establish a small task/finish sub-group to meet with officers, as necessary, to consider emerging drafts for new Conservation Area Design Guides during the course of the year.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: None specific.

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