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4 January 2016

To: Councillor Robert Turner, Portfolio Holder

Henry Batchelor  
Kevin Cuffley

Aidan Van de Weyer

Opposition Spokesman  
Scrutiny and Overview Committee  
Monitor  
Opposition Spokesman

Dear Sir / Madam

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **PLANNING PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S MEETING**, which will be held in **MONKFIELD ROOM, FIRST FLOOR** at South Cambridgeshire Hall on **TUESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2016 at 2.00 p.m.**

Yours faithfully  
**JEAN HUNTER**  
Chief Executive

**Requests for a large print agenda must be received at least 48 hours before the meeting.**

## AGENDA

	PAGES
<b>PROCEDURAL ITEMS</b>	
1. <b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
2. <b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b> To authorise the Portfolio Holder to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2015 as a correct record.	1 - 2
<b>DECISION ITEMS</b>	
3. <b>Pre-application advice service (Key)</b>	3 - 10
4. <b>Local Development Framework - Annual Monitoring Report 2014-2015</b> Appendix 2 is available only on the Council's website by visiting <a href="http://www.scambs.gov.uk">www.scambs.gov.uk</a> > The Council > Councillors, minutes and agendas and then following the links.	11 - 32
5. <b>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - Response to consultation on proposed changes</b>	33 - 56
<b>STANDING ITEMS</b>	
6. <b>Work Programme</b>	57 - 60
7. <b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	

The next Planning Portfolio Holder meeting is on 10 February 2016 at 10.00am. The Portfolio Holder is asked to consider a schedule of four meetings during 2016-17 (June, September, November, February) with provision for additional meetings should they be needed as part of the Local Plan process.

### **OUR LONG-TERM VISION**

South Cambridgeshire will continue to be the best place to live, work and study in the country. Our district will demonstrate impressive and sustainable economic growth. Our residents will have a superb quality of life in an exceptionally beautiful, rural and green environment.

### **OUR VALUES**

We will demonstrate our corporate values in all our actions. These are:

- Working Together
- Integrity
- Dynamism
- Innovation

## **GUIDANCE NOTES FOR VISITORS TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE HALL**

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# Agenda Item 2

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Planning Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on  
Friday, 4 December 2015 at 10.00 a.m.

Portfolio Holder: Robert Turner

### **Councillors in attendance:**

Scrutiny and Overview Committee monitors: Kevin Cuffley

Opposition spokesmen: Henry Batchelor

Also in attendance: Anna Bradnam and Lynda Harford

### **Officers:**

Jo Mills	Planning and New Communities Director
David Roberts	Principal Planning Officer
Ian Senior	Democratic Services Officer
Alison Talkington	Senior Planning Policy Officer

## **1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Planning Portfolio Holder signed, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2015, subject to the following amendment:

### **Minute 8 (Amendments to the current scheme of delegated powers and functions for planning decisions)**

In the final paragraph, replace the words "...at least..." with the words "...up to..." so that it then stated, "*Recognising the mood of the meeting, the Planning Portfolio Holder agreed to ask officers to look again at the scheme of delegation of planning decisions, and to defer making a recommendation to Full Council for a period of up to six months.*"

## **3. STRATEGIC POLICIES IN THE ADOPTED DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

The Planning Portfolio Holder considered a report identifying policies in the adopted development plan that should be regarded as strategic and with which, therefore, a neighbourhood plan would have to comply. Legal advice stated that Parish Councils should be given the opportunity to comment during a consultation on the proposed list of strategic policies to give them weight prior to a formal decision on them by the Council. The District Council intended to publish its consultation document before Christmas.

Officers highlighted the differences between Appendix A (Strategic Policies in the emerging Local Plan) and Appendix B (Strategic Policies in the adopted development plan for South Cambridgeshire). Neighbourhood Plans adopted by the Council would become a material consideration in the planning process. The Planning and New Communities Director explained that those Neighbourhood Plans adopted on the basis of strategic policies identified in the adopted development plan would not have to be updated once the new Local Plan had been adopted.

Councillor Francis Morris, Chairman of Cottenham Parish Council, addressed the Portfolio

Holder and those present. He pointed out that Parish Councils would find it helpful if consultation highlighted the difference between Appendix A and Appendix B.

The Planning Portfolio Holder agreed

1. The policies in the adopted development plan for South Cambridgeshire that are proposed to be identified as strategic for the purposes of neighbourhood planning as listed in Appendix B of the report from the Planning and New Communities Director; and
2. To carry out a consultation with interested parties, in particular parish councils, the results of which would be reported back to a future Planning Portfolio Holder meeting.

#### **4. UTTLESFORD LOCAL PLAN - RESPONSE TO ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION**

The Planning Portfolio Holder considered a report on the Local Plan Issues and Options consultation being undertaken by Uttlesford District Council.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer referred the Portfolio Holder to the two major concerns for South Cambridgeshire District Council, namely the areas of search along the South Cambridgeshire / Uttlesford border, and the impact on arterial transport links into Cambridge, and its surrounding area. The Planning and New Communities Director added that Cambridgeshire County Council, as Local Highways Authority, had also submitted comments in response to the consultation.

Those present noted the need for a cross-border transport approach, recognising South Cambridgeshire's greater emphasis on public transport (including staff buses provided by businesses such as those at Granta Park) and Uttlesford's reliance on private transport. The Planning and New Communities Director undertook to speak with officers at Cambridgeshire County Council to make sure that this issue was being considered.

Members highlighted the need to consider the impact of Uttlesford's proposals on the adjacent part of Suffolk and, in particular, on Haverhill.

The Planning Portfolio Holder **agreed** the consultation response set out in Appendix 1 of the report from the Planning and New Communities Director, with minor amendments to reflect discussion at the meeting.

#### **5. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Planning Portfolio Holder and others present noted the contents of the Work Programme attached to the agenda.

#### **6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Planning Portfolio Holder meeting had been scheduled for Tuesday 12 January 2016, starting at 2.00pm.

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**The Meeting ended at 10.55 a.m.**

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# Agenda Item 3



South  
Cambridgeshire  
District Council

**Report To:** Planning Portfolio Holder  
**Lead Officer:** Jo Mills

12 January 2016

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## Pre-application advice service

### Purpose

1. To consider the quality and timeliness of pre-application advice that is now being provided following the review agreed by the Planning Portfolio Holder in February 2015 and to present a new fee schedule for 2016/17. This is to ensure that:
  - (a) Applicants/agents are encouraged to request pre-application advice and continue to receive a high-class service; and
  - (b) Income generated through the pre-application charging structure fully recovers the cost of providing the service.

### Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Planning Portfolio Holder (PPH):
  - (a) Notes the progress made in the provision of pre-application advice; and the planned approach in respect of Development Delivery Agreements;
  - (b) Endorses the principle of a revised fee structure for pre-application advice, with staff costs and inflationary uplifts, details of which will be reported to Cabinet in February 2016, and changes to be implemented from 1 April 2016;

### Reasons for Recommendations

3. The delivery of a reliable, well-regarded value for money and cost-effective pre-application advice service is important to help support and facilitate the timely delivery of acceptable and appropriate development.
4. The Council has previously reviewed its charges against those of comparable authorities and the schemes adopted by both Cambridge City and Cambridgeshire County Council. Both these Councils carried out an assessment of cost and benchmarked against other authorities. The existing fee schedule reflects that work.

### Executive Summary

5. The Council operates a formal pre-application advice service. In 2014, complaints about the service, particularly in respect of timeliness of providing advice, led to the start of a strategy being put in place to improve delivery of the service. Following the changes endorsed by the Planning Portfolio Holder in February 2015 and issues raised by planning agents, measures have been put in place to address the quality, timeliness and extent of the service. Recent feedback on the service has been largely positive, although there are a number of pre-application advice requests where the response times have been slow. Steps to improve performance have been put in place including cover for vacant posts and enhanced monitoring arrangements.

6. The Planning and New Communities Service Plan 2015-16 income/savings target of £100,000 arising from the Development Control Improvement Plan is expected to be achieved through income from pre-application fees. At the meeting in February 2015, the anticipated income for providing advice was £114,000. From income received to date, an increase of £105,000 above the budgeted figure for 2014/15 is expected.
7. Some increase in fees to reflect an increase in staff costs over the last 12 months and inflation is recommended.

### **Background**

8. Since 2009, the Council has been providing formal pre-application advice to applicants, developers and their agents. This process is intended to speed up the progress of subsequent planning and related applications, improve the quality of development and provide more certainty in the outcome of applications. It also provides the Council with fee income to offset the time providing the service and potentially saves developers wasted effort and costs by not pursuing abortive schemes.
9. On 3 February 2015, the Planning Portfolio Holder considered a report on the quality and timeliness of the pre-application service as well as revisions to the pre-application charging structure. The following was approved:
  - (a) an increase in fees as proposed with a recommendation that Cabinet approves the increase in fees at its next meeting on 12 February 2015 to be introduced on 1 April 2015.
  - (b) the introduction of a one-off meeting service in addition to the existing service;
  - (c) cessation of the existing free written permitted development advice service with the retention of the Planning Duty Officer service to provide up to 15 minutes of free verbal advice; and
  - (d) Implementation of the above changes from 1 April 2015, with a six-month review taking place at the Portfolio Holder meeting scheduled for 10 November 2015.
10. Cabinet subsequently approved the new increase in fees and these were introduced from early April 2015.

### **Quality, scope and timeliness of the service**

11. At the beginning of July 2014, there were some 300 requests for pre-application advice that remained to be closed. A target of no more than 150 is reasonable given the number of new requests received each month. By mid-October 2014 the number of outstanding requests had been halved to approximately 150.
12. Some 600 paid-for requests for pre-application advice were received over the last 12 months. This compares with approximately 550 the previous year. This demonstrates an increasing demand and confidence in the service. Advice has been provided throughout the year, however, the number of on hand cases has risen and currently stands at 223.
13. An update on the delivery of the pre-application service was given at the Agents Forum on 10 October 2015. Despite previous requests from agents for a one-off



meeting service, the Forum was advised of an extremely low take-up rate – barely half a dozen this year. Agents had no comment on this, and did not raise any particular points on the pre-application service.

14. A one-meeting on site (rather than in the office as is the agreed practice) has since been trialled at the request of an agent. This was well received and in principle at least the service could be extended to include site meetings if requested. The fee for this would also take into account travelling time but does not result in any formal written response being provided.
15. Applicants have occasionally questioned the charges for advice relating to one and two dwellings. There is a significant difference between the two charging rates and given the time spent and scope of the advice, this could be rationalised and a single fee category provided for these applications.
16. A number of developers have taken up the opportunity for design workshops as part of their pre-application process, for example, Cambridge Science Park. These meetings bring together the planning officer with the relevant specialist officers such as Urban Design and Landscape, depending on the type of proposal. The workshops help shape and assess the proposed scheme at an early stage. Feedback so far has been excellent and the service has generated over £7,500 income this year.
17. Applicants/developers continue to be encouraged to use the Design and Enabling Panel where appropriate and pay the relevant fee to ensure this is a cost-neutral service. Customer satisfaction questionnaires are sent out to all applicants who use the panel; feedback to date is very good based on a 50% response rate.
18. At present, Planning Performance Agreements (PPA's) are used on the strategic growth sites, and are being introduced for major applications across the service. This year, PPA's have been used for Northstowe Phase 2, North West Cambridge, Girton College and the Hinxtton Genome Campus. The agreements have been used to secure an agreed programme with clear milestones for determination of the planning application as well as covering pre-application advice. In view of this, it is proposed that the Council introduce the term 'Development Delivery Agreement' (DDA) rather than Planning Performance Agreement. This allows and encourages a focus on delivery across the full planning process through to discharge of all conditions and construction.
19. Moving forward in 2016, our intention is to make greater use of DDAs to enable us to work more closely with applicants. This will help identify key issues and enable all parties to agree a programme of work with set milestones including committee dates, and approaches to community engagement. This in turn should help us to plan resources and to co-ordinate input from Health and Environmental Services and other consultees. The development of this approach will form part of the Planning and New Communities Service Plan 2016/17.
20. The decision not to continue with a free written permitted development advice service has not led to any complaints or identified drop in the quality of general service provision. Applicants can still obtain up to 15 minutes free verbal advice via the Duty Officer system, self-serve by using the Planning Portal or seek a formal determination by submitting an application for a Lawful Development Certificate ("LDC").
21. An appointment system has been introduced to the Duty Officer system. This allows the Duty Officer to prepare before returning calls or meeting customers in reception and results in more informed and comprehensive advice being offered. There were

some initial issues over the booking system, but these were resolved quickly. At present the service is provided on mornings only, and this is being kept under review.

22. With the introduction of the new pre-application fees in April 2015, information on the Council's website was updated and improved. The recent changes to the Council's website provide a further opportunity to improve the published advice and this will be also be part of the Planning and New Communities Service Plan 2016-17.
23. The Pre-Application Advice Service is an established aspect of the Council's planning service. Demand for the service has increased since the new charging regime was introduced in April 2015, and there is good feedback on level of communication and quality of advice. However, there have been high demands upon the service, particularly with the high number of complex applications, and response times have been slow for some customers. The quality, scope and timeliness of the service will continue to be monitored and reviewed in order to make sure that the overall quality is as high as possible. The aim will be to reduce the on hand number of cases down towards the target of 150.

### **Fees**

24. It is proposed that an uplift be applied to the level of fees. This is to take account of increased staffing costs and inflation. Issues such as market supplements and National Insurance contributions need to be taken into account. It should be noted that the standard pre-application advice and PPA's have been costed so that actual costs are reimbursed, as far as possible. Customers have indicated that they are more willing to pay if there is quality and timeliness in the pre-application service.
25. The actual increase for each fee category needs to accurately reflect current staff costs. Further work therefore needs to be done to provide the up to date figure and a revised fee schedule produced. This will be prepared for approval by Cabinet in February 2016 as part of the budget report.
26. The various fee categories appear to have worked well having been revised in April 2015. Generally, no customer concerns have been raised. The one category where some change might be warranted is for requests for advice on schemes for two dwellings. A small number of applicants have suggested the fee for two dwellings is too high given the perceived differences in time spent on requests for one and two dwellings.
27. Officers have considered the implications of such a change but note that even with a revised single category fee there would be resultant loss of pre-application income. There have still been a reasonable number of requests for two dwellings and in the circumstances no change to this, or any other, fee category is warranted.
28. The following pre-application advice will continue to be provided free of charge:
  - Development for or on behalf of parish and community councils
  - Development required for the needs of disabled people (in line with the planning application exemption fee).
  - Permitted development proposals caught by Article 4 directions (a direction removing permitted development rights for specific development over a particular area (e.g. removing the right to erect porches on a row of terraced dwellings where a porch, which would normally not require specific planning permission, may harm the quality of the street scene).

- Permitted development proposals that require planning permission following the removal of rights by planning conditions(s) (i.e. where a condition on a planning permission has restricted development that without the condition could go ahead without needing to first obtain specific planning permission such as the conversion of an integral garage to a living area.)
- Advice on trees

### **Options**

29. The following options are suggested:

- To continue with the existing schedule of charges;
- To increase fees to take account of increased staff costs and inflation at 1.4%
- To revise the fee categories to introduce a fee for 1-2 dwellings;
- To implement a new fee schedule. It is suggested these increases are applied on or after 1 April 2016

### **Implications**

30. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:

#### **Financial**

31. The Planning and New Communities Service Plan 2015-16 income/savings target of £100,000 arising from the Development Control Improvement Plan is expected to be achieved through income from pre-application fees. From income received to date, an increase of £105,000 above the budgeted figure for 2014/15 is expected. This amounts to a surplus of £5,000 above the identified savings target.
32. The removal of the free written permitted development advice has resulted in 128 LDC applications over the last 12 months. This is a 35% increase over the previous year and has represented an additional increase in planning fee income of approximately £3,000. Thus type of application means that applicants now receive a formal determination rather than an informal view and this gives greater certainty as to the lawfulness of their property.
33. Consumer Price Inflation for the year to 30 November 2015 was just 0.1% according to the latest figures released on 15 December 2015 by the Office of National Statistics. However, where appropriate the Council has uplifted the 2016/17 budgets to reflect inflation, a 1.4% inflation figure has generally been applied including the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). This is therefore a more appropriate uplift for the planning pre-application fees, should an increase be justified.
34. The above fees do not include the extended use of PPAs/DDAs. These have now started to be used on a number of larger sites. This was previously predicted to bring in an addition income of approximately, £30,000. To date, £10,000 has been paid for advice on the growth sites with an invoice of a further £21,000 shortly to be issued for the North West Cambridge Site.
35. The extended use of Development Delivery Agreements is predicted to bring in an additional income. Trajectories across the department have not yet been compiled,

although a pre-application income of £600,000 is predicted for 2016/17 from the growth sites which will include Northstowe, Bourn Airfield and Waterbeach.

**Legal**

36. None.

**Staffing**

51. None.

**Risk Management**

52. Risks will be managed through the Planning and New Communities Risk Register and in particular risk associated with meeting the demands for increased numbers of planning enquiries.

**Equality and Diversity**

53. None

**Climate Change**

54. None

**Consultation responses (including from the Youth Council)**

55. Consultation has taken place with the Agents Forum and the sue of feedback questionnaires. The responses are identified and considered between paragraphs 30 and 34 above.

**Effect on Strategic Aims**

**Aim 1 - Engagement:** Engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure we deliver first class services and value for money.

56. An improved and quality pre-application advice service will help deliver a first class and value for money planning service.

**Aim 2 - Partnerships:** Work with partners to create opportunities for employment, enterprise, education and world-leading innovation

57. The pre-application advice service is intended to allow developers and planning officers to work together along with parish councils as appropriate to bring forward quality development. This in turn will assist in creating opportunities for employment, enterprise, education and world-leading innovation.

**Aim 3 - Wellbeing:** Ensure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for our residents

58. The delivery of high-quality development will help improve the quality of life for residents.

**Background Papers**

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and

- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Report to Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder's Meeting on 11 June 2014)  
<http://moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=600&MId=6233&Ver=4>

**Report Author:** John Koch – Development Control Team Leader (West)  
Telephone: (01954) 713268

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**Report To:** Planning Portfolio Holder  
**Lead Officer:** Planning and New Communities Director

12 January 2016

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## Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report 2014-2015

### Purpose

1. To approve the Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report 2014-2015 for publication on the Council's website.
2. This is not a key decision but raises matters relating to communities living or working in the district and is a document the Council is required to prepare.

### Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Planning Portfolio Holder:
  - (a) approves the contents of the Annual Monitoring Report 2014-2015 (included as Appendix 2) for publication; and
  - (b) delegates any further minor editing changes to the Annual Monitoring Report to the Director of Planning and New Communities where they are technical matters.

### Reasons for Recommendations

4. Local planning authorities are required to publish information monitoring progress of the implementation of their Local Development Scheme and planning policies included in their development plan documents at least on an annual basis. The Annual Monitoring Report is also required to give details of what action the Council has taken relating to the duty to co-operate, details of any neighbourhood development orders or neighbourhood development plans made, and once the Council has an adopted Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule, information relating to the collection and spending of CIL monies.

### Background

5. Monitoring is essential to establish what has been happening in the district, what is happening now, what may happen in the future, and what needs to be done to achieve policies and targets.
6. This is the eleventh Annual Monitoring Report produced by the Council and covers the period from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015. The Annual Monitoring Report includes indicators to measure the performance of the Council's adopted planning policies, and also to measure change in the district against the objectives set out in

the Council's Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Reports and to look at the wider effects of its planning policies on the district. The Annual Monitoring Report also includes details on the action the Council has taken relating to the Duty to Co-operate and of any neighbourhood development orders or neighbourhood development plans made.

### **Considerations**

7. Chapter 2 of the Annual Monitoring Report sets out the key results from the data collected, and provides a commentary as an overview to the detailed monitoring of indicators in the Annual Monitoring Report. It is attached as Appendix 1. The headlines from Appendix 1 are set out in the following paragraphs.

#### *Progress against the Local Development Scheme*

8. The Council submitted its Local Plan, alongside the Cambridge Local Plan, to the Secretary of State on 28 March 2014. Joint examination hearing sessions were held between November 2014 and April 2015 on strategic issues, including housing and employment needs, development strategy, Green Belt, transport, infrastructure and housing supply. The Inspectors wrote to the Councils in May 2015 in relation to three main issues and invited the Councils to undertake additional work to address those issues before the examinations progressed further. The Councils agreed to undertake additional work and the examinations have been formally suspended until March 2016.
9. Public consultation is being carried out in December 2015 to January 2016 (jointly with Cambridge City Council) on the proposed modifications identified from the additional work undertaken. The suspension of the examination to allow for the further work and public consultation to be undertaken means that progress on the Local Plan is taking longer than originally anticipated. A revised timetable for the preparation of the Local Plan is set out in an addendum to the Local Development Scheme agreed in November 2015.
10. The Cambridge Northern Fringe East Area Action Plan is being prepared jointly with Cambridge City Council. The Councils undertook public consultation on issues and options between December 2014 and February 2015, which is consistent with the Local Development Scheme. A report setting out the results of the consultation and the proposed way forward to proposed submission was considered by the relevant members of both Councils in November 2015. A revised timetable for the preparation of this Area Action Plan is set out in an addendum to the Local Development Scheme agreed in November 2015. The revised timetable anticipates that public consultation on proposed submission will be undertaken in January - March 2017, and submission to the Secretary of State for examination will be in June 2017.

#### *Details of Neighbourhood Development Orders and Neighbourhood Development Plans Made*

11. There was initially limited interest shown by Parish Councils in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, as the Council had offered them the opportunity to put forward proposals within their area through the Local Plan process as an alternative to the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans. Since the Local Plan was submitted for



examination there has been a steady increase in interest from Parish Councils considering preparing Neighbourhood Plans for their areas.

12. There are currently seven designated neighbourhood areas in South Cambridgeshire, of which the first three at Linton and Hildersham, Histon & Impington and Gamlingay were designated in the last monitoring year. Four further areas have been designated since the end of the monitoring year at Waterbeach, Cottenham, Foxton and West Wickham.
13. Initial discussions have taken place with an increasing number of other Parish Councils about neighbourhood planning and whether a Neighbourhood Plan would be the right tool for them to achieve the aspirations they have for the future in their villages. The Council is considering options and resources for providing further support to Parish Councils undertaking Neighbourhood Plans.

*Monitoring the Local Development Framework policies and Sustainability Appraisal objectives*

14. The monitoring of the performance of the Council's planning policies has shown that development granted planning permission in the district is generally in accordance with the adopted planning policies.
15. **Housing completions:** in 2014-2015, a total of 869 net additional dwellings were completed in South Cambridgeshire; this is 165 dwellings more than the number predicted in the housing trajectory included in last year's Annual Monitoring Report. This is also an increase on the previous six monitoring years, where annual net housing completions were consistently around 600 dwellings reflecting the slowdown in the housing market and that the fringe sites coming forward were building out on the Cambridge side of the administrative boundary. The increase in completions in the last monitoring year is due to an increase in completions at Cambourne and Orchard Park; on the historic rural allocation at Papworth Everard, which is nearing completion; and on large windfall sites, and as a result of the first 29 dwellings in South Cambridgeshire being completed at Trumpington Meadows.
16. **Housing quality:** Twelve developments completed in 2014-2015 have been assessed against the Building for Life standard. Of these, four developments at Cambourne, Longstanton and Trumpington Meadows are eligible to be put forward for 'Built for Life' accreditation as they have scored 9 or more 'greens' out of a possible total of 12 'greens'. Taking all 12 developments together, the assessments show that nearly half of the criteria were scored as 'green' as they have been successfully met, and less than 10% were scored as 'red' as they had not been complied with.
17. **Business floorspace completions:** in 2014-2015 there has been a significant increase in business floorspace completed, compared to the previous five monitoring years. This is due to the completion of over 21,000 sqm of new floorspace as part of the redevelopment of TWI at Granta Park (Great Abington), which replaces nearly 13,000 sqm of floorspace demolished in the previous year. The continued success of policies supporting research and development, hi tech and biotech industries in the district can be seen in the net increase of over 204,000 sqm of B1b (research &

development) use completed in the last 16 years, largely at research parks such as Granta Park (Great Abington), Cambridge Research Park (Landbeach) and the Wellcome Institute (Hinxton).

### **Options**

18. It is a legal requirement that the Council publishes an Annual Monitoring Report.

### **Implications**

19. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:

#### ***Legal and Risk Management***

20. Local planning authorities are required to publish information monitoring progress on the implementation of their Local Development Scheme and planning policies included in their development plan documents at least on an annual basis.

### **Consultation responses (including from the Youth Council)**

21. The housing trajectory included in the Annual Monitoring Report has been produced in consultation with the various landowners, developers and agents responsible for the sites included in it. Council officers and external organisations have provided information and data for the indicators included in the Annual Monitoring Report.
22. The Youth Council has not been consulted as the Annual Monitoring Report is a technical assessment of the Council's progress on preparing its planning policy documents and the performance of the Council's adopted planning policies.

### **Effect on Strategic Aims**

#### **Aim 1: We will engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure we deliver first class services and value for money.**

23. The Annual Monitoring Report provides information on the Council's performance against its planning policies; these policies aim to provide successful, vibrant, healthy and sustainable communities.

#### **Aim 2: We will work with partners to create opportunities for employment, enterprise, education and world-leading innovation.**

24. The Annual Monitoring Report provides detailed analysis on how the Council's adopted planning policies have performed, and includes a number of indicators related to the Council's planning policies on employment and the wider effects of the LDF on the district including its economy.

#### **Aim 3: We will ensure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for our residents.**

25. The LDF aims to satisfy the development needs of the area while preserving and enhancing its rich built and natural heritage and distinctive character and providing quality places where people are happy to live, work and play. The Annual Monitoring

Report provides detailed analysis on how the Council's adopted planning policies have performed.

## **Background Papers**

South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework:

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/content/local-development-framework>

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (submitted in March 2014):

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/localplan>

Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Modifications Consultation Report:

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/localplanmods-dec2015>

National Planning Policy Framework:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)

National Planning Practice Guidance:

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

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## Extract of Chapter 2 of Annual Monitoring Report 2014-2015

### 2. Commentary

#### a. Progress against the Local Development Scheme

- 2.1. The adopted **Local Development Scheme** (LDS) at the start of the monitoring period (1 April 2014) was the LDS adopted in February 2014. This LDS set the timetable that the Council was progressing during the monitoring year.
- 2.2. The February 2014 LDS sets out the stages in the preparation of the **Local Plan**, which incorporates a review of the **Core Strategy, Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD)** and **Site Specific Policies DPD**. It also includes the policies and proposals for **Gypsy and Traveller** accommodation as this is no longer to be progressed in a separate DPD.
- 2.3. The February 2014 LDS anticipated that the **Local Plan** would be submitted in Spring 2014, that the examination would be undertaken in Summer / Autumn 2014 and that the Local Plan would be adopted in Spring 2015.
- 2.4. The Council **submitted** its **Local Plan**, alongside the Cambridge Local Plan, to the Secretary of State on 28 March 2014. Miss Laura Graham has been appointed as the lead Inspector to consider both the Cambridge Local Plan and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. A joint **Pre-Hearing Meeting** was held on 11 September 2014 and joint examination **hearing sessions** were held between November 2014 and April 2015 on strategic issues, including housing and employment needs, development strategy, Green Belt, transport, infrastructure and housing supply.
- 2.5. The Inspectors wrote to the Councils on 20 May 2015<sup>1</sup> in relation to three main issues and invited the Councils to undertake additional work to address those issues before the examinations progressed further. The issues are in relation to:
- Objectively Assessed Need for new housing;
  - Overall Development Strategy; and
  - Conformity with revisions to National Planning Policy since the Local Plans were submitted for examination.
- The Councils agreed to undertake additional work and the examinations were formally suspended until March 2016.
- 2.6. This additional work resulted in a small number of proposed modifications to both the Cambridge Local Plan and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. The modifications were subject to Sustainability Appraisal. Public consultation is being carried out (jointly with Cambridge City Council) on these modifications between 2 December 2015 and 25 January 2016<sup>2</sup>. The results of the consultation will be considered by the

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<sup>1</sup> Inspectors Initial Conclusions Letter of 20 May 2015:  
<https://www.scams.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Letter%20from%20Inspectors%20to%20Councils%20-%20Preliminary%20Conclusions%20200515.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Modifications Consultation:  
<https://www.scams.gov.uk/localplanmods-dec2015>

- Councils who will decide whether any further modifications need to be made. The Councils will then submit the consultation responses, evidence base documents and proposed modifications to the Inspectors, so they can reopen the examinations.
- 2.7. The suspension of the examination to allow for the further work and public consultation to be undertaken on the proposed modifications means that the Local Plan process is taking longer than originally anticipated. It is anticipated that the examination will be completed in 2016 and the Local Plan adopted in 2017; this revised timetable is set out in an addendum to the LDS agreed in November 2015.
  - 2.8. The February 2014 LDS also sets out the timetable for the preparation of the **Cambridge Northern Fringe East Area Action Plan (AAP), Bourn Airfield New Village AAP and Waterbeach New Town AAP**.
  - 2.9. The **Cambridge Northern Fringe East AAP** is being prepared jointly with Cambridge City Council and the LDS anticipated that public consultation on issues and options would be undertaken in Winter 2014/2015, that consultation on the proposed submission AAP would be undertaken in Autumn 2015, and that the AAP would be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination in Spring 2016. The Councils undertook public consultation on issues and options between December 2014 and February 2015, which is consistent with the LDS. A report setting out the results of the consultation, the proposed way forward to proposed submission, and a revised timetable for the preparation of the AAP was considered by the relevant members of both Councils in November 2015. It is anticipated that public consultation on proposed submission will be undertaken in January - March 2017, and submission to the Secretary of State for examination will be in June 2017; this revised timetable is set out in an addendum to the LDS agreed in November 2015.
  - 2.10. The **Bourn Airfield New Village and Waterbeach New Town AAPs** were scheduled to begin in Winter 2015/16 and Winter 2017/18 respectively. However, the AAPs are dependent upon the outcome of the Local Plan examination, which will not now be known until 2016-17. The promoters of both sites have also advised that they intend to prepare Development Framework Documents for the new settlements to be published in Spring 2016 and to submit planning applications during 2016. These factors may impact on the production of AAPs.
  - 2.11. An addendum to the LDS was approved in July 2015 that sets out the timetable for the preparation of the **Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**. This addendum anticipated that public consultation on the draft SPD would be undertaken in September – October 2015 and that the SPD would be adopted in December 2015 / January 2016. Public consultation on the draft SPD was carried out in September – October 2015, however to enable appropriate consideration to be given to the comments received by all the local authorities, it is now likely that adoption of the SPD will be in Spring 2016.

## **b. Action taken on Duty to Co-operate**

### **Working with Duty to Co-operate Bodies**

- 2.12. South Cambridgeshire District and Cambridge City Councils have engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis during the preparation of the two Local Plans, both with each other and each with the other Duty to Co-operate bodies to maximise the effectiveness of the Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters. The Councils have worked closely throughout the preparation of joint evidence base documents and their respective Local Plans to prepare complementary plans on similar timescales that together set out a clear development strategy for the Greater Cambridge area.
- 2.13. Joint examination hearings on strategic issues for both plans were held between November 2014 and April 2015. The Inspectors wrote to the Councils on 20 May 2015<sup>3</sup> raising some initial queries relating to objectively assessed need for new housing, the development strategy and conformity with national planning policy, and inviting the Councils to undertake additional work to address those issues before the examinations progress further. The Councils agreed to undertake additional work and the examinations have been formally suspended until March 2016. The Councils have carried out additional work to address the issues raised by the Inspectors, and have identified a small number of modifications to the Local Plans that arise from the work. A joint public consultation<sup>4</sup> is currently taking place seeking views on the proposed modifications which illustrates the close working relationship that has developed between the two Councils. The consultation runs until 25 January 2016.
- 2.14. The Council produced a **Statement of Compliance with the Duty to Co-operate** in June 2013 setting out how the Council has co-operated with other bodies in preparing the Local Plan. This was updated when the Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State in March 2014<sup>5</sup>. This document sets out how the Council has engaged extensively with the prescribed Duty to Co-operate bodies, as appropriate to the Local Plans, throughout the stages of evidence base production and plan-making. This joint working has continued through the first part of the examination process from November 2014 to May 2015 to assist the Council to respond to questions raised in the Inspector's Matters and in support at hearings.
- 2.15. Statements of Common Ground have been agreed with Uttlesford District Council, Hertfordshire District Council and Hertfordshire County Council as part of confirming the Council's compliance with the duty to cooperate for the Local Plan examination process. The Statements of Common Ground agree that the duty to co-operate has been met and that all the districts involved are planning to deliver their full objectively assessed needs within their own administrative boundaries.
- 2.16. A **Statement of Co-operation between the Greater Cambridgeshire Local Nature Partnership and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough local planning authorities**<sup>6</sup> (April 2013) sets out how the organisations will continue to cooperate.

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<sup>3</sup> Inspectors Initial Conclusions Letter of 20 May 2015:  
<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Letter%20from%20Inspectors%20to%20Councils%20-%20Preliminary%20Conclusions%20200515.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Modifications Consultation:  
<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/localplanmods-dec2015>

<sup>5</sup> Statement of Compliance with Duty to Co-operate (March 2014):  
<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/www.scambs.gov.uk/files/documents/Statement%20of%20Compliance%20with%20Duty%20to%20Cooperate%20March%202014.pdf>

South Cambridgeshire District Council, Anglian Water and the Environment Agency have also produced a **Joint Position Statement on Foul Water and Environmental Capacity**<sup>7</sup> (January 2014) which sets out the current understanding of the waste water treatment issues within South Cambridgeshire and its associated environmental implications.

- 2.17. During the examination process the Council has agreed Statements of Common Ground with a number of different organisations relating to issues raised during the hearings. South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council have agreed a joint statement of common ground with English Heritage relating to the Green Belt<sup>8</sup>.

**Memorandum of Co-operation signed by Cambridgeshire authorities, together with Peterborough City Council**

- 2.18. The Council co-operated with other local authorities in the preparation of the **Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2013 (SHMA)**<sup>9</sup> and other evidence base studies. The **Memorandum of Co-operation**<sup>10</sup> (May 2013) was agreed by all Cambridgeshire local authorities, together with Peterborough City Council, and includes an agreement on the objectively assessed housing needs for each of the districts in the Cambridge Sub-Region Housing Market Area as part of fulfilling the Duty to Co-operate. Building on a strong legacy of joint working between the local authorities, the Memorandum of Co-operation demonstrates that the full objectively assessed needs of the Cambridge Sub Region housing market area identified in the SHMA will be met. The Council committed to meeting its full objectively assessed need within the district. The Council has undertaken further work on the assessment of objectively assessed housing need as part of the further work requested by the Inspectors.
- 2.19. The Memorandum of Co-operation has already been subject to scrutiny through the examinations of the Fenland Local Plan – Core Strategy (adopted May 2014) and the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan. The Fenland Inspector’s Report and East Cambridgeshire Inspector’s Interim Conclusions both conclude that the Memorandum of Co-operation provides clear evidence that co-operation has taken place constructively, actively and on an on-going basis.

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<sup>6</sup> Statement of Co-operation between the Greater Cambridgeshire Local Nature Partnership and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough local planning authorities:

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/www.scambs.gov.uk/files/documents/Greater%20Cambridgeshire%20Local%20Nature%20Partnership%20Statement%20of%20Cooperation.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Joint Position Statement on Foul Water and Environmental Capacity:

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/www.scambs.gov.uk/files/documents/Anglian%20Water%20and%20Environment%20Agency%20Cooperation%20Statement%202014.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Statement of Common Ground with English Heritage relating to the Green Belt:

[https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/rd-scg-080\\_0.pdf](https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/rd-scg-080_0.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Strategic Housing Market Assessment:

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/public/ldf/coredocs/RD-STRAT-090.pdf>

<sup>10</sup>

Memorandum of Co-operation:

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/www.scambs.gov.uk/files/documents/Memorandum%20of%20Co-operation%20May%202013.pdf>



- 2.20. The Cambridgeshire authorities, together with Peterborough City Council, have also agreed the **Strategic Spatial Priorities: Addressing the Duty to Co-operate across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough**<sup>11</sup> document that was published in January 2014. This document supplements the Memorandum of Co-operation and provides an overview of strategic spatial issues as they apply to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough as a whole.

### **Memorandum of Understanding**

- 2.21. In September 2014, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council also agreed a **Memorandum of Understanding on the Greater Cambridge Joint Housing Trajectory**<sup>12</sup>. This confirms the agreement between the two Councils under the duty to co-operate that the housing trajectories for the two areas should be considered together for the purposes of phasing housing delivery, and for calculating five year housing land supply for plan-making and decision-taking. The merits of the Memorandum of Understanding were considered during the examination hearing sessions for Matter 8: Housing Land Supply and Delivery in March 2015. The Councils asked the Inspectors in September 2015 whether they would consider issuing a view on the principle of the joint housing trajectory given the five year housing land supply issues in South Cambridgeshire. The Inspectors have responded that they do not consider it appropriate to reach any conclusions on the principle of the joint housing trajectory in advance of knowing the outcome of the further work that the Councils are undertaking whilst the examinations are suspended.

### **Transport Issues**

- 2.22. Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council have worked together closely on transport issues as they have prepared their Local Plans and a transport strategy for the Greater Cambridge area. South Cambridgeshire District Council responded to a consultation on this strategy in September 2013. The **Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Transport Strategy**<sup>13</sup> was adopted in March 2014. It is recognised that there is a close link between planning for growth and development and for transport and accessibility to ensure that growth can be accommodated in the most sustainable way and that people can access the services and facilities they need in an efficient and affordable way.
- 2.23. The Council responded to consultations on the **Cambridgeshire Long Term Transport Strategy**<sup>14</sup> and the revisions to the **Local Transport Plan**<sup>15</sup> in July 2014 recognising the importance of planning for future transport within the county.

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<sup>11</sup> Strategic Spatial Priorities: Addressing the Duty to Co-operate across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough:

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/www.scambs.gov.uk/files/documents/Strategic%20Spatial%20Priorities%20January%202014.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Memorandum of Understanding on the Greater Cambridge Joint Housing Trajectory:

[https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/www.scambs.gov.uk/files/documents/Memorandum%20of%20Understanding%20-%20Joint%20Housing%20Trajectory\\_0.pdf](https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/www.scambs.gov.uk/files/documents/Memorandum%20of%20Understanding%20-%20Joint%20Housing%20Trajectory_0.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Transport Strategy:

[http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20006/travel\\_roads\\_and\\_parking/66/transport\\_plans\\_and\\_policies/2](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20006/travel_roads_and_parking/66/transport_plans_and_policies/2)

- 2.24. The Council has also worked closely with Highways England (formerly the Highways Agency) as the **A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Scheme** has progressed by formally responding to consultations in February and May 2014. Highways England submitted its Development Consent Order application to the Secretary of State in December 2014 and the Council participated in the examination which was held between May and November 2015. The Examining Authority will publish its report and recommendations to the Secretary of State by February 2016 and the Secretary of State must issue a decision by May 2016.
- 2.25. In the **Road Investment Strategy**<sup>16</sup> the Government announced funding for upgrading the A428 between the Caxton Gibbet and A1 (Black Cat junction) to create an expressway standard link between Cambridge and Oxford. The Council will work closely with Highways England and the Department for Transport to develop the scheme. It is anticipated delivery will be late in the period 2015 to 2020.

### **Working with other Adjacent Local Planning Authorities**

- 2.26. The Council has submitted representations to a number of consultations by neighbouring planning authorities to ensure that joint issues that impact on South Cambridgeshire continue to be considered. These include responding to Central Bedfordshire Council in June 2013 and March 2014, Cambridge City Council in September 2013, East Cambridgeshire District Council in November 2013, Uttlesford District Council in May 2014 and December 2015, and Braintree District Council in May 2014.

### **c. Details of Neighbourhood Development Orders or Neighbourhood Development Plans Made**

- 2.27. There was initially limited interest shown by Parish Councils in preparing a **Neighbourhood Plan**, as the Council had offered them the opportunity to put forward proposals within their area through the Local Plan process as an alternative to the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans. Some Parish Council proposals have as a result been included in the **Local Plan** (submitted in March 2014), or recommended as Major Modifications to it, but only where there has been clear local support. Since the Local Plan was submitted for examination there has been a steady increase in interest from Parish Councils considering preparing Neighbourhood Plans for their areas.

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<sup>14</sup> Cambridgeshire Long Term Transport Strategy:  
[http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20006/travel\\_roads\\_and\\_parking/66/transport\\_plans\\_and\\_policies/5](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20006/travel_roads_and_parking/66/transport_plans_and_policies/5)

<sup>15</sup> Local Transport Plan:  
[http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20006/travel\\_roads\\_and\\_parking/66/transport\\_plans\\_and\\_policies](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20006/travel_roads_and_parking/66/transport_plans_and_policies)

<sup>16</sup> Road Investment Strategy:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/382813/dft-ris-road-investment-strategy.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/382813/dft-ris-road-investment-strategy.pdf)

- 2.28. Before a Neighbourhood Plan can be prepared a **neighbourhood area** must be designated. The Local Development Scheme is either updated or an addendum is published when each Neighbourhood Area is designated. There are currently seven designated neighbourhood areas in South Cambridgeshire:
- **Linton and Hildersham** – these two parishes have joined together to form a single neighbourhood area that was approved in May 2014;
  - **Histon & Impington** – this covers the area of the parish to the north of the A14 and was approved in September 2014;
  - **Gamlingay** – this covers the whole parish and was approved in February 2015;
  - **Waterbeach** – this covers the whole parish and was approved in August 2015 with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Waterbeach Parish Council agreeing a framework as to how they will work together;
  - **Cottenham** – this covers the whole parish and was approved in November 2015;
  - **Foxton** – this covers the whole parish and was approved in November 2015; and
  - **West Wickham** – this covers the whole parish and was approved in November 2015.

These Parish Councils are making progress in their plan-making.

- 2.29. Initial discussions have taken place with an increasing number of other Parish Councils about neighbourhood planning and whether a Neighbourhood Plan would be the right tool for them to achieve the aspirations they have for the future in their villages. Some Parish Councils are considering preparing Neighbourhood Plans jointly with their adjoining parishes as they have common issues and wish to pool their resources. The Council is considering options and resources for providing further support to Parish Councils undertaking Neighbourhood Plans.
- 2.30. The Council's webpages relating to Neighbourhood Planning (accessed from [www.scambs.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning)) are being expanded to provide clearer information about future consultations, events, and support given by the Council.

#### **d. Information relating to the Collection and Spending of Community Infrastructure Levy Monies**

- 2.31. The Council submitted its Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) draft Charging Schedule for independent examination on 6 October 2014. Given the close relationship between the proposed rates in the CIL Charging Schedule and the Local Plan, the CIL examination cannot take place until the Local Plan has been examined. Until the Council has an adopted CIL Charging Schedule it cannot collect any CIL monies.
- 2.32. Further details relating to the examination of the Council's CIL draft Charging Schedule are available on the Council's website: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/content/examination-draft-charging-schedule>.

## e. Monitoring the Local Development Framework policies and Sustainability Appraisal objectives

- 2.33. A complete list of indicators is included in Chapter 3, the data for all indicators is included in Chapters 4 and 5, and the commentary is set out in this chapter. The commentary highlights the key messages from the data collected and identifies any areas where policies are not being implemented.

### Housing

- 2.34. **Housing completions:** The development strategy for South Cambridgeshire is one of supporting the economic success of the Cambridge area through continued jobs growth, with housing provision at a level, and of a quality, to meet objectively assessed needs.
- 2.35. In the last monitoring year, 869 net additional dwellings were completed in South Cambridgeshire; this is 165 dwellings more than the number predicted in the housing trajectory included in the Annual Monitoring Report 2013-2014. This is an increase on the previous six monitoring years, where annual net housing completions were consistently around 600 dwellings reflecting the slowdown in the housing market and that the fringe sites coming forward were building out on the Cambridge side of the administrative boundary. The increase in completions in the last monitoring year is due to the first 29 dwellings in South Cambridgeshire being completed at Trumpington Meadows and an increase in completions: at Cambourne and Orchard Park compared to the preceding years; on the historic rural allocation at Papworth Everard, which is nearing completion; and on large windfall sites such as Station Road, Gamlingay, Long Drove / Beach Road, Cottenham, and the former EDF Energy Depot and Training Centre at Milton.
- 2.36. **Delivering housing requirements:** The housing trajectory identifies predicted annual housing completions from existing and proposed allocations, planning permissions granted or with resolution to grant, and predicted windfalls. The new **Local Plan** (submitted in March 2014) includes in **Policy S/5** that provision is made for 19,000 dwellings in the district during the period 2011 to 2031 to meet the current objectively assessed need. Joint examination hearing sessions with Cambridge City Council were held between November 2014 and April 2015 covering strategic issues, including housing and employment needs. The **Inspectors** wrote to the Councils in May 2015<sup>17</sup> setting out their initial findings and inviting the Councils to undertake additional work, including in relation to objectively assessed need for new housing. The additional work undertaken relating to calculating the objectively assessed need<sup>18</sup> for the district has resulted in the Council concluding that provision should be made for 19,500 dwellings in the district during the plan period from 2011 to 2031. The Council has therefore included a **proposed modification**<sup>19</sup> to **Policy S/5**, which is

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<sup>17</sup> Inspectors Initial Conclusions Letter of 20 May 2015:  
<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Letter%20from%20Inspectors%20to%20Councils%20-%20Preliminary%20Conclusions%200515.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> Objectively Assessed Housing Need: Further Evidence:  
<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/OAN%20%26%20Market%20Signals%20FINAL%20Nov%202015.pdf>

currently subject to public consultation, to increase the housing requirement from 19,000 dwellings to 19,500 dwellings.

- 2.37. Against the **Local Plan**, the housing trajectory shows that 21,091 dwellings are expected to be delivered, this is 8% (1,591 dwellings) more than the revised requirement and allows flexibility to respond to changing conditions as required in the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**.
- 2.38. Against the **Core Strategy** (January 2007) which requires 20,000 dwellings to be provided between 1999 and 2016, the housing trajectory shows that 12,577 dwellings are expected to be delivered; this is 37% (7,423 dwellings) below the requirement. As set out above, the new **Local Plan** identifies an up to date housing requirement for 2011-2031 that will provide for the identified objectively assessed needs of the district. The **Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2013**<sup>20</sup> and **Objectively Assessed Housing Need: Further Evidence 2015**<sup>21</sup> make clear that there is no backlog to make up.
- 2.39. **Five year housing land supply**: The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land, mainly due to delays in the delivery of strategic sites during the recession, and to the fringe sites building out from the edge of Cambridge and them having only just started to deliver completions in South Cambridgeshire.
- 2.40. There are two methodologies for calculating five year housing land supply. The Liverpool methodology assumes that any shortfall will be made up during the remaining years of the plan period. The Sedgefield methodology requires the whole of any previous shortfall to be made up within the five year assessment period. The **NPPF** requires that a 5% buffer be provided in the five year supply calculation to provide greater confidence that the housing requirement will be delivered. In areas of persistent historic undersupply the buffer should be 20%. The Council's statement to the Matter 8: Housing Land Supply and Delivery hearings addressed the appropriate means of calculating the five year supply<sup>22</sup>.
- 2.41. In response to a number of changes in circumstance<sup>23</sup> since the Local Plan was submitted in March 2014, the Council agreed in September 2014 to a **Memorandum of Understanding on the Greater Cambridge Joint Housing Trajectory** with Cambridge City Council. This memorandum set out the agreement between the two Councils under the duty to co-operate that the housing trajectories for the two areas

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<sup>19</sup> Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Modifications Consultation Report:  
[https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/final\\_mods\\_consultation\\_document\\_website\\_8.12.15.pdf](https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/final_mods_consultation_document_website_8.12.15.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Strategic Housing Market Assessment:  
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/public/ldf/coredocs/RD-STRAT-090.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Objectively Assessed Housing Need: Further Evidence:  
<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/OAN%20%26%20Market%20Signals%20FINAN%20Nov%202015.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> Council's statement to the Local Plan examination in relation to Matter 8: Housing Land Supply and Delivery: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/local-plan-examination-statements-matter-8>

<sup>23</sup> A detailed list of reasons is given in the Council's statement to the Local Plan examination in relation to Matter 1: Legal Requirements (paragraph 34):  
<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/www.scambs.gov.uk/files/documents/Matter%201%20Statement%20OCC%20-%20SCDC.pdf>

should be considered together for the purposes of phasing housing delivery, and for calculating five year housing land supply for plan-making and decision-taking. The Council's statement to Matter 1: Legal Requirements set out proposed modifications to the Local Plan (submitted in March 2014) to give effect to the Memorandum<sup>24</sup>.

- 2.42. The merits of a joint housing trajectory for the Greater Cambridge area were considered at the Matter 8: Housing Land Supply and Delivery hearings. The merits of this approach were not addressed in the initial findings letter from the Inspectors of 20 May 2015<sup>25</sup>. The Councils requested that the Inspectors reconsider issuing a view on the principle of the joint housing trajectory given the five year land supply issues in South Cambridgeshire. The Inspectors have responded that they do not consider it appropriate to reach any conclusions on the principle of the joint housing trajectory in advance of knowing the outcome of the further work that the Councils are undertaking. The Councils remain committed to the **Memorandum of Understanding on the Greater Cambridge Joint Housing Trajectory** and the proposed modifications to the Local Plans to give effect to the joint trajectory have been included in the public consultation being undertaken jointly with Cambridge City Council on Proposed Modifications to the Local Plans.
- 2.43. The **Memorandum of Understanding on the Greater Cambridge Joint Housing Trajectory** and the use of the five year supply calculations for Greater Cambridge will not be relied upon or used in relation to planning decisions and planning appeals until the Inspectors examining the Local Plan have reported on the approach and found it to be 'sound'.
- 2.44. In view of the various ways that five year supply can be calculated, and pending the outcome of consideration at the Local Plan examination, this Annual Monitoring Report shows the results for all ways of calculating the five year land supply for 2015-2020 for both South Cambridgeshire and the Greater Cambridge area. These results are set out in the tables below, and the calculations for the Local Plan are based on the housing requirement of 19,500 dwellings included in the **proposed modification**<sup>26</sup> to **Policy S/5** of the **Local Plan**, which is currently subject to public consultation. When the Greater Cambridge area is considered as a whole, whichever methodology or buffer is used, a five year supply can be demonstrated. This is a logical and appropriate way of delivering sites to meet the combined objectively assessed housing need across the Greater Cambridge area, consistent with the development strategy contained in both submitted Local Plans.
- 2.45. Against the housing requirements in the new South Cambridgeshire **Local Plan** of 19,500 homes between 2011 and 2031, and the housing requirement for Greater

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<sup>24</sup> Council's statement to the Local Plan examination in relation to Matter 1: Legal Requirements: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/www.scambs.gov.uk/files/documents/Matter%201%20Statement%200CCC%20-%20SCDC.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Inspectors initial conclusions letter of 20 May 2015: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Letter%20from%20Inspectors%20to%20Councils%20-%20Preliminary%20Conclusions%2000515.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Modifications Consultation Report: [https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/final\\_mods\\_consultation\\_document\\_website\\_8.12.15.pdf](https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/final_mods_consultation_document_website_8.12.15.pdf)

Cambridge of 33,500 homes between 2011 and 2031, the Council's five year housing land supply for 2015-2020 is:

'Liverpool' Methodology	South Cambs	Greater Cambridge (City & South Cambs)
Five year supply (with 5%)	5.1	6.4
Five year supply (with 20%)	4.5	5.6

'Sedgefield' Methodology	South Cambs	Greater Cambridge (City & South Cambs)
Five year supply (with 5%)	4.4	5.9
Five year supply (with 20%)	3.9	5.2

- 2.46. Against the housing requirement in the adopted **Core Strategy** of 20,000 homes between 1999 and 2016, the Council's five year housing land supply for 2015-2020 is:

	'Liverpool' Methodology	'Sedgefield' Methodology
Five year supply (with 5%)	2.1	2.1
Five year supply (with 20%)	1.8	1.8

- 2.47. **Gypsy & Traveller pitches:** Four permanent Gypsy & Traveller pitches were completed in the last monitoring year. At 31 March 2015, a further 8 permanent Gypsy & Traveller pitches with planning permission were under construction; 3 permanent Gypsy & Traveller pitches with planning permission had not yet been started; and 4 permanent Travelling Showpeople plots with planning permission had not yet been started.
- 2.48. **Housing completions on previously developed land (PDL):** In the last monitoring year, 31% of dwellings completed were on PDL and the cumulative percentage is still below the target of at least 37% as included in **Core Strategy Policy ST/3**. It had been anticipated that the percentage would increase when the major developments at Northstowe and Cambridge East, which would involve the reuse of PDL, started delivering towards the end of the plan period (which runs up to 2016); however, delays in the major developments as a result of the recession mean this is now unlikely to be achieved. In the last monitoring year, completions at Orchard Park, Cambourne, and the historic rural allocation at Papworth Everard (Summersfield), have contributed to a significant proportion of completions on 'greenfield' sites.
- 2.49. **Housing density:** Over the last 16 years, the average net density of dwellings completed on sites of 9 or more dwellings has fluctuated. It is expected that the

average net density of new housing developments will increase in future monitoring years as the major developments on the edge of Cambridge and Northstowe are implemented with higher housing densities reflecting their urban character. Phase 1 at Trumpington Meadows includes 29 dwellings in South Cambridgeshire and this parcel has a net density of over 70 dph. Over the last 16 years, the completed parcels at Cambourne have achieved an average net density of 30.3 dph. In general, lower densities have been achieved at Lower Cambourne (an early phase in the construction of the settlement), and higher densities have been achieved at Upper Cambourne (a more recent phase that is still being completed). Great Cambourne includes a mixture of densities, with higher densities achieved on parcels located in and around the village centre, where there is good access to services and facilities.

- 2.50. **Affordable housing:** The availability of housing that is affordable to local people is a major issue in the district, especially as median house prices in the district have risen from 4.9 times median earnings in 1999 to 8.0 times median earnings in 2013. In the last monitoring year, 329 new affordable dwellings were completed; this amounts to 36% of all new dwellings completed. This an increase in the number of affordable housing completions compared to the previous six monitoring years. In the last monitoring year, affordable housing has been delivered at the major developments of Cambourne, Orchard Park and Trumpington Meadows, and on large windfall sites at Station Road, Gamlingay, and the former EDF Energy Depot and Training Centre at Milton, as well as on three affordable housing exception sites providing 72 new affordable dwellings to meet identified local need in Cottenham, Horseheath and Orwell.
- 2.51. In the last four monitoring years there has been a fall in the proportion of social rented affordable housing completed. Some of this shortfall has been made up by the provision of 'affordable rent' housing.
- 2.52. In the last monitoring year, only 23% of dwellings permitted on sites of two or more dwellings, where **Development Control Policy HG/3** was applicable, were affordable. This falls below the target of 40% set by the policy and is due to only 20% of dwellings being secured as affordable dwellings on phase 1 of Northstowe and also to there being a change part way through the year from applying the adopted **Development Control Policy HG/3** to applying the new **Policy H/9** in the **Local Plan** (submitted in March 2014) which changes the threshold at which the policy applies to developments of three or more dwellings. The affordable dwellings secured are a mixture of onsite provision and financial contributions that have been converted into notional units that will be provided offsite.
- 2.53. **Housing development by settlement category:** The development strategy for the district was changed by the adoption of the Core Strategy, which focuses the development proposed in a few major developments on the edge of Cambridge and the new town of Northstowe, and provided for more development within the village frameworks of the largest villages. Between 2006 and 2011, this change in development strategy could be seen to be gradually taking effect with an increase in the proportion of completions on the edge of Cambridge and at the Rural Centres, which includes the new settlement of Cambourne, and a decrease in the proportion of completions in the smaller and less sustainable villages.



- 2.54. In the last four monitoring years, less than half of the dwellings completed were in the most sustainable locations on the edge of Cambridge and at Rural Centres. This departure from the adopted development strategy is due to the completion of 297 dwellings at Summersfield, Papworth Everard (a Minor Rural Centre), and the completion of 246 dwellings on a large development to the west of Longstanton (a Group Village). Both of these developments are rural allocations carried forward from previous Local Plans. Completions on the major developments at Orchard Park and Cambourne had also fallen compared to previous years, although in the last monitoring year there has been an increase in completions on these two major developments and the first completions at Trumpington Meadows.
- 2.55. **Housing quality:** All new development will have an impact on its surroundings and the predominantly rural character of the district makes it particularly important that new development is sensitively located and designed to a high quality. The Council has assessed 76 developments completed in the last six monitoring years against the Building for Life (BfL) standard, which is a Government endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The BfL standard was redesigned in 2012, and is now based on a traffic light system rather than an absolute scoring system. The developments completed in 2014-2015 have been assessed against the new BfL 12 standard.
- 2.56. Of the 12 developments that were completed in the last monitoring year, 4 developments at Cambourne, Longstanton and Trumpington Meadows are eligible to be put forward for 'Built for Life' accreditation as they have scored 9 or more 'greens' out of a possible total of 12 'greens'. The majority of the 12 developments assessed received 'greens' for successfully addressing the following categories:
- Meeting local housing requirements – the development has a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements;
  - Easy to find your way around – the streets are legible, and easy to move through;
  - Connections – developments connect well with their surroundings by reinforcing existing connections or forming new ones;
  - Facilities and services – the developments are located close to community facilities; and
  - External storage and amenity space – the design of the development integrates bin storage, and / or provides convenient and secure cycle and vehicle storage.
- 2.57. The results also show that developments receiving 'ambers' tend not to satisfy the categories relating to:
- Public and private spaces – the definition between the public and private spaces may be unclear, poorly designed or unmanaged;
  - Car parking – resident or visitor parking may be insufficient or not well integrated so that it dominates the streets; and
  - Character – the design of the scheme does not fully create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character.
- 2.58. **Accessibility to services and facilities by public transport:** Over the last ten monitoring years, less than 20% of new dwellings completed in each year were within 30 minutes public transport time of all six key services (GP surgery, hospital, primary school, secondary school, employment and major retail centre). This is a reflection of

the rural nature of the district and also the changes in the provision and / or frequency of rural bus services. Almost all new development is located close to the key local services of a GP surgery and primary school. Access to services and facilities is a key objective of the development strategy, and as the already adopted allocations for sustainable major developments on the edge of Cambridge and at the new town of Northstowe are implemented, together with the proposed major sites included in the Local Plan (submitted in March 2014), it is expected that accessibility to services and facilities will increase.

### **Employment and the Economy**

- 2.59. ***Delivering jobs requirements:*** The **Local Plan** (submitted in March 2014) requires 22,000 additional jobs to be provided between 2011 and 2031 to support the Cambridge Cluster and provide a diverse range of local jobs. Data suggests that between 2011 and 2013 there was a net loss of 5,000 jobs in South Cambridgeshire, of which a large proportion can be attributed to a loss of armed forces jobs. Other sources of jobs data suggest that there has not been such a significant loss of jobs in the district. Indications are that economic conditions have improved since 2012, and the Council will continue to monitor the situation to ensure that it can take action if necessary to deliver the additional jobs required to support the local economy.
- 2.60. ***Business floorspace completions:*** Business floorspace completions in the five monitoring years from 2009 to 2014 were significantly lower than they were in the early 2000s, although there has been a significant increase in business floorspace completed in the last monitoring year due to the completion of over 21,000 sqm of new floorspace as part of the redevelopment of TWI at Granta Park (Great Abington). This new floorspace replaces nearly 13,000 sqm of floorspace demolished in the previous monitoring year. The continued success of policies supporting research and development, hi tech and biotech industries in the district can be seen in the net increase of over 204,000 sqm of B1b (research & development) use completed between 1999 and 2015, largely at research parks such as Granta Park (Great Abington), Cambridge Research Park (Landbeach) and the Wellcome Institute (Hinxton).
- 2.61. Between 1999 and 2013, there was a significant increase in the proportion of business floorspace completed on PDL. This was followed by a fall to only 40% in the 2013-2014 monitoring year due to the completion of a new storage and distribution warehouse at Papworth Business Park, which is a 'greenfield' allocation on the edge of the village of Papworth Everard. In the last monitoring year, the proportion of business floorspace completed on PDL has increased again due to the completion of new buildings as part of the redevelopment of TWI at Granta Park (Great Abington).
- 2.62. ***Supply of business land:*** South Cambridgeshire has a large supply of business land with planning permission; at 31 March 2015 this amounted to over 80 ha of net additional land, and of this 44% had detailed planning permission. Significant scale sites with planning permission include:
- land at Babraham Research Campus for research and development uses (9.8 ha);
  - phase 2 and other parcels at Granta Park for research and development uses (13 ha); and

- land at Cambridge Research Park, Landbeach for a mixture of business uses (Use Classes B1, B2 and B8) (9.5 ha).

2.63. **Economy:** Whilst the Cambridge area has withstood the effects of the recession better than some areas, the recession has had an impact on the vitality of the local economy. The district has consistently shown over 80% of the working age population as economically active, even though there are more employed residents in the district than the number of jobs (workplace population). The number of people claiming job seekers allowance doubled in 2009 (from 636 claimants in 2008 to 1,508 claimants in 2009), but there has then been a gradual reduction over the last six years to 556 claimants in February 2015. The number of businesses closing outweighed the number of new businesses opening in 2009 and 2010, however this has now reversed.

### **Climate Change, Resources and the Environment**

- 2.64. **Carbon dioxide emissions and air quality:** A key factor affecting climate change is carbon dioxide emissions and the aim nationally, and indeed internationally, is to reduce levels of emissions of this greenhouse gas. The rate of carbon dioxide emissions per person from domestic sources, for example, through the use of gas and electricity, has shown a small reduction over the last nine years.
- 2.65. Air quality is an issue alongside the A14 and the Council has designated an Air Quality Management Area with the objective of improving conditions in terms of levels of nitrogen dioxide and the particulate PM<sub>10</sub>. There have been gradual improvements in air quality recorded at the Council's automatic monitoring stations alongside the A14 at Bar Hill and Orchard Park, although the reason for this improvement is unclear. It is possible that it is due to a combination of improvements in cleaner vehicle engine technologies and changing meteorological conditions. A new automatic monitoring station at Girton Road was introduced in 2012.
- 2.66. **Household waste and recycling:** Over the last thirteen years there has been a significant increase in the proportion of waste that is recycled and composted in the district. This is the result of the Council's pro-active approach to recycling through the introduction of blue and green bins, which allow the recycling and composting of a significant amount of household waste. In the last monitoring year, 58% of household waste was recycled or composted.
- 2.67. **Renewable and non-renewable resources:** The Council is committed to encouraging and enabling a reduction in the use of fossil fuels and increasing the proportion of energy used that is generated from renewable sources. In recent years, household consumption of gas and electricity in the district has fallen, while the generating potential of renewable energy sources in the district has increased. At 31 March 2015, four wind turbines, four biomass boilers and fourteen schemes for photovoltaic panels including four solar farms that could provide over 120MW of renewable energy at Shingay-cum-Wendy, Melbourn and Great Wilbraham, had planning permission but had not yet been installed.

- 2.68. In the last four monitoring years, over 80% of planning permissions granted for developments greater than 1,000 sqm or 10 dwellings, included renewable energy technologies to provide 10% renewable energy. Although the remaining planning permissions met the thresholds set out in Development Control Policy NE/3, individual circumstances meant that they were not required to meet the policy.
- 2.69. Average water consumption by Cambridge Water Company and Anglian Water customers is gradually falling. There is a general expectation that water consumption will reduce as more efficient devices are installed, more properties are metered, and as customer awareness increases. Anglian Water has run a “Drop 20” campaign that encourages customers to save 20 litres per day and it has carried out many household audits and provided water saving devices. Cambridge Water Company attributes some of the variations to weather conditions. Wetter weather conditions during the summer months tends to result in lower water consumption levels, whereas drier weather conditions in the summer months tends to result in higher water consumption levels.
- 2.70. ***Development in locations of environmental importance:*** Between 2004 and 2015 no new development was completed within, or is considered to adversely affect, nationally or internationally important nature conservation sites. In the last monitoring year, four proposals for development in the Green Belt have been completed that fall within the definition of ‘inappropriate’ in terms of the uses normally acceptable in the Green Belt. Very special circumstances for each of these proposals were considered to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt.
- 2.71. ***Biodiversity:*** There are small areas of our Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) that are assessed as ‘unfavourable declining’ or ‘unfavourable no change’, suggesting that their unique biodiversity characteristics are under threat. Natural England is working with landowners to improve the management and therefore condition of these areas of the district’s SSSIs.
- 2.72. The Council has successfully undertaken and / or supported a number of biodiversity conservation projects in the last monitoring year. Examples include: continued working with the Wildlife Trust to deliver the Hoffer Brook restoration project and its maintenance; grant aid for bat surveys for St Denis Church, East Hatley; support for the restoration of a meander of the Bourn Brook in association with the Countryside Restoration Trust; and provision of bird and bat boxes to Council owned properties in Ickleton and to Hatley St George Church.



**Report To:** Planning Portfolio Holder  
**Lead Officer:** Director of Planning & New Communities

12 January 2016

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## **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Response to consultation on proposed changes**

### **Purpose**

1. To consider the proposed changes to the NPPF and agree an appropriate response.
2. This is not a key decision.

### **Recommendation**

3. That the Planning Portfolio Holder agrees the consultation response set out in Appendix 1.

### **Background**

4. The National Planning Policy Framework, published in March 2012, sets out the Government's planning policies for England, and how they are to be applied in regard to plan making and development control. The consultation proposes a number of changes to the NPPF to reflect the Government's stated intentions for reform to the planning system as set out in the 2015 Autumn Statement, and in policy statements 'Fixing the foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation', 'Towards a one nation economy: A 10-point plan for boosting rural productivity', and the Housing and Planning Bill currently working its way through Parliament. The reforms are intended to boost the delivery of new homes and economic growth. Links to the consultation document and these other source documents are provided in the 'Background Papers' section of this report.
5. The consultation includes changes in the following areas:
  - Broadening the definition of affordable housing, to expand the range of low cost housing opportunities for those aspiring to own their new home;
  - Increasing the density of development around commuter hubs, to make more efficient use of land in suitable locations;
  - Supporting sustainable new settlements, development on brownfield land and small sites, and delivery of housing allocated in plans; and
  - Supporting delivery of starter homes.

## Summary of the Consultation and Proposed Response

The consultation questions and proposed responses are set out in Appendix 1. Questions 22 and 23 relate to the impact of the proposed changes and equalities matters. The following summaries are of the Government consultation document.

### ***Affordable Housing (questions 1 and 2)***

Summary of questions:

6. The current definition of affordable housing is considered to be too narrowly defined, stifling innovation in housing products and failing to meet the needs of households aspiring to home ownership. Starter homes for low cost home ownership are to be brought into the definition and the need for all affordable housing to be provided 'in perpetuity' and for subsidy to be recycled are to be made less restrictive.

Government intend that starter homes should be included in the definition of affordable housing. Starter homes are homes for low cost home ownership for first time buyers under the age of 40 at time of purchase, sold at a minimum of 20% discount to the market price, and with the price after the discount being no more than £250,000 outside London. After 5 years there are no restrictions on resale at open market value with no recycling of the discount.

Government has committed to the delivery of 200,000 starter homes in England by 2020 and the Housing and Planning Bill with its associated regulations is likely to require the provision of set proportions of starter homes on qualifying sites of different size.

Summary response:

The intention of Government to boost home ownership is supported. But home ownership is not an option for many local households in housing need, whether particularly because of a low or insecure household income (as demonstrated below) or because an individual is aged 40 or more or is not a first time buyer for example and needing to move to South Cambridgeshire to take up employment – and so not qualifying for a starter home. The NPPF requires local planning authorities to plan proactively to meet the housing needs of different groups in the community such as families with children, older people, people with disabilities, and service families amongst others. If starter homes are built on s106 sites as a replacement in whole or part for affordable rented homes, it will reduce the local authorities ability to assist households who are unable to afford or who do not qualify for a starter home. In recent years around 30% of households on our housing needs register have been in bands A and B (those with an urgent or high housing need), and these have made up the great majority of new affordable housing lets in the district.

One drawback to starter homes as currently proposed is that unlike other alternative forms of affordable housing there is no provision to recycle the subsidy provided (the discount to full market value) into further affordable housing provision. Consideration should be given to ways in which all or some of the discount could be recycled to provide an ongoing local benefit rather than it only benefiting the first owner.

It is important that future affordable housing is made up of a mix of products suitable for a wide variety of households which includes but is not limited to starter homes. In general a household income of around £50,000 would be needed to support home ownership of a £250,000 starter home locally. Property values are such that it is unlikely that a 2/3 bedroom home will be available in most of South Cambridgeshire at less than £250,000 without a larger discount than 20%. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the Cambridge Sub Region 2013 records the following data on local household incomes:

SCDC households	Lower quarter household income	Middle (median) household income	Average (mean) household income
SCDC all households	£18,900	£36,150	£42,082
SCDC recently moved social tenants household incomes (2009 to 2012 data)	£8,320	£13,944	£15,606

It is therefore unlikely that the majority of households on an average income will not be able to afford a Starter Home and their needs will have to be met by alternative forms of affordable housing.

With the withdrawal of grants for the provision of affordable housing delivery, and increasing issues of affordability generally (both in respect of house prices and rents) there is a need for new innovative housing products to come onto the market such as starter homes and rent to buy schemes. It is therefore positive that the Government is amending the definition of affordable housing to enable such provision. But there must be a balance between starter home provision and other forms of affordable housing to create sustainable communities and meet the housing needs of our area.

In respect of starter homes consideration should be given to the affordable housing definition specifying that the household income of the first purchaser should not already be sufficient for them to buy a similar property in the same district on the open market. Without this provision the availability of starter homes would be reduced for those who could not otherwise be able to afford to buy in the district.

The provision of a mix of affordable housing products is also important to the success of the local economy and the provision of public services. Many staff cannot afford home ownership even of starter homes and must be provided for if the economy and local services are not to suffer (including staff such as nurses, and lab technicians). Labour mobility is important both to the local economic growth and for household income growth and career development. Home ownership can play a part in such mobility but is not the only answer. In this respect it is disappointing that there is nothing in the NPPF changes to encourage the growth of purpose built homes for rent by institutional investors, as well as of affordable rented and other intermediate products.

Future funding for traditional affordable housing products is being squeezed by a lack of subsidy, competing s106 requirements, falling rents and in future by CIL, all of which support the need for innovative new affordable housing products being developed and introduced. Controlling future housing costs will have ongoing benefits for households and for the size of the housing benefit bill nationally.

***Increasing residential density at transport hubs (questions 3, 4 and 5)***

Summary of questions:

7. Policy is to be amended to support higher residential densities for new development around commuter transport hubs (rail, tube or tram), and places with at least a 15 minute service by public transport to that transport hub in normal commuting hours. A minimum national density is not proposed, local densities should be set which take account of local character.

Summary response:

The proposed change can be welcomed in relation to transport hubs planned for the new town of Northstowe (guided bus), and for Cambridge Northern Fringe East (guided bus, bus and new railway station), and also regarding the proposed Waterbeach new town if the railway station is relocated. These are all locations where increased residential densities would in principle be appropriate.

We have rural railway stations in our district at Ashwell and Morden, Meldreth, Shepreth, Foxton, Shelford, Whittlesford and at Waterbeach. Some of these villages are small and are not otherwise well served in terms of facilities and services or alternative means of public transport.

A number of villages on the guided bus routes in our district currently benefit from a 15 minute bus frequency although sometimes bus stops are not always close to the village (Fen Drayton, Swavesey, Longstanton, Oakington, and Impington).

For all these villages the proposed safeguard that would allow local densities to be set which take account of local character is very important and should be included in the final NPPF.

If the frequency of bus services were to increase to villages which benefit from a 20 minutes service at present such as Cambourne, Cottenham and Sawston (and intermediate villages on these bus routes) additional villages could also be affected.

***New settlements (question 6)***

Summary of question:

8. Policy is to be strengthened to provide a more supportive approach for new settlements in local plans, where they can meet the sustainable development objectives of national policy, including taking account of the need to provide an adequate supply of new homes. Local planning authorities should work proactively with developers coming forward with proposals for new settlements in their area.



Summary response:

The provision of a more supportive national policy approach to new settlements in national planning policy is welcome. This Council has delivered new settlements at Bar Hill, and Cambourne; has a new town at Northstowe already allocated and is proposing further new settlements at Waterbeach and Bourn Airfield. It provides further acknowledgement that new settlements can offer a sustainable development strategy option, when compared to alternatives such as Green Belt development. Such an approach should include making appropriate allowances for the lead in times of new settlements in regard to 5 year housing land supply calculations and the time necessary to make up any past undersupply, where this offers benefits to achieving a sustainable development strategy for an area, or where this has resulted directly from a failure of site promoters and developers to bring forward the development of new settlements in accordance with agreed timetables.

***Supporting housing development on brownfield land and on small sites (defined as less than 10 dwellings) (questions 7, 8, 9 and 10)***

Summary of questions:

9. Housing proposals on brownfield sites are to benefit from a presumption in favour of housing development unless there are overriding conflicts with the Local Plan and NPPF.
10. The Government want to ensure that all proposals for sustainable development on small sites of less than 10 units are strongly supported by national policy. They propose to apply the approach described above for brownfield land to other small sites, provided they are within existing settlement boundaries and well-designed to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.
11. Small housing developments on land adjoining but outside settlement boundaries will be enabled provided they are sustainable.

Summary response:

The prioritisation of brownfield land for housing development can be supported in principle, provided that it is fully thought through. Is it intended to apply to large airfield sites for example which count as brownfield land and whose allocation as new settlements are currently key issues for decision through the Local Plan process?. A presumption in favour of development must allow proper consideration of sustainability including local employment land, and impact on the wider development strategy for the area.

The South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework and Submitted Local Plan already positively supports appropriately scaled development within settlement boundaries. However, in the smallest villages (Infill Villages), with fewest facilities, development is restricted to sites of two dwellings (where not using a brownfield site where 8 dwellings can be developed). An assumption in favour of development of sites of 10 dwellings could increase the scale of development taking place in the least sustainable locations. Consideration should be given to reducing the permissible scale of development to a figure less than 10 in villages at the lowest scale of settlement hierarchy set out in a Local Plan.

The proposal to allow small sites adjoining settlement boundaries to be developed for residential would be likely to lead to a significant amount of village development with impacts on the landscape setting of many villages. The new Local Plan policies envisaged by question 10 must be able to take account of village sustainability as

well as landscape impact. The NPPF needs to be clear what is meant by small in this context, the impact would be less if the sites are clearly stated to be for less than 10 dwellings.

The relationship between this change and that proposed by question 17 (starter homes on rural exception sites) is important. Allowing market housing development adjoining settlement boundaries as is proposed will be likely to bring more village land onto the market for housing development, but also blur the difference between such sites and rural exception sites. It may reduce the amount of rural exception site affordable housing coming forward as the local benefit is less direct.

### ***Ensuring housing delivery on allocated sites (questions 11 and 12)***

Summary of questions:

12. A new housing delivery test is proposed to apply where there is a significant shortfall between the homes provided for in Local Plans and actually being built. Actions to address a significant shortfall will be required, the consultation asks for views on what these should be. One suggestion is the identification of additional sustainable development sites and which could include new settlements, identified either through a targeted Local Plan review or preparation of Area Action plans.

Summary response:

The proposed remedies to under delivery are already available to local planning authorities. It is unclear they would be more successful than existing national policies intended to boost housing delivery have been such as the 20% additional site buffer and the penalties which flow from not having a 5 year supply of deliverable sites.

Consideration should be given to remedies which would incentivise developers as well as local planning authorities. These could include a land tax on non delivering sites, and enabling the HCA and local councils to acquire and deliver non performing sites.

A specific mechanism should be introduced through legislation and the NPPF to enable additional housing sites to be added to an adopted Local Plan to ensure a 5 year housing land supply. The mechanism should be such as to allow for the process to be rapidly completed. The review of our Local Plan started in 2011, has been at examination since March 2014 and until its adoption we will not be able to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply.

It will be important that any policy response allows area specific circumstances to be taken into account regarding the most appropriate response to a shortfall.

### ***Supporting starter homes on underused commercial and employment land (questions 13, 14 and 15)***

Summary of questions:

13. Unviable or underused employment sites (and including retail, leisure and institutional sites) should be released for the development of starter homes unless there is significant and compelling evidence for its retention.

Summary response:

Through recent government consultations, the Council has stressed the need to protect village employment sites. These are an important part in maintaining viable rural communities. It is acknowledged that a balance must be struck between protecting sites and applying long term protection where there is no reasonable

prospect of take up. Our Local Plan already allows for commercial and employment land within villages to move to residential use subject to appropriate policy tests including evidence of marketing for a minimum of 12 months. Changes to the NPPF must allow Local Planning Authorities to continue to protect this important resource, and not create unreasonable evidence requirements.

Partial residential development of employment sites could undermine existing employment functions by other occupiers. There are also risks of landlords displacing firms to seek residential development, given the potential difference in land values.

National policy must make provision to ensure that the employment areas of new settlements are not vulnerable to being lost to residential use based on inappropriate policy tests. New settlements can deliver over periods of over 20 years and some employment land may not be delivered until towards the end of this period. For new settlements it would be inappropriate to allow the loss of employment land based on the length of time a site has been undeveloped or lack of evidence of market interest delivering development within two years.

#### ***Encouraging starter homes in mixed use commercial developments (question 16)***

Summary of question:

14. Appropriate unlet units in commercial developments are to be encouraged to be converted into starter homes.

Summary response:

No response is proposed. This policy change is primarily aimed at struggling town centres rather than to the type of village centres found in South Cambridgeshire. Our Local Plan already allows for such changes of use where there would not be an unacceptable reduction in village services and facilities, and subject to viability and marketing criteria.

#### ***Encouraging starter homes in rural areas (questions 17 and 18)***

Summary of questions:

15. It is proposed to allow starter homes to be provided on rural exception sites subject to the same 5 year restriction on resale. It is also proposed that a local connection test could be applied 'exceptionally' where local connections are important and access to the housing market for working people can be difficult.

Summary response:

The practical results of this proposed policy change are uncertain. It could lead to some landowners not making their land available for rural exception sites as the starter home residents would not necessarily have any local connection given that such a test is seen as exceptional and not of general application. Starter homes are subject to a 20% discount for the buyer which does not have to be recycled for subsequent purchasers after 5 years of residency. This gift from the landowner to purchasers with no local connection may make some landowners reluctant to make their land available for such developments. Local communities are unlikely to support proposals without a guarantee of perpetuity and local connection criteria. Experience of shared ownership sales on rural exception sites demonstrates that often purchasers do not come forward with a local connection and cascade provisions have to be implemented. This is likely to be exacerbated if all homes on rural exception sites are starter homes. It is also unclear whether you would still need to evidence the need for starter homes in line with existing policies on rural exception sites.

There is also some concern that a wholly exception site of starter homes will mean that the affordable housing asset targeted for local people will be lost as soon as the properties are sold on, resulting in a loss of affordable housing in rural areas. Village sites are often constrained and cannot grow in perpetuity, this would support a different approach to starter homes on exception sites such that the 20% discount is retained in perpetuity.

There would also appear to be a contradiction in terms of legislation where the Housing (Right to Acquire or Enfranchise) (Designated Rural Areas) was implemented to ensure affordable homes in specified areas was not lost to the open market.

### ***Neighbourhood planning and starter homes (question 19)***

Summary of question:

16. Policy is to be amended to allow Neighbourhood Plans to allocate small-scale sites in the Green Belt specifically for starter homes.

Summary response:

The NPPF at paragraph 89 already allows limited affordable housing for local community needs in the Green Belt. Extending this exception to starter homes may be attractive to some villages who see a need for some low cost market homes in the village but not for additional affordable homes.

### ***Brownfield sites in the Green Belt (question 20)***

Summary of question:

17. A very small amount of land in the Green Belt is previously developed brownfield land suitable for housing (0.1%). It is proposed that policy be changed to allow these sites to be redeveloped providing this would contribute to the delivery of starter homes. Additional flexibility is proposed in relation to impacts on the openness of the Green Belt.

Summary response:

Existing national policy requires that the development of such sites not have a greater impact on the openness of Green Belt land than the existing development on site. This can sometimes lead to it not being viable to redevelop such sites where contaminated or occupied by significant industrial structures. Provided that the development enabled is suitable, sensitively designed and the impact on openness is not substantial such a change would not have any major impact on the purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt.

### ***Transitional arrangements (question 21)***

18. The document states that Government does not consider it necessary for Local Plans now in the examination process to be revisited. A period of 6-12 months is considered to be sufficient to allow partial reviews of Local Plans to be undertaken.
19. Depending on the exact changes which are made to the NPPF, we will need to consider if any changes to the Local Plan are necessary to make the plan sound. Such changes would need to be subject to consultation and sustainability appraisal

before being submitted to the examination Inspector. This should not delay the Local Plan examination as further plan modifications requiring consultation are certain to arise through the examination process.

### **Options**

20. The Planning Portfolio Holder has the following options:
- (a) Agree the proposed repose; or
  - (b) Agree the proposed response with amendments; or
  - (c) Not to agree the proposed response.

### **Implications**

21. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:

#### ***Financial***

22. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

#### ***Legal***

23. There are no direct legal implications of this report.

#### ***Staffing***

24. There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

#### ***Equality and Diversity***

25. The consultation is accompanied by an Equalities Statement which identifies a number of impacts particularly in regard to the expanded definition of affordable housing and the release of more land for starter homes. The overall impact is stated to be not significant, and positive outcomes are identified for all groups provided that the number of additional homes arising is high enough to impact favourably on housing affordability. Also see questions 22 and 23 in Appendix 1.

#### ***Climate Change***

26. There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report.

### **Consultation (including from the Youth Council)**

27. This report has been prepared in liaison with officers from across the Council including housing officers.

### **Effect on Strategic Aims**

#### **Aim 3: We will ensure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for our residents.**

28. The proposed response to consultation set out at Appendix 1 is intended to help secure a continued high quality of life for South Cambridgeshire residents.

## **Background Papers**

Consultation on proposed changes to national planning policy and Equalities Statement (DCLG)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-consultation-on-proposed-changes>

Autumn Statement 2015 (HM Treasury)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/spending-review-and-autumn-statement-2015-documents>

Towards a one nation economy: A 10-point plan for boosting rural productivity (DEFRA and HM Treasury)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/towards-a-one-nation-economy-a-10-point-plan-for-boosting-rural-productivity>

Fixing the Foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation (HM Treasury)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/443898/Productivity\\_Plan\\_web.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/443898/Productivity_Plan_web.pdf)

Housing and Planning Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2015-16/housingandplanning.html>

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Proposed response to the consultation on proposed changes to the NPPF

### **Report Authors:**

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Proposed response to the consultation on proposed changes to the NPPF

DCLG consultation questions	Proposed response
<b>Affordable Housing</b>	
<p>Q1. Do you have any comments or suggestions about the proposal to amend the definition of affordable housing in national planning policy to include a wider range of low cost home ownership options?</p>	<p>The intention of Government to boost home ownership is supported. But home ownership is not an option for many local households in housing need, whether particularly because of a low or insecure household income (as demonstrated below) or because an individual is aged 40 or more or is not a first time buyer for example and needing to move to South Cambridgeshire to take up employment – and so not qualifying for a starter home. The NPPF requires local planning authorities to plan proactively to meet the housing needs of different groups in the community such as families with children, older people, people with disabilities, and service families amongst others. If starter homes are built on s106 sites as a replacement in whole or part for affordable rented homes, it will reduce the local authorities ability to assist households who are unable to afford or who do not qualify for a starter home. In recent years around 30% of households on our housing needs register have been in bands A and B (those with an urgent or high housing need), and these have made up the great majority of new affordable housing lets in the district.</p> <p>One drawback to starter homes as currently proposed is that unlike other alternative forms of affordable housing there is no provision to recycle the subsidy provided (the discount to full market value) into further affordable housing provision. Consideration should be given to ways in which all or some of the discount could be recycled to provide an ongoing local benefit rather than it only benefiting the first owner.</p> <p>It is important that future affordable housing is made up of a mix of products suitable for a wide variety of households which includes but is not limited to starter homes. In general a household income of around £50,000 would be needed to support home ownership of a £250,000 starter home locally. Property values are such that it is unlikely that a 2/3 bedroom home will be available in most of South Cambridgeshire at less than £250,000 without a</p>

DCLG consultation questions	Proposed response
	<p>larger discount than 20%. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the Cambridge Sub Region 2013 records the following data on local household incomes:</p> <p>SCDC households      Lower quarter household income  Middle (median) household income      Average (mean) household income</p> <p>SCDC all households      £18,900      £36,150  £42,082</p> <p>SCDC recently moved social tenants household incomes (2009 to 2012 data)      £8,320      £13,944  £15,606</p> <p>It is therefore unlikely that the majority of households on an average income will not be able to afford a Starter Home and their needs will have to be met by alternative forms of affordable housing.</p> <p>With the withdrawal of grants for the provision of affordable housing delivery, and increasing issues of affordability generally (both in respect of house prices and rents) there is a need for new innovative housing products to come onto the market such as starter homes and rent to buy schemes. It is therefore positive that the Government is amending the definition of affordable housing to enable such provision. But there must be a balance between starter home provision and other forms of affordable housing to create sustainable communities and meet the housing needs of our area.</p> <p>In respect of starter homes consideration should be given to the affordable housing definition specifying that the household income of the first purchaser should not already be sufficient for them to buy a similar property in the same district on the open market. Without this provision the availability of starter homes would be reduced for those who could not otherwise be able to afford to buy in the district.</p> <p>The provision of a mix of affordable housing products is also important to the success of the local economy and the provision of public services. Many staff cannot afford home ownership even of starter homes and must be provided for if the economy and local services are not to suffer (including staff such as</p>

DCLG consultation questions	Proposed response
	<p>nurses, and lab technicians). Labour mobility is important both to the local economic growth and for household income growth and career development. Home ownership can play a part in such mobility but is not the only answer. In this respect it is disappointing that there is nothing in the NPPF changes to encourage the growth of purpose built homes for rent by institutional investors, as well as of affordable rented and other intermediate products.</p> <p>Future funding for traditional affordable housing products is being squeezed by a lack of subsidy, competing s106 requirements, falling rents and in future by CIL, all of which support the need for innovative new affordable housing products being developed and introduced. Controlling future housing costs will have ongoing benefits for households and for the size of the housing benefit bill nationally.</p>
<p>Q2. Do you have any views on the implications of the proposed change to the definition of affordable housing on people with protected characteristics as defined in the Equalities Act 2010? What evidence do you have on this matter?</p>	<p>The change to the definition in itself is unlikely to have significant implications. However, if the change results in significant changes to the nature of new affordable housing, there could be significant implications, see response at Q23.</p>
<b>Increasing residential density around commuter hubs</b>	
<p>Q3. Do you agree with the Government's definition of commuter hub? If not, what changes do you consider are required?</p>	<p>The proposed change can be welcomed in relation to transport hubs planned for the new town of Northstowe (guided bus), and for Cambridge Northern Fringe East (guided bus, bus and new railway station), and also regarding the proposed Waterbeach new town if the railway station is relocated. These are all locations where increased residential densities would in principle be appropriate.</p> <p>We have rural railway stations in our district at Ashwell and Morden, Meldreth, Shepreth, Foxton, Shelford, Whittlesford and at Waterbeach. Some of these villages are small and are not otherwise well served in terms of facilities and services or alternative means of public transport.</p> <p>A number of villages on the guided bus routes in our district currently benefit from a 15 minute bus frequency although sometimes bus stops are not</p>

DCLG consultation questions	Proposed response
	<p>always close to the village (Fen Drayton, Swavesey, Longstanton, Oakington, and Impington).</p> <p>For all these villages the proposed safeguard that would allow local densities to be set which take account of local character is very important and should be included in the final NPPF.</p> <p>The definition should include reference to guided bus systems such as that operating into Cambridge.</p>
<p>Q4. Do you have any further suggestions for proposals to support higher density development around commuter hubs through the planning system?</p>	<p>The guidance should be clear that rural locations on a commuter hub are not necessarily sustainable locations for development. It is only if they are sustainable locations for development that the policy on higher residential densities would apply, and then only after taking local character into account and the need to deliver high quality development.</p>
<p>Q5. Do you agree that the Government should not introduce a minimum level of residential densities in national policy for areas around commuter hubs? If not, why not?</p>	<p>Yes, a minimum suitable for inner London on a site next to a major railway station would be very different from one for a site next to a rural railway station next to a small village.</p>
<p><b>Supporting new settlements, development on brownfield land and small sites, and delivery of housing agrees in Local Plans</b></p>	
<p>Q6. Do you consider that national planning policy should provide greater policy support for new settlements in meeting development needs? If not, why not?</p>	<p>Yes, It would be helpful if the NPPF could offer more support for new settlements. South Cambridgeshire is seeking deliver two new settlements through its Local Plan currently at examination. There is very little in the existing NPPF which supports the taking of strategic decisions of long term benefit to housing supply; the onus is on short term measures when what is needed are both. The evidence requirements for Local Plans in respect of new settlements in regard to transport, infrastructure and viability, and reasonable alternatives are onerous and are in some cases approaching what would be needed to support a planning application. A general statement that new settlements can offer a sustainable development solution would be very helpful. We are fully aware that developing further urban extensions on the edge of Cambridge in the Green Belt would on some measures be more sustainable, but we judge the overall balance to be less sustainable than new settlements when the harm caused to Green Belt</p>

DCLG consultation questions	Proposed response
	<p>purposes by additional urban extensions is accounted for.</p> <p>Appropriate allowances must be provided for the lead in times of new settlements in regard to 5 year housing land supply calculations and the time necessary to make up any past undersupply where this has resulted directly from a failure of site promoters and developers to bring forward the development of new settlements in accordance with agreed timetables. If such allowances are not made some local authorities will continue to pursue purely short term solutions to future housing land supply.</p>
<p>Q7. Do you consider that it would be beneficial to strengthen policy on development of brownfield land for housing? If not, why not and are there any unintended impacts that we should take into account?</p>	<p>Yes. The prioritisation of brownfield land for housing development can be supported in principle, provided that it is fully thought through. Is it intended to apply to large airfield sites for example which count as brownfield land and whose allocation as new settlements are currently key issues for decision through the Local Plan process?. A presumption in favour of development must allow proper consideration of sustainability including local employment land, and impact on the wider development strategy for the area.</p> <p>The South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework and Submitted Local Plan already positively supports appropriately scaled development within settlement boundaries. However, in the smallest villages (Infill Villages), with fewest facilities, development is restricted to sites of two dwellings (where not using a brownfield site where 8 dwellings can be developed). An assumption in favour of development of sites of 10 dwellings could increase the scale of development taking place in the least sustainable locations. Consideration should be given to reducing the permissible scale of development to a figure less than 10 in villages at the lowest scale of settlement hierarchy set out in a Local Plan.</p> <p>The proposal to allow small sites adjoining settlement boundaries to be developed for residential would be likely to lead to a significant amount of village development with impacts on the landscape setting of many villages. The new Local Plan policies envisaged by question 10 must be able to take</p>

DCLG consultation questions	Proposed response
	<p>account of village sustainability as well as landscape impact. The NPPF needs to be clear what is meant by small in this context, the impact would be less if the sites are clearly stated to be for less than 10 dwellings.</p> <p>The relationship between this change and that proposed by question 17 (starter homes on rural exception sites) is important. Allowing market housing development adjoining settlement boundaries as is proposed will be likely to bring more village land onto the market for housing development, but also blur the difference between such sites and rural exception sites. It may reduce the amount of rural exception site affordable housing coming forward as the local benefit is less direct.</p>
<p>Q8. Do you consider that it would be beneficial to strengthen policy on development of small sites for housing? If not, why not? How could the change impact on the calculation of the local planning authorities' five-year land supply?</p>	<p>Yes. If such changes were to be made to the NPPF it would be reasonable to include an allowance for such development in the windfall allowance making up overall housing supply and hence calculation of 5 year housing land supply.</p> <p>If enough land is made potentially suitable for housing development through the NPPF changes, calculating future 5 year housing land supply will become both more difficult and less relevant.</p>
<p>Q9. Do you agree with the Government proposal to define a small site as a site of less than 10 units? If not, what other definition do you consider is appropriate, and why?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>Q10. Do you consider that national planning policy should set out that local planning authorities should put in place a specific positive local policy for assessing applications for development on small sites not allocated in the Local Plan?</p>	<p>As the consultation document states, most plans are already positive towards appropriate windfall development within settlements, and are an important element of housing supply already sought by Local Planning Authorities in light of the current NPPF.</p> <p>The proposal to allow small sites adjoining settlement boundaries to be developed for residential would need a specific local policy to balance support for such provision with protection of local amenity, heritage and the environment.</p>
<p>Q11. We would welcome your views on how best to</p>	<p>It will be important that any policy response allows area specific circumstances to be taken into account</p>

<b>DCLG consultation questions</b>	<b>Proposed response</b>
<p>implement the housing delivery test, and in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you consider should be the baseline against which to monitor delivery of new housing?</li> <li>• What should constitute significant under-delivery, and over what time period?</li> <li>• What steps do you think should be taken in response to significant under-delivery?</li> <li>• How do you see this approach working when the housing policies in the Local Plan are not up-to-date?</li> </ul>	<p>regarding the most appropriate response to a shortfall.</p> <p>The proposed remedies to under delivery are already available to local planning authorities. It is unclear they would be more successful than existing national policies intended to boost housing delivery have been such as the 20% additional site buffer and the penalties which flow from not having a 5 year supply of deliverable sites.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to remedies which would incentivise developers as well as local planning authorities. These could include a land tax on non delivering sites, and enabling the HCA and local councils to acquire and deliver non performing sites.</p> <p>A specific mechanism should be introduced through legislation and the NPPF to enable additional housing sites to be added to an adopted Local Plan to ensure a 5 year housing land supply. The mechanism should be such as to allow for the process to be rapidly completed. The review of our Local Plan started in 2011, has been at examination since March 2014 and until its adoption we will not be able to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply.</p> <p>It is also difficult to see how the NPPF providing a more supportive policy towards new settlements can be consistent with introduction of a housing delivery test given the long lead in times of new settlements and the risks involved in their delivery. Adding a new settlement to a Local Plan in response to failure of the under delivery test would be very unlikely to provide a quick solution.</p> <p>New settlements should be discounted from the housing delivery test given these uncertainties which are primarily in the control of the promoter and site developers rather than the local planning authority.</p>
<p>Q12. What would be the impact of a housing delivery test on development activity?</p>	<p>No response.</p>
<p><b>Supporting delivery of starter homes</b></p>	
<p>Q13. What evidence would you suggest could be used to justify</p>	<p>Through recent government consultations, the Council has stressed the need to protect village</p>

DCLG consultation questions	Proposed response
<p>retention of land for commercial or similar use? Should there be a fixed time limit on land retention for commercial use?</p>	<p>employment sites. These are an important part in maintaining viable rural communities. It is acknowledged that a balance must be struck between protecting sites and applying long term protection where there is no reasonable prospect of take up. Our Local Plan already allows for commercial and employment land within villages to move to residential use subject to appropriate policy tests including evidence of marketing for a minimum of 12 months. Changes to the NPPF must allow Local Planning Authorities to continue to protect this important resource, and not create unreasonable evidence requirements.</p> <p>Partial residential development of employment sites could undermine existing employment functions by other occupiers. There are also risks of landlords displacing firms to seek residential development, given the potential difference in land values.</p> <p>National policy must make provision to ensure that the employment areas of new settlements are not vulnerable to being lost to residential use based on inappropriate policy tests. New settlements can deliver over periods of over 20 years and some employment land may not be delivered until towards the end of this period. For new settlements it would be inappropriate to allow the loss of employment land based on the length of time a site has been undeveloped or lack of evidence of market interest delivering development within two years.</p>
<p>Q14. Do you consider that the starter homes exception site policy should be extended to unviable or underused retail, leisure and non-residential institutional brownfield land? <i>(such as schools and hospitals)</i></p>	<p>The loss of such sites in a village context can have serious implications for local employment and village sustainability. In the case of the village of Papworth Everard in South Cambridgeshire plan policy seeks to ensure that a existing hospital site is maintained in either healthcare use or as employment land and does not provide for future residential use. The future use of such sites is most appropriately dealt with locally where the impacts of policy on a locality can best be judged.</p> <p>This proposed change in combination with the proposal to allow more flexibility in the redevelopment of brownfield sites in the Green Belt (Question 20) could result in proposals to redevelop garden centre</p>



DCLG consultation questions	Proposed response
	sites in the Green Belt for starter homes and open market residential.
Q15. Do you support the proposal to strengthen the starter homes exception site policy? If not, why not?	See the answers to questions 13 to 18.
Q16. Should starter homes form a significant element of any housing component within mixed use developments and converted unlet commercial units?	<p>No response.</p> <p>This policy change is primarily aimed at struggling town centres rather than to the type of village centres found in South Cambridgeshire. The Local Plan already allows for such changes of use where there would not be an unacceptable reduction in village services and facilities, and subject to viability and marketing criteria.</p>
Q17. Should rural exception sites be used to deliver starter homes in rural areas? If so, should local planning authorities have the flexibility to require local connection tests?	<p>The practical results of this proposed policy change are uncertain. It could lead to some landowners not making their land available for rural exception sites as the starter home residents would not necessarily have any local connection given that such a test is seen as exceptional and not of general application. Starter homes are subject to a 20% discount for the buyer which does not have to be recycled for subsequent purchasers after 5 years of residency. This gift from the landowner to purchasers with no local connection may make some landowners reluctant to make their land available for such developments. Local communities are unlikely to support proposals without a guarantee of perpetuity and local connection criteria. Experience of shared ownership sales on rural exception sites demonstrates that often purchasers do not come forward with a local connection and cascade provisions have to be implemented. This is likely to be exacerbated if all homes on rural exception sites are starter homes. It is also unclear whether you would still need to evidence the need for starter homes in line with existing policies on rural exception sites.</p> <p>There is also some concern that a wholly exception site of starter homes will mean that the affordable housing asset targeted for local people will be lost as soon as the properties are sold on, resulting in a loss of affordable housing in rural areas. Village sites are often constrained and cannot grow in perpetuity, this would support a different approach to starter homes</p>

<b>DCLG consultation questions</b>	<b>Proposed response</b>
	<p>on exception sites such that the 20% discount is retained in perpetuity.</p> <p>There would also appear to be a contradiction in terms of legislation where the Housing (Right to Acquire or Enfranchise) (Designated Rural Areas) was implemented to ensure affordable homes in specified areas was not lost to the open market.</p> <p>A local connection test must remain an option for inclusion in Local Plans and not as an exception.</p>
<p>Q18. Are there any other policy approaches to delivering starter homes in rural areas that you would support?</p>	<p>No comment.</p>
<p>Q19. Should local communities have the opportunity to allocate sites for small scale starter home developments in their Green Belt through neighbourhood plans?</p>	<p>The NPPF at paragraph 89 already allows limited affordable housing for local community needs in the Green Belt. Extending this exception to starter homes may be attractive to some villages who see a need for some low cost market homes in the village but not for additional affordable homes.</p>
<p>Q20. Should planning policy be amended to allow redevelopment of brownfield sites for starter homes through a more flexible approach to assessing the impact on openness?</p>	<p>Existing national policy requires that the development of such sites not have a greater impact on the openness of Green Belt land than the existing development on site. This can sometimes lead to it not being viable to redevelop such sites where contaminated or occupied by significant industrial structures. Provided that the development enabled is suitable, sensitively designed and the impact on openness is not substantial such a change would not have any major impact on the purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt.</p>
<b>Transitional arrangements</b>	
<p>Q21. We would welcome your views on our proposed transitional arrangements (<i>which only relate to the affordable housing definition</i>)</p>	<p>No comments.</p> <p>The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan has been submitted for examination. The Local Plan Inspector is able to require changes to the affordable housing policy and definition where necessary to make the plan sound.</p>
<b>General questions</b>	
<p>Q22. What are your views on the assumptions and data sources set out in this document to estimate the</p>	<p>The impact on local authorities' ability to discharge their duties in terms of homelessness has not been assessed in terms of the availability of new homes meeting this client group's needs. Further analysis</p>

<b>DCLG consultation questions</b>	<b>Proposed response</b>
<p>impact of the proposed changes? Is there any other evidence which you think we need to consider?</p>	<p>on the current allocation of new affordable homes should be investigated to understand the impact on future allocations.</p>
<p>Q23. Have you any other views on the implications of our proposed changes to national planning policy on people with protected characteristics as defined in the Equalities Act 2010? What evidence do you have on this matter?</p>	<p>If the proposed change in the definition results in a decrease in the supply of rented homes, it is likely there will be an adverse affect on people with a disability or long term illness. 27.7% of applicants for rented homes in South Cambridgeshire have indicated they have a disability or long-term illness; but this is true for just 4.4% of applicants for low cost home ownership.</p> <p>If the change results in a decrease of rented homes in South Cambridgeshire, people aged over 40 will be adversely affected. In 2015 (to date) 38.4% of social/affordable lets were to over people aged over 40.</p>

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## Planning Portfolio Holder – Work Programme 2015-16

1 Date of meeting	2 Reports to be signed off and sent to Democratic Services by 5.00pm on	3 Title of Report	4 Key or Non-Key?	5 Reason Key Specify no(s) listed below	6 Purpose of Report, ie For Recommendation / Decision / Monitoring	7 Lead Officer / Report Author	8 Date added to Corporate Forward Plan (contact: Victoria Wallace) *
To be scheduled		Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document – Consultation– Timing will depend on examination	Key	2	Decision	Jo Mills / David Roberts	10 September 2014
2016-02-10	Mon 1 February 2016	Towards a Paperless Planning Service (working title)				Julie Baird	
2016-02-10	Mon 1 February 2016	Foxton Conservation Area				Trovine Monterio	

2016-03-14	Thur 3 March 2016	Local Plan	Key	2	Decision	Caroline Hunt	
2016-03-14	Thur 3 March 2016	Review of scheme of delegation :next steps				Jane Green	
2016-03-14	Thur 3 March 2016	Flood and Water SPD	Non-key probably			Jenny Nuttycombe / Jon Dixon	10 September 2014
2016-03-14	Thur 3 March 2016	Playing Field Strategy	Key	2	Decision	Alison Talkington	16 December 2015
2016-03-14	Thur 3 March 2016	Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy	Key	2	Decision	Alison Talkington	16 December 2015
2016-03-14	Thur 3 March 2016	Strategic Policies in the adopted development plan for South Cambridgeshire	Key	2	Decision	Alison Talkington	18 December 2015

## Key Decisions

1. it is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates, or
2. 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.  
In determining the meaning of 'significant' for the purposes of the above, the Council must have regard to any guidance for the time being issued by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 9Q of the 2000 Act (guidance)).
  - Key decisions can only be made after they have been on the Corporate Forward Plan for at least 28 clear calendar days not including the day on which they first appear on the Forward Plan or the day on which the decision is to be made.

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