

REPORT TO: Informal Cabinet

8 January 2020

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: Lead Cabinet Member for Planning

LEAD OFFICER: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Adoption of the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

Executive Summary

1. The Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared to provide guidance on the implementation of policies related to climate change and sustainable design and construction within the adopted South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge Local Plans in order to support the Greater Cambridge growth agenda and delivery of sustainable development.
2. The draft SPD was made available for public consultation between the 15 July and the 23 September 2019. During the consultation a total of 257 representations were received, 253 of which were to the SPD and 4 of which were to the Habitats Regulations Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal Screening Reports. Of the representations received to the SPD, 48 were in support of the provisions in the SPD, 113 were in objection and 92 were comments on the SPD.
3. This report provides responses to the representations received along with recommendations for amendments to the SPD ahead of adoption. Cabinet are asked to consider the summary of representations made on the draft SPD during the public consultation and the officers' response to these representations and adopt the SPD with a number of consequential proposed changes.

Key Decision

Yes

The key decision was first published in the November 2019 Forward Plan.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) Consider the main issues raised in the public consultation; agree responses to the representations received and agree consequential proposed changes to the SPD as set out in the Consultation Statement and the tracked changed version of the SPD for adoption (See Appendices A and B);
- b) Subject to a), adopt the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD; and
- c) Delegates to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development is in liaison with the Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, the authority to make any editing changes to the SPD prior to publication.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. The above recommendation is required to ensure that the SPD is amended to take account of the outcome of the recent consultation as appropriate and to ensure that the adopted SPD is available to assist the determination of planning applications for the district.

Details

6. The Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD has been developed with input from officers from across both Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. It provides technical guidance for developers on the information that needs to be submitted with planning applications to demonstrate compliance with adopted planning policies related to climate change and sustainable design and construction. In providing such guidance, the SPD will ensure that new development contributes to meeting the challenges posed by our changing climate including:
 - (a) Contributing to carbon reduction targets and reducing fuel poverty;
 - (b) Ensuring that new development is adaptable to our changing climate;
 - (c) Ensuring that new development makes efficient use of resources;
 - (d) Ensuring that new development contributes to the health and wellbeing of new and existing residents.
7. The draft Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD was made available for public consultation from the 15th July to the 23rd September 2019.

Results of the consultation

8. The outcomes of the consultation are set out in the consultation statement in Appendix A. This appendix has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) (England) Regulations 2012. Regulation 12 requires the preparation of a consultation statement, setting out the persons consulted when preparing the SPD, a summary of the main issues raised by those persons and how these have been addressed in the SPD.

9. During the consultation a total of 257 representations were received, 253 of which were to the SPD and 4 of which were to the Habitats Regulations Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal Screening Reports. Of the representations received to the SPD, 48 were in support of the provisions in the SPD, 113 were in objection and 92 were comments on the SPD.
10. The table below provide a summary of the representations received to each section of the SPD. All of the representations are available to be read in full on our online consultation system at: <https://cambridge.jdi-consult.net/localplan/>.
11. The SPD is considered to be consistent with the Local Plan policies for which it provides additional guidance, subject to the proposed changes that are recommended to made in response to the representations received as set out in the consultation statement (Appendix A) and brought together in Appendix B in a tracked changed version of the SPD for adoption. A summary of the key issues and the responses to these is provided below. Cabinet is recommended to adopt the amended SPD to provide further guidance and detail on the implementation of policies in the adopted Local Plan.

Table 1: Summary of representations

Section 1: Introduction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General support for the SPD but with comments that the document should go further, specifically with regards to net zero carbon development; • Comments regarding the need for flexibility in how the requirements of policy and the guidance in the SPD are applied to specific developments, giving consideration to viability, advances in technology and future national policy (for example changes to Building Regulations) • Objections to the level of detail contained within the SPD with recommendations that the focus should be on the Sustainability Checklist, with developers pointed to guidance contained in the Planning Practice Guidance and other relevant documents. • Comments regarding the role of neighbourhood plans, with the SPD needing to make reference to Neighbourhood Planning; • Exemplar role of local authorities in delivering their own projects should be addressed in the SPD.
Section 2: The importance of urban design
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General support, particularly for the principles of walkable neighbourhoods and adaptable buildings; • Objections to the level of detail contained within the SPD with recommendations that the focus should be on the Sustainability Checklist, with developers pointed to guidance contained in the Planning Practice Guidance and other relevant documents; • Concerns over how applicable some elements of the guidance are to villages in South Cambridgeshire; • Support for the transition to low and zero emissions transport and reducing the reliance on private vehicles;

- Exemplar role of local authorities should be addressed in the SPD;
- Clarification sought on references to 'off gauge bikes'

Section 3: Implementation

Introduction

- Support for the recognition of the need for early and effective engagement to agree alternative approaches where feasibility or viability are a concern;
- General support for the topics and guidance in this section;
- Concern over lack of reference to communications connections to properties;
- Some support for the inclusion of aspirational targets that go beyond policy requirements particularly related to energy, water and biodiversity

Energy and carbon reduction

- Guidance is too complicated and requirements overlaps with information required to meet Building Regulations;
- Query the support for gas fired Combined Heat and Power as it is not a true low carbon technology and can in many cases lead to an increase in carbon emissions compared to a standard gas boiler;
- Support for the requirement for 10% of carbon reduction to come from on-site renewable energy;
- Support for submission of Carbon Reduction Statements and the energy hierarchy;
- Request for additional guidance related to retrofit to be referenced in the section on energy efficiency in existing homes;
- The SPD should be more ambitious (i.e. net zero carbon);
- Objection to the inclusion of on-site requirements as part of the 10% renewable energy requirement;
- Need to reference future changes to Building Regulations and the Future Homes Standard which will have implications for policy implementation;
- Request that the 19% requirement should be applied on a site wide basis and not on a building by building basis;
- Energy requirements are considered to only apply to typical non-residential developments and not developments such as hospitals which may require a different approach;
- Concern that policies to maximise biodiversity and space for pv arrays at roof level may compromise the positioning of certain technologies;
- Viability should not be used to bypass the policy requirements related to energy and carbon reduction.

Water efficiency

- Adopted policies do not require the submission of a Water Conservation Strategy;
- Support for policy requirements related to water efficiency;
- Water efficiency requirements do not go far enough;
- Cambridge requirements for non-residential development do not take account of the feasibility and viability constraints of achieving this requirement in all forms of non-residential development;
- Some of the water efficiency requirement may not be achievable in certain

types of development (e.g. restrictions on water re-use in acute hospital environments);

- Rainwater harvesting works best in isolation of green/brown roofs.

Climate Change Adaptation

- Sufficient guidance on climate change adaptation and the role of trees exists elsewhere so further guidance in the SPD is not required;
- Policy CC/8 should not be read as requirement for all flat roofs to be green or brown roofs;
- Support for the approach to climate change adaptation – should be inherent part of masterplanning;
- Strong support for the cooling hierarchy;
- Support for the encouragement of green and brown roofs and the recognition of the role of green infrastructure;
- Support for the role of trees although the SPD should encourage the use of native species of local provenance;

Biodiversity

- Adequate local guidance on biodiversity already exists and as such further guidance is not required in this SPD;
- The SPD should not include a requirement for biodiversity net gain as this is not included in local plan policies;
- The list of priority habitats should include chalk streams;
- Support for guidance on biodiversity and the role of new development in enhancing biodiversity;
- Emphasis should be placed on encouraging the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations;
- Reference should be made to the Doubling Nature Vision;
- Welcome reference to the application of the mitigation hierarchy – the document would benefit from an explanation of the ecological mitigation hierarchy;
- Comments were made as to the type of assessment that should be submitted as part of the planning process;
- Reference to the need for developments likely to affect a European site to be accompanied by sufficient information to assess likely significant effect and the need for an Appropriate Assessment to be undertaken where necessary.

Pollution

- Section needs substantial editing to simplify advice for applicants, making reference to relevant national guidance and other advice;
- Sensible to plan for the provision of electric vehicles but the planning for the infrastructure demands associated with this needs to happen at an early stage and can require a substantial infrastructure burden to be accommodated. Further clarity should be provided to define the type/specification/energy demands of ev charging require for specific uses;
- Need to make it illegal for people to idle their engines while stationary;
- With regards to the requirement for a Low Emission Strategy and the

requirements of Table 3.20, there is insufficient flexibility in relation to the scale of development proposed. Allowance should be made for the LES to be included in the Design and Access Statement or Sustainability Statement depending on the scale of development;

- EV charging requirements need to be consistent with national policy (i.e. Building Regulations). Some of the requirements are too high and could have cost implications for developments;
- Some elements of this section may be difficult to apply in a hospital setting;
- Need to include reference to the need to mitigate impacts on sensitive ecological receptors including protected species;
- Need to include reference to the impacts that noise and vibration and lighting schemes can have on heritage assets;
- Support for the SPD from the Environment Agency in respect of groundwater and contaminated land;
- Requirements related to ev charging have not been tested at local plan examination;
- Clarification sought on acoustic standards in relation to ventilation;
- The SPD should include a definition of slow, fast and rapid for electric vehicle charging;

Sustainable Drainage and Flood Risk

- Adequate guidance is contained in the Flood and Water SPD;
- Support for the requirements in relation to sustainable drainage systems, particularly multi-functional approaches;
- Include reference to the need to consider archaeology in the design and layout of sustainable drainage systems;
- Need to include guidance on foul drainage;
- Include option to re-use water on site as part of this section;
- Include reference to adoption of sustainable drainage systems by sewerage undertaker or other bodies;
- Section should also apply to South Cambridgeshire.

Construction standards (BREEAM)

- Further guidance on BREEAM not required;
- BREEAM excellent is often not feasible for schemes under 1,000m², and in these cases the SPD could more strongly encourage the development of bespoke approaches;
- The SPD could usefully establish thresholds and non-residential project criteria defining where BREEAM 'excellent' is realistically achievable;
- This requirement should also apply to development in South Cambridgeshire.

Sustainable Show Homes

- The requirements of policy CC/5 and its associated supporting text are sufficient – no further guidance in the SPD is required;

Works to a heritage asset to address climate change

- Historic England, English Heritage and the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers provide advice on environmental improvements in heritage assets, and as such it is considered that no additional guidance is

required or necessary;

- Need to stress the importance of putting buildings into good repair;
- Works to heritage assets should be sensitive but also with purpose;
- Broad support for this section of the SPD. Reference to additional guidance prepared by Historic England and other organisations recommended.
- More guidance for homeowners required.

Construction waste and recycling and waste facilities:

- Sufficient guidance is already included in the RECAP Waste Management Guide and Toolkit;
- Support for this section of the SPD
- More reference to embodied carbon and the recycling and re-use of materials required;
- Needs to include advice for non-typical non-residential development (e.g. hospitals);
- Change should be designed to reduce construction waste to must be designed to reduce construction waste;
- Refer to the Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites;
- Needs to be a better solution to charging/disposing of waste.

Section 4: Further approaches

- Topics are not related to planning policies and cannot be addressed through the planning system. The SPD is not the appropriate document to set out such aspirations;
- Figures 13 and 14 do not take into account the historic environment;
- The South Cambridgeshire Health Impact Assessment SPD considers matters related to health and wellbeing and it is not necessary to duplicate this within the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD;
- Support for the section, particularly elements related to food growing;
- CUH pleased to see the recognition in the SPD of the role of the built environment in the health and wellbeing of residents;
- Developers should seek advice from Cambridgeshire Police Designing out Crime Officers at an early stage to ensure the principles of Secured by Design are met;
- Policies related to modern methods of construction need to be flexible to accommodate change;
- Encourage the inclusion of explicit support for the use of natural building materials;
- Include guidance on increasing the use of wood products in construction and wherever possible the use of UK sourced timber;
- Need to include reference to the embodied energy of existing buildings and the assessment of proposals in line with whole life cycle in accordance with BS EN 15978;

Needs to be a measurable standard for embodied energy included in the SPD – reference to Oxford City Council requiring a Natural resource Impact Assessment.

Appendix 1: Sustainability Checklists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for Ha.1 – Ha.4 to cross reference Governments retrofit guidance PAS 2035:2019 and the special considerations under Part L1B and L2B; • The checklist should be the main focus of the document with a single checklist prepared for both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire; • En.2 for South Cambridgeshire should not make reference to other onsite energy use; • Wt.2 – the Cambridge requirement for 5 BREEAM credits should be reduced in recognition that this requirement will not be technically feasible for smaller developments; • En.1 for Cambridge should be updated to read 19% improvement on Part L 2013; • Include reference to Habitats Directive requirements in the checklist; • Checklist should be more aspirational in relation to energy targets; • SuSH.1 – can you give benchmarking standards for the Show Home?; • Welcome the historic environment questions.
Appendix 2: Carbon reduction template for inclusion in Carbon reduction Statement for residential development – Cambridge developments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too Cambridge specific
Appendix 3: Gas Fired Combined Heat and Power Advice Note
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs to take account of the latest Climate Change Committee advice; • Possibly irrelevant to SCDC as the A14 work should eliminate the AQMA.
Appendix 4: Home Energy Questionnaire
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs to cross reference PAS 2035:2019; • Too Cambridge specific.
Appendix 5: Carbon reduction proformas for applications in South Cambridgeshire
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCDC report carbon reduction form
Appendix 6: Requirements for specific lighting schemes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For all-night lighting at low brightness use a compact fluorescent porch light of 9W (600 lumen); This is probably taken from an old existing document. Should be LED low power lighting that is not mercury based as per a compact fluorescent lamp. • Is more guidance on lighting needed?
Appendix 7: Contaminated land guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noddy's guide to development process for contaminated areas.
Appendix 8: Noise Pollution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is more guidance on noise pollution needed?
Acronyms
No comments
Glossary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a definition of setting and significance in relation to heritage assets
Representations to Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Reports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural England is satisfied with the conclusions of the Draft Habitats

Regulations Assessment Screening (June 2019) report that the draft Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD is unlikely to have any significant impacts on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites. We agree that it is not necessary to proceed to the next stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process i.e. Appropriate Assessment.

- Historic England would concur with your assessment that the document is unlikely to result in any significant environmental effects and will simply provide additional guidance on existing Policies contained within a Adopted Development Plan Document which has already been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal/SEA. As a result, we would endorse the Authority's conclusions that it is not necessary to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment of this particular SPD.
- Natural England agree with the conclusions of the Sustainability Appraisal Screening (June 2019) report that the SPD will not give rise to significant environmental effects beyond those already identified as part of the appraisal of the parent policies and site allocation contained within the adopted 2018 Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans. The Plan can therefore be screened out of the requirement for a separate Sustainability Appraisal.
- Objection to the accompanying HRA, which is deficient as it presumes mitigation of water abstraction by "increased efficiency" will allow sufficient water to be available without impacts on European sites. As indicated, there is finite water available, so this is a nonsensical approach. The accompanying Habitat Regulations Assessment cannot reach its conclusion of no impact based on present evidence and furthermore should be aware of "People over wind/Sweetman" C 323/17 decision

12. A common theme across many of the representations received from local community and interest groups, residents and architects was that the SPD should be more ambitious in the targets required related to energy, water and biodiversity, in light of recently declared climate and biodiversity emergencies and increasing concerns about water abstraction. While this support for greater ambition is welcomed, it is important to note that SPDs cannot be used to set new policy requirements and can only provide guidance on the implementation of existing policies. As such the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD must focus on providing guidance on the implementation of existing policy, which was developed prior to announcements on net zero carbon. Further work on Net Zero Carbon will be carried out as part of the development of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, and the Councils have committed to introducing policies related to net zero carbon as part of this document. Work is being commissioned to provide the evidence base for these policies, building on work on carbon footprinting and carbon budgets already carried out for the area.

13. Nevertheless, it is recognised that the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD is being prepared at a time of changing national policy, and some additional wording has been added to the introduction of the SPD to reflect this. This will encourage developers to consider ways in which to

futureproof their developments, giving consideration to emerging national requirements such as the Future Homes Standard and changes to Building Regulations.

14. Others respondents called for a degree of flexibility in how the requirements of policy and the guidance in the SPD is applied on a case by case basis, giving consideration to issues around technical feasibility and viability but also recognising that policy in this area, particularly around net zero carbon is a rapidly evolving area. Paragraphs 3.1.4 and 3.1.5 of the SPD already allow for some flexibility in the implementation of policies in light of feasibility and viability considerations, subject to early engagement with the planning service as part of the pre-application process. However, given that the policies in the adopted Local Plans were written in 2011/12, it is inevitable that elements of adopted policy will become overtaken by changes to national policy. As such it is proposed that additional wording be added to section 3 of the SPD to allow for updates to national requirements such as Building Regulations to be taken into account. This is most likely to apply to the topic of energy and carbon reduction, with the current consultation on changes to Part L of the Building Regulations to support the transition to net zero carbon buildings likely to have implications for the implementation of existing local plan policies. The most notable impact will be on the implementation of the Cambridge carbon reduction requirement for new homes, which is measured as a percentage improvement on 2013 Part L. But there may also be implications for the South Cambridgeshire policy given the Government's preferred approach stipulates the use of on-site renewable energy in order to reduce carbon emissions. A response to the Part L consultation is being developed by officers from across both South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council and will be subject to Member endorsement in due course.
15. It is also important to ensure that the implementation of current policy does not lead to unintended consequences, for example the SPD as currently drafted allows for gas Combined Heat and Power to be used in meeting the requirements of policy CC/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (renewable and low carbon energy in new developments). However, with the continued decarbonisation of the electricity grid, and Governments proposal to ban gas heating for new homes from 2025, some respondents to the SPD have called for the support for CHP to be removed from the SPD. This section of the SPD (paragraphs 3.2.28 – 3.2.32) has been amended to ensure that developments are not locked into higher carbon emissions in the future through the selection of inappropriate technologies.
16. With regards to the representations suggesting that the SPD is contains too much detail, it is recognised that there is a wide variety of guidance on topics available, and where possible, the SPD has referenced this material. However, in developing the SPD, officers have been mindful of the quality of information submitted with planning applications, as well as how up to date some of the guidance available is, including the Planning Practice Guidance. There are cases where applications are submitted with little or no information to enable officers to

fully determine the extent to which they comply with adopted policy and mitigate their impact on the environment, despite the presence of national guidance. This leads to technical officers having to either request the submission of further information, which leads to delays in determining applications or recommend refusal of applications. As such, it is considered that the level of information included in the SPD is necessary to ensure that appropriate detail is included within applications to enable officers to make an informed decision on how the proposals respond to policy requirements.

Next steps

17. The SPD as proposed to be amended in response to the consultation is consistent with adopted policy in the Local Plan 2018 for which it provides further detail and guidance. The guidance it provides will help to ensure that new development responds to the climate emergency and assists with the delivery of sustainable development.
18. Subject to approval by Cabinet, the Consultation Statement will be published on the Council's website.
19. If the SPD is adopted, officers will prepare an adoption statement and carry out various other actions laid down by regulation including actions to publicise the adoption of the SPD and make it available for reference.
20. On adoption, the SPD is capable of being a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Options

1. Members may decide:
 - Approve the Consultation Statement including the proposed changes to the SPD;
 - Approve the Consultation Statement including the proposed changes to the SPD with amendments;
 - Not approve the Consultation Statement including the proposed changes to the SPD;
 - Not delegate to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development in liaison with the Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, the authority to make any editing changes to the SPD prior to publication.

Implications

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

Equality and Diversity

22. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the development of the SPD. This notes that given the aim of the SPD to enhance the environmental performance of new homes, including their energy efficiency, there could be positive impacts from a fuel poverty perspective amongst the following protected characteristics:

- (e) Age;
- (f) Disability;
- (g) Pregnancy and maternity;
- (h) Race; and
- (i) Rurality.

Climate Change

23. The Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD will play an important role in planning for climate compatible development, helping to support the implementation of relevant policies in the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. While growth will inevitably lead to an overall increase in carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions, the SPD provides guidance on policies in the Local Plan that seek to reduce these impacts and increase the use of renewable and low carbon energy, sustainable modes of transport, reduce water use in new developments and also ensure that development is able to adapt to our changing climate. In doing so, it seeks to ensure that development is designed to exceed statutory minimum requirements for environmental performance set out in the Building Regulations.

Effect on Council Priority Areas

Growing local businesses and economies

24. Not directly relevant.

Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in

25. By ensuring that new homes are built to the highest possible sustainability standards, and incorporate renewable energy technologies and water saving devices, this can help to ensure that homes remain affordable not just to buy but to also live in by reducing energy and water bills.

Being green to our core

26. The SPD will provide guidance on the implementation of policies related to climate change and sustainable construction, helping to ensure that all new development plays a role in responding to our changing climate and meeting national targets for carbon reduction.

A modern and caring Council

27. Not directly relevant.

Background Papers

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018:
https://www.scambs.gov.uk/media/12740/south-cambridgeshire-adopted-local-plan-270918_sml.pdf
- Draft Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD:
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/7434/draft-sustainable-design-and-construction-spd.pdf>
- Sustainability Appraisal Screening Report:
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/7440/draft-sustainable-design-and-construction-spd-consultation-sustainability-appraisal-screening-report.pdf>
- Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report:
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/7436/draft-sustainable-design-and-construction-spd-consultation-habitats-regulations-assessment-screening-report.pdf>
- Equalities Impact Assessment:
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/7435/draft-sustainable-design-and-construction-spd-consultation-eqia.pdf>
- Draft Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD Consultation Statement: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/7439/draft-sustainable-design-and-construction-spd-consultation-statement.pdf>

Appendices

Appendix A: Statement of Consultation

Appendix B: Tracked changed version of the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD for adoption

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