

North East Cambridge Area Action Plan – draft plan consultation: Duty to Co-operate Position Statement

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Introduction

What is the duty to co-operate?

The duty to co-operate in relation to planning for sustainable development was introduced through the Localism Act 2011 and amends the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 accordingly. It places a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils and other prescribed bodies to co-operate with each other to address strategic cross-boundary matters relevant to their areas. The duty requires on-going constructive and active engagement on the preparation of Local Plans and other activities relating to sustainable development and use of land. At examination of Development Plan Documents, the statutory duty to co-operate is considered by the Local Plan inspector as a standalone test separate to consideration of the soundness of the Plan.

What is this document?

This document is a position statement on strategic cross-boundary matters relevant to the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan. It sets out engagement undertaken to date with relevant prescribed duty to co-operate bodies, and the current position on each relevant issue. For clarity, this document is not a Statement of Common Ground.

This position statement includes the following sections:

- General arrangements for addressing the duty to co-operate
- Current position on strategic cross-boundary matters relevant to North East Cambridge
- Next steps for duty to co-operate and North East Cambridge Area Action Plan

General arrangements for addressing the duty to co-operate for North East Cambridge Area Action Plan

Relationship between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council

The North East Area Action Plan is being prepared jointly by South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council¹. This builds on the Cambridge Northern Fringe East strategic site allocation in both councils' 2018 local plans and is now proposed to cover a wider area including Cambridge Science Park and other sites. The preparation of the Area Action Plan for this cross boundary site is being led by the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service for both local planning authorities, to establish a shared vision and development proposals for the site.

To support the development of a shared position for the Area Action Plan and also the proposed joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan referred to below, the councils have set up the Joint Local Planning Advisory Group (JLPAG). The [Terms of Reference](#) for JLPAG set out that it is a “non decision-making joint member group intended to facilitate the development of a shared policy understanding to allow the timely preparation of the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan, coordinated with transport policy”. The Advisory Group includes a representative of Cambridgeshire County Council.

Relationship with Local Plan duty to cooperate engagement and evidence

Co-operation between the councils extends to a new joint local plan being prepared for Greater Cambridge. Clearly North East Cambridge lies within the wider Greater Cambridge area, and as such, engagement with relevant duty to cooperate bodies on strategic cross-boundary matters, and related evidence relevant to North East Cambridge, will also be relevant in the context of this wider plan-making process.

¹ This in itself supports the fulfilment of the Duty to Cooperate under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase 2004 Section 33a part 6 – consideration of whether to agree under section 28 to prepare joint local development documents

In terms of the proposed engagement with Duty to Co-operate bodies for the Local Plan, the Councils' proposed approach was considered by the [Joint Local Planning Advisory Group meeting held on 2nd June 2020 and recommended for agreement to the South Cambridgeshire Cabinet meeting of 29 June 2020 and Cambridge Planning & Transport Scrutiny Sub Committee on 30 June 2020](#). Going forwards, duty to co-operate engagement for North East Cambridge Area Action Plan will be integrated where relevant within duty to co-operate engagement supporting the preparation of Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

In terms of evidence, a number of ongoing evidence bases supporting the Local Plan will also inform the Proposed Submission Area Action Plan at the next stage of the process. Should strategic cross-boundary matters arise through that ongoing wider evidence that affect North East Cambridge they will be addressed as relevant through each plan-making process.

Public Partners Stakeholder Group

To ensure that the Area Action Plan has had active and sustained engagement from Cambridgeshire County Council as the relevant authority responsible for education, highways, community services and minerals and waste, a monthly Public Partners Stakeholder Group was set up at the project's inception.

The Public Partners Stakeholder Group provides a regular forum to provide updates on emerging planning matters within the area and as a forum for discussion and an opportunity for attendees to help influence and shape planning policy in advance of formal consultation. Each of these duty to co-operate partners has the opportunity to contribute to and respond to policy development as it emerges to shape future delivery at the North East Area Cambridge. These sessions have sought input and provided an early awareness on all emerging issues from proposed homes and jobs to transport and climate impacts, to ensure a joined-up approach is achieved.

The meetings are attended by officers from:

- South Cambridgeshire District Council

- Cambridge City Council
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Greater Cambridge Partnership (this is not a duty to cooperate body, but as a delivery partner for transport schemes is a key organisation to coordinate with)

In accordance with the duty to co-operate, these partners have played a key role in the production of the Issues and Options Report, the ongoing development of the evidence base, and the Draft Area Action Plan.

Duty to co-operate and the preparation of evidence base

In order to prepare the Draft Area Action Plan, it has been necessary to research a range of background issues and produce new evidence to inform and support the proposed policies for North East Cambridge. Duty to co-operate partners have been involved in the preparation of evidence base documents including commenting on drafts as relevant. Topic papers have also been prepared and some of these were researched and drafted by duty to co-operate partners themselves, and others were commissioned jointly with duty to co-operate partners. Further detail on this is provided in the topic-specific sections below.

Current position on strategic cross-boundary matters relevant to North East Cambridge

This section explores a series of topics:

- that are considered to be strategic cross-boundary matters relevant to North East Cambridge at this stage in the plan-making process; or
- For which there are relevant prescribed bodies with whom the councils need to engage under the duty to co-operate.

For each relevant strategic cross-boundary matter, the list below sets out the current position, which may evolve as the plan progresses further. Responses to the draft plan will be reviewed to consider implications for ongoing duty to co-operate engagement.

The only strategic cross-boundary matter relevant to the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan that could affect areas beyond South Cambridgeshire is journeys from the wider travel to work area.

For clarity, the Councils consider that all the other strategic cross-boundary matters set out below are relevant only between Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, and that there are no strategic cross-boundary matters relevant to the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan that substantively affect areas beyond South Cambridgeshire.

Transport infrastructure

Why a strategic cross-boundary matter?

Congestion on rail and road routes within and crossing the boundaries of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, and the range of significant transport infrastructure proposals close to North East Cambridge, make transport a strategic cross-boundary issue for North East Cambridge.

Relevant proposed transport infrastructure projects include:

- Greater Cambridge Partnership's Waterbeach to Cambridge North scheme, which will form the first phase of
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro (CAM) – a portal to the proposed underground tunnel system is proposed within the North East Cambridge site.
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority's A10 Ely to Cambridge road improvement study and any improvements arising will influence future traffic flows in the area of North East Cambridge.

Evidence

A transport study commissioned jointly with Cambridgeshire County Council defined a 'trip budget' approach to the Area Action Plan.

Ongoing engagement

A monthly Transport Working Group was set up to ensure that all proposals at North East Cambridge are integrated in the wider development of strategic transport infrastructure, and that the impacts of development are understood and mitigated. These meetings provide updates on transport infrastructure projects proposed close to North East Cambridge, while providing a forum to share and discuss the interrelationship of emerging transport evidence and transport proposals impacting on the Area Action Plan.

The meetings are attended by officers from:

- Highways England
- South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Cambridge City Council
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Greater Cambridge Partnership
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (Local Transport Authority; includes the Business Board which is in effect the Local Enterprise Partnership – a prescribed duty to cooperate body; responsibility to prepare a Non-Statutory Strategic Spatial Framework; responsibilities for funding including: Housing Investment Fund, Single Pot Infrastructure Fund, and Adult Education Budget)

In addition to discussion at the Transport Working Group, officers developing the Area Action Plan have collaborated extensively with Highways England and Cambridgeshire County Council to develop transport proposals, and have consulted with Network Rail.

Current position

In relation to the overall transport impacts of development at North East Cambridge, the draft policies include the trip budget approach referred to above, with the aim of ensuring that vehicle trip generation levels do not exceed the current level, to mitigate all development's impact on the highway network. The councils

acknowledge that the development area will still generate some cross-boundary impacts on the wider highway network. However, consultation will take place to understand and positively respond to any potential impacts on both car and non-car modes in the wider travel to work area.

In relation to engagement with transport infrastructure proposals, the emerging draft Area Action Plan takes into account the CAM plans and a potential expansion of Cambridge North by safeguarding land for the portal and other infrastructure improvement under a Policy 19: Safeguarding for Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro and Public Transport.

Waste management infrastructure

Why a strategic cross-boundary matter?

The Minerals and Waste Authority, Cambridgeshire County Council, has a safeguarded Waste Transfer site within the Area Action Plan boundary. This is proposed for relocation to a suitable location either inside or outside of North East Cambridge in the current draft Area Action Plan.

Ongoing engagement

Ongoing engagement is taking place on this issue with Cambridgeshire County Council's Minerals and Waste Team and via the Public Partners Stakeholder Group.

Current position

The emerging Minerals and Waste Plan reflects engagement with council officers from South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council.

Water supply infrastructure

Why a strategic cross-boundary matter?

Water issues are shaped by river basins which cross boundaries. Greater Cambridge is in a water stressed area with low levels of rainfall. A particular challenge currently is the ecological impact of water abstraction, including from development, on the chalk streams that supply the River Cam.

Evidence

An integrated Water Cycle Study and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment commenced in spring 2020 to support the joint Local Plan. The Water Cycle Study includes a specific element on exploring the impact of water abstraction.

Current position

As noted above regarding the integration of Greater Cambridge Local Plan and Area Action Plan evidence, should strategic cross-boundary matters relating to water supply be identified through this ongoing evidence, they will be addressed as relevant through each plan-making process. Ahead of this more definitive view, the draft AAP policies aim to minimise and re-use water, connecting into strategic SuDs, if feasible drain into the first drain, use on-site SuDS and if on-site, prioritise vegetated SuDS.

Waste-water infrastructure

Why a strategic cross-boundary matter?

A waste-water recycling plant which provides for properties in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire lies within the North East Cambridge site. Cambridge City Council and Anglian Water have been successful in a bid for Housing Infrastructure Funding to inter alia, relocate the Milton Waste Water Treatment Plant (WTP). The proposed relocation of the Water Treatment Plant, will deliver critical water recycling services to residents in and around Cambridge in a new, modern, low-carbon facility. The

relocation of the Water Treatment Plant will enable a comprehensive regeneration of the North East Cambridge area and the Area Action Plan is predicated on the relocation taking place. There is therefore an inter-dependency between the Water Treatment Plant relocation and the AAP.

The relocation will be taken forward by Anglian Water under a Development Control Order process running in parallel with, but separate from, the Area Action Plan.

Ongoing engagement

Engagement with the County Council and Anglian Water seeks to ensure alignment of processes, taking into account the inter-dependency between the Area Action Plan and the relocation of the waste-water recycling plant. South Cambridgeshire District Council is also a statutory consultee on the Development Consent Order process.

Current position

Development of the full North East Cambridge site area is subject to the separate Development Consent Order process for the relocation of the waste-water recycling plant. The proposed draft revised Local Development Scheme for the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan incorporates the new proposed timings for the decision regarding that Development Consent Order process.

Provision of minerals

Why a strategic cross-boundary matter?

Requirements and provision for minerals is planned for at a county level, and is therefore a strategic cross-boundary matter.

Ongoing engagement

Ongoing engagement is taking place on this issue with the Minerals and Waste Team at Cambridgeshire County Council and via the Public Partners Stakeholder Group.

Current position

The draft Area Action Plan safeguards a minerals railhead that exists within the boundary, in accordance with Cambridgeshire County Council's adopted Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The draft Area Action Plan seeks to facilitate the ongoing operational needs of the aggregates railhead but looks to measures that may better manage its impacts including noise, dust, vibration and HGV movements. Such measure include changes to on-site operations (enclosure) and provision of a buffer from more sensitive receptor uses through the location of appropriate light industrial and commercial uses to mitigate environmental health concerns.

Community facilities - health

Why a strategic cross-boundary matter?

It is not expected that provision for needs arising at North East Cambridge will generate cross-boundary impacts that require substantive discussion. However, the bodies with health responsibilities (including NHS England, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health in Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council) are relevant prescribed bodies with whom the councils need to engage under the duty to co-operate.

Ongoing engagement

Several stakeholders with different responsibilities for planning, funding and commissioning types of health care provision are being actively engaged to contribute to the Health and Wellbeing Topic Paper. These include NHS England, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health in Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council. The Area Action

Plan team has been engaging with these stakeholders to discuss their vision and preferred model of service delivery for health care provision at North East Cambridge. This collaboration has slowed down due to the health services' priorities to confront the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, but they are in the process of agreeing the approach to modelling the increased demand for health care infrastructure and the high level preference for infrastructure to meet the demand for the projected population growth.

Current position

The Health and Wellbeing topic paper is being jointly researched and written by the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, Cambridgeshire County Council, and Peterborough City Council, and is being consulted on with National Health Service Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan is consulting with the stakeholders and considering the preferred approach recommended in the topic paper

Community facilities - education

Why a strategic cross-boundary matter?

While additional homes and associated residential population at North East Cambridge will increase demand for school places, education provision at North East Cambridge is not expected to provide, or generate demand for, education across administrative boundaries. However, the Local Planning Authorities are required to engage with the County Council under the Duty to Cooperate, which is responsible for education provision.

Ongoing engagement

Officers developing the Area Action Plan have been working with the County Council to develop options for the provision of school places. The Education topic paper

supporting draft policies has been written by Cambridgeshire County Council and this includes a preferred approach to inform the draft Area Action Plan policies.

Current position

At this point in the process the Councils are not aware of specific duty to cooperate issues arising in relation to education provision that are as yet unresolved.

Next steps for duty to co-operate and North East Cambridge

The Councils will continue to engage constructively and actively on the preparation of North East Cambridge Area Action Plan with relevant bodies to work to resolve outstanding issues before the Plan is agreed for submission to the Secretary of State.

As referred to above, going forwards, duty to co-operate engagement for North East Cambridge Area Action Plan will be integrated where relevant within duty to co-operate engagement supporting the preparation of Greater Cambridge Local Plan.