



Local Development Framework Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document

Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment Adoption Statement

Introduction

South Cambridgeshire District Council adopted the Local Development Framework Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) on 28 January 2010.

This statement has been prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (16) (3) and (4), which require a statement to be produced on adoption of a plan or programme, to detail:

1. How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;
2. How the Environmental Report has been taken into account;
3. How opinions expressed through public consultation have been taken into account;
4. The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with;
5. The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.

Planning Policy Statement 12 widens these considerations from environmental to the appraisal of the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the plan, so this statement provides information on the wider sustainability appraisal process.

This statement examines each of these points in turn.

1. How sustainability considerations have been integrated into the plan.

The LDF aims to improve the overall quality of life for the residents of South Cambridgeshire, in a way that will also benefit future generations. Taking a sustainable approach to economic, social and environmental issues is at the heart of the plan and will be closely related to the national strategy for sustainable development, which has four objectives, namely:

- Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- Effective protection and enhancement of the environment;
- Prudent use of natural resources; and
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

Policy context

The national policy context is set out in Planning Policy Statements (the replacement for Planning Policy Guidance Notes), Circulars and other advice from Government.

The regional context for the DPD was originally set out in the Regional Planning Guidance for East Anglia (RPG6), which has since been replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy (2008). Both these plans aim to focus a higher proportion of growth into the Cambridge Sub-Region, setting a sequential approach to the planning of development, with much of the development concentrated into and on the edge of Cambridge (subject to a review of the Cambridge Green Belt), including development in South Cambridgeshire, and into a new town beyond the boundary of the Green Belt.

RPG6 informed the strategy taken in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003 – now in part replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy). A number of the Structure Plan policies have been saved, including Policy P9/2c, which identified land between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road for release from the Green Belt for housing and mixed-use development.

Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document Policy Approach

The Local Development Framework contains a number of site specific policies, including allocations for housing and employment development, and safeguarding land for transport infrastructure. These are detailed in the Site Specific Policies DPD.

Housing

The Housing chapter draws together various policies for housing development. This includes housing-led mixed-use developments at sites on the edge of Cambridge; Cambridge Northern Fringe (Orchard Park) and North West Cambridge, as well as

housing sites in the rural settlements including; at Cambourne, Impington and Great Shelford. There are also policies concerning the re-development of sites at Hauxton, Fulbourn, two sites in Papworth Everard and the reuse of the former Land Settlement Association land at Fen Drayton.

Employment

The Employment chapter sets the employment allocations for B1 uses and for B1, B2 and B8 uses in the rural area.

Services and Facilities

This chapter sets out the recreational allocations in the rural area, including extensions to recreation grounds, an extension to a school playing field, and allocations for recreational use.

Cultural Heritage

The Northstowe Area Action Plan (AAP) sets out policies for the development of the new town. The AAP includes a policy requiring green separation between the new town and nearby Longstanton village. By its very nature, part of the green separation will be about the Longstanton village framework, which is outside the scope of the area covered by the AAP and is therefore included in the Site Specific Policies DPD.

Transport

This chapter details land that is safeguarded for transport infrastructure, including the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway, new rail infrastructure and safeguarding existing freight facilities and sidings. An area is also identified for safety purposes at Cambridge Airport.

Phasing and Delivery

This chapter includes objectives to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to secure the efficient and timely delivery of site specific policies. This includes delivery mechanisms, phasing of housing land and housing trajectory, delivering the development strategy.

Monitoring

The Site Specific Policies DPD also includes a series of indicators that will be monitored through the LDF Annual Monitoring Report. The impact of the plan can therefore be monitored, and a review triggered if conditions require it.

2. How the Sustainability Appraisal has been taken into account.

The Sustainability Appraisal has contributed to the plan development by providing an independent assessment of the sustainability of the Council's proposed options and policies as they were developed. It demonstrates that sustainability considerations have been incorporated into the development of the DPD from an early stage, and provides a formal statement and audit trail of the assessment.

The Sustainability Report is a key output of the plan preparation process. It reflected and supported the draft plan on which formal public consultation and participation was carried out. Appraisals of the Core Strategy DPD, Development Control Policies DPD, in combination with the Northstowe, Cambridge East and Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plans were submitted in parallel, which had the advantage of providing greater level of detailed analysis of the impact of policies in the Site Specific Policies DPD.

The process began with preparation of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. This formed a useful part of the evidence base for the early stages in plan preparation. It provided information on other relevant plans and strategies, from European to local level, and analysed which objectives and requirements were relevant to the preparation of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework.

The information gathered was used to create a set of sustainability objectives, which could be used to test emerging options and policies. A consistency matrix was used to test any tensions between these objectives. A set of indicators was also created, to provide evidence on the current state of the environment, as well as social and economic factors. These indicators were tested against other geographical areas to provide a comparison. This helped to identify priorities for South Cambridgeshire and any existing problems. It also highlighted policy issues that should be explored.

The key sustainability issues identified in the Scoping Report influenced the development of plan policies and objectives. Section 6.2, and Appendix 8, of the Final Sustainability Report specifically analyses the impact of policies on these wider sustainability issues. The objectives of the draft plan were tested against the sustainability objectives, through the Initial Sustainability Report. This provided information to the Council and representors on the compatibility between plan objectives and sustainability objectives.

The significant effects of the options, and subsequent policies, were analysed against the sustainability objectives, which provided information on their economic, social and environmental impact. Analysis included the scale and nature of the impact, cumulative, secondary and synergistic impacts. Both detailed testing matrices, and written summaries were included in the Final Sustainability Appraisal Report. This provided useful information to both representors and the Inspectors on the impacts of the policies of the plan.

The analysis of the impacts of the plan proposals also indicated opportunities to improve the sustainability of the plan, and indicate mitigation measures. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant effects on the environment, as well as social and economic objectives, are summarised in Appendix 5 of the Final Sustainability Report. A number of changes were made to plan options, and subsequently plan policies, as a result of the analysis in both the initial and the draft final, and the Final Sustainability Appraisal Reports.

3. How consultation has been taken into account (draft plan and the Environmental Report)

In this statement the Council is required to detail how opinions expressed in response to consultation have been taken into account.

Key Environmental Bodies

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires that authorities referred to in Article 6(3) shall be consulted when deciding the scope and level of detail of the information that should be included in the Environmental Report. In England, the key bodies are the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England (formerly English Nature and the Countryside Agency).

Consultation on a draft of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report with these key bodies was carried out in June 2004. The consultation enabled these bodies to comment on the appropriateness of the objectives, indicators, baseline assessment and issues / problems. A report on the outcome of these consultations is included in Appendix 7 of the Scoping Report. The consultation resulted in a number of changes to the Scoping Report, including changes to the sustainability objectives and questions, new issues for the area being identified, new plans and strategies being analysed in the report, and revised and new monitoring indicators.

Public Participation

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the draft plan or programme and the accompanying Environmental Report before the adoption of the plan or programme or its submission to the legislative procedure. The Council undertook a programme of public participation on the plan and its Sustainability Appraisal prior to submission to the Secretary of State. Full details can be found in the 'Statement of Statutory Bodies Consultation and Pre-Submission Public Participation (REGULATION 28 STATEMENT)', available to view on the Council's website.

Issues and Options Consultation (Regulation 25)

Statutory Bodies Consultation

The Council carried out an initial consultation with statutory bodies on all the matters which would be covered by the DPDs, as required under the new system of plan making, to ensure that it was aware, at an early stage of any programmes and plans that would affect the LDF. This took place under the “jumping the gun” regulations, in the lead up to the new system of plan making which did not come into force until September 2004. The consultation took the form of a letter highlighting general issues relating to the proposed Development Plan Documents, and seeking comments on issues that should be considered. The responses received were taken into account in preparing the Preferred Options Reports. A summary of the main issues raised and how the issues were addressed can be found in Appendix 1.

Preferred Options

Public consultation at this stage provided the public the opportunity to participate on options, before the decision was made on the preferred approach.

Initial Sustainability Appraisal Reports were included as annexes to the Preferred Options Reports. Whilst no representations were received specifically on the initial appraisal of the Site Specific Policies DPD, a total of 52 representations were submitted to the Site Specific Policies DPD. A summary of the main issues raised and how the issues were addressed can be found in Appendix 1.

A consultation draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was also included in the public participation at the Preferred Options stage of the LDF preparation. This also included consultation with a wide range of statutory bodies. The Preferred Options Reports were published in October 2004 and were subject to a six-week long public participation period. During this period, over 6,000 representations were received, 30 of which specifically related to the Scoping Report. A report on the outcome of the public participation is included in Appendix 8 of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. The consultation resulted in a number of changes to the scoping report, including changes to the sustainability objectives and questions, new issues for the area being identified, new plans and strategies being analysed in the report, and revised and new monitoring indicators.

Consultation under Regulation 26

The Pre-Submission Public Participation DPDs, together with the draft Final Sustainability Reports allowed the public to consider the Council’s reasons for selecting their preferred options in the context of a compliant environmental report and to seek to persuade the Council to opt for another, different approach. A single set of proposals, in the form of the pre-submission DPDs, allowed consideration of a holistic view in the draft final Sustainability Report and for the assessment of cumulative and synergistic effects. It included an outline of the process of selecting and rejecting options.

Appraisals of the Core Strategy DPD, Development Control Policies DPD, and Site Specific Policies DPD were bound together in one document. 20 representations were received in relation to the appraisal. A further 256 representations specifically related to the Site Specific Policies DPD. A summary of the main issues raised and how the issues were addressed can be found in Appendix 1.

The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was also subject to further public participation at the Pre-Submission Public Participation stage. 11 representations specifically related to the Scoping Report. A schedule of responses is included in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report 2006. The majority of representations related to health issues. Changes were made prior to publication of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, alongside the Final Sustainability Appraisal. They include additional details from additional plans and strategies relating to health issues.

Submission

On submission of the DPD, accompanied by the Final Sustainability Report, a further 418 representations were received, which were considered by independent Inspectors through the Examination process.

Informal consultation on Responding to a Housing Shortfall

Following the examination hearings, the Inspectors announced that they had found a shortfall in the dwelling capacity of land allocated in the various DPDs submitted in January 2006. That shortfall amounted to about 2,200 dwellings. The Inspectors asked the Council to assess additional site options to make up the housing shortfall and to put forward its preferred sites for them to consider. In order for the sites to be properly considered by the Inspectors, they were subject to sustainability appraisal and public consultation, for a six-week period from 31 October 12 December 2008. A total of 735 representations were received to the Responding to a Housing Shortfall, with 5 representations received to the Sustainability Appraisal. All responses received were passed directly to the Inspectors in order to help inform their final decision.

4. Reasons for choosing the document as adopted in light of other reasonable alternatives.

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (12) (2) requires environmental reports to examine reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme.

This statement is required to set out the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with.

PPS12 makes clear that full regard should be had to the chain of conformity to avoid duplication of assessment. The scope for strategic choices in particular was limited

by the specificity of policies in the former Regional Planning Guidance (RPG6) and the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan (2003). This limited the number of available reasonable alternatives, as non-conformity with the clearly established strategy in adopted higher order plans would make an alternative unreasonable. The Structure Plan was subject to Sustainability Appraisal.

The appraisal of alternatives is documented in the Final Sustainability Report. Appendix 2 of the report details the options selection process, and sets out why certain options were not considered reasonable. The preferred options reports included a number of options, each of which were appraised through the initial appraisal reports, to assist decision making of both the Council, and to inform representors. This process is also captured in Chapter 5 of the Final Sustainability Report. Sustainability Appraisal involves testing each reasonable plan option against the SA Framework to determine their performance in sustainability terms. The process is fully documented, including the reasons for eliminating options.

Following Examination of the DPD, the binding Inspectors' Report states that, 'The Council has carried out a process of Sustainability Appraisal of the submitted document and of the additional comparative assessment of sites which we requested as a result of our finding that there was a shortfall in housing allocations. As a consequence the SSP meets the test.'

5. Monitoring.

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 requires authorities to set out the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.

Details of the monitoring measures envisaged are summarised in Appendix 6 of the Final Sustainability Report.

The indicators created in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, will continue to be monitored annually. They have been utilised as 'significant effect indicators', to be collated in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report. This report includes an analysis of the implications of the results, and should a need arise a review of LDF documents could be triggered by this information.

The South Cambridgeshire Annual Monitoring Report is available to view on the Council's website.

Appendix 1: Extract From 'Statement of Statutory Bodies Consultation and Pre-Submission Public Participation (REGULATION 28 STATEMENT)'

7. Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

Statutory Bodies Consultation on Draft South Cambridgeshire Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

- Consultation with statutory bodies took place in June 2004.
- Key agencies that have environmental, social or economic responsibilities (the Environment Agency, English Nature, English Heritage, and the Countryside Agency).
- All four bodies responded.
- A schedule of responses is included in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report 2006, and is available to view on the District Council's website (www.scambs.gov.uk).
- Summary of main issues raised: The consultation enabled these bodies to comment on the appropriateness of the objectives, indicators, baseline assessment and issues/problems. Additional Sustainability Objectives, decision making criteria, and monitoring indicators suggested. A number of local sustainability issues raised, including historic environments, water and drainage, and biodiversity.
- How were issues addressed: Changes were made prior to publication of the Consultation Draft Scoping Report. They include additional Sustainability Objectives, decision making criteria, and monitoring indicators.

Consultation Draft South Cambridgeshire Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

- Public consultation took place during a 6 week period from Friday 1 October 2004 to 12 noon on Friday 12 November 2004 (alongside Preferred Options Reports).
- 30 representations specifically related to the scoping report.
- A schedule of responses is included in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report 2006, and is available to view on the District Council's website (www.scambs.gov.uk).
- Summary of main issues raised: A wide variety of issues were raised, ranging from transport, landscape, to health.
- How were issues addressed: Changes were made prior to publication of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, alongside the Final Draft Sustainability Appraisal. They include additional Sustainability Objectives, decision making criteria, and monitoring indicators.

South Cambridgeshire Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

As part of the Draft Final Sustainability Reports for the six Development Plan Documents, the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was subject to further public participation at the Pre-Submission Public Participation stage.

- Consultation took place in a 6 week period from Friday 17 June 2005 to 12 noon on Friday 29 July 2005.
- 11 representations specifically related to the scoping report.
- A schedule of responses is included in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report 2006, and is available to view on the District Council's website (www.scambs.gov.uk).
- Summary of main issues raised: The majority of representations related to health issues.
- How were issues addressed: Changes were made prior to publication of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, alongside the Final Draft Sustainability Appraisal. They include additional details from additional plans and strategies relating to health issues.

8. Initial Sustainability Reports

The Initial Sustainability Appraisal Reports were included as annexes to the Preferred Options Reports. Each option was subject to testing against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives created through the Scoping Report. The Initial Appraisal reports provided a summary of results, and provided valuable supporting information when considering options. Detailed background tables supporting the appraisal of each option are available to view on the District Council's website (www.scambs.gov.uk).

Core Strategy and Development Control Policies (including Site Specific Policies)

- 1 representation specifically related to the Initial Appraisal.
- A schedule of responses is available to view on the District Council's website (www.scambs.gov.uk).
- Summary of main issues raised: Issue raised on access to Papworth Hospital.
- How were issues addressed: No change required.

9. Draft Final Sustainability Reports

The Draft Final Sustainability Reports meet the requirements for sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment.

They were published for public participation alongside the Pre-Submission Public Participation Draft Development Plan Documents.

1. Core Strategy DPD, 2. Development Control Policies DPD, and 3. Site Specific Policies DPD

Appraisals of the Core Strategy DPD, Development Control Policies DPD, and Site Specific Policies DPD were bound together in one document.

- 20 representations were received.
- A schedule of responses is available to view on the District Council's website (www.scambs.gov.uk).
- Summary of main issues raised: Whilst there was one support, some representations criticised the complexity of the process, and some representations queried the outcome of individual policy appraisals. Some representations on the failure to appraise alternative options to a number of policies.
- How were issues addressed: Issues raised were considered when appraising policy changes. Sustainability appraisals are only required to assess reasonable alternatives. It is considered that additional options raised in these particular representations did not require appraisal at this stage in the plan making process.

3. Site Specific Policies DPD

3.A Statutory Bodies Consultation

- A total of 19 representations specifically related to the Site Specific Policies.
- A schedule of responses is available to view on the District Council's website (www.scambs.gov.uk).

Summary of main issues raised:

- The need for a site specific policy for Papworth Everard Hospital, and the former LSA at Fen Drayton.
- Calls for some growth to be permitted in some smaller villages to assist retention of services and facilities.
- The need for policies relating to Travellers.

How were issues addressed:

- Issues raised were considered when the Preferred Options Reports were drafted.

3.B Preferred Options Report

At this stage options relating to the Core Strategy DPD, Development Control Policies DPD, and Site Specific Policies DPD were bound together in one document - the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Preferred Options Report.

- A total of 52 representations specifically related to the Development Control Policies.
- A schedule of representations, officers responses and recommended changes to plan is available to view on the District Council's website together with the minutes of the meeting recording the Council's decisions (www.scambs.gov.uk).

Summary of main issues raised:

- CS20 set out the Preferred Approach to the existing housing allocations made in the 2004 Local Plan, which was to roll these forward into the LDF. There were some representations suggesting that this was not appropriate, that they would not come forward or are not in sustainable locations.
- Several representations raised concerns regarding housing provision, both in terms of delivery, particularly the delivery of the stated housing numbers at the major development locations of Northstowe and on the edge of Cambridge by 2016, and in terms of insufficient allocations to meet the housing need. Many subsequently sought additional allocations within the rural area to compensate for perceived shortfalls.
- CS55 – CS58 dealt with the options surrounding the potential relocation of Papworth Hospital. Whilst there was support for the preferred approach in particular from the Parish Council, other responses suggest that it was not appropriate for a LDF policy to dictate to the health authorities whether the current activities continue on this site.
- General support for a transport interchange at Chesterton Sidings, and safeguarding land for road infrastructure.
- With regard to the additional graveyard proposed at Gamlingay, there was support from the Parish Council but objection from the land owner. Other objectors sought additional land allocations in other locations.

How were issues addressed:

In the majority of cases the preferred approaches were developed into policies in the Pre Submission Public Participation Draft DPD. Some specific changes to the approach were as follows:

- Develop a policy for Papworth Hospital within the LDF to guide a mixed development and set the criteria against which any redevelopment proposals should be tested and that this should be augmented by a Supplementary Planning Document.

3.C Pre-Submission Public Participation Draft

At this stage the Core Strategy DPD, Development Control Policies DPD, and Site Specific Policies DPD were bound together in one document - the Core Strategy, Development Control Policies, Site Specific Policies Pre-Submission Public Participation Draft.

- A total of 256 representations specifically related to the Site Specific Policies (An additional 19 related to the Introduction).
- A schedule of representations, officers responses and recommended changes to plan is available to view on the District Council's website together with the minutes of the meeting recording the Council's decisions (www.scambs.gov.uk).

Summary of main issues raised:

- A large number of representations sought additional housing allocations.
- The rolling forward of allocations was criticised, because some do not fall in the most sustainable village categories, or were unlikely to come forward for development.
- Representations pointed out that additional land required in some villages to meet the shortfall in recreation provision. Specific sites were suggested.
- A number of representations were submitted relating to Papworth Hospital, and the approach that should be taken if it relocates to Addenbrooke's.

How were issues addressed:

A number of changes were made for the Submission DPD, some of the more significant changes include:

- New policy proposed to allocate Bayer Crop Science, Hauxton for mixed-use development.
- As part of the update of the housing land supply information, housing allocations rolled forward from Local Plan 2004 were revisited, including site specific investigations relating to the planning situation and landowner intentions. Where sites now have the benefit of planning permission (as at end of March 2005) they are deleted as allocations as they are now included in the commitments figures. Some other outstanding allocations are proposed to be deleted because either they are in Group or Infill villages and therefore now contrary to the strategy which focuses housing in rural areas at Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres, or they are considered unlikely to be developed for site specific reasons.
- Additional allocations for recreation at Histon and Impington.
- Policy on Papworth Hospital revised to make clear a sequential approach will be taken to finding replacement uses, beginning with healthcare. Only if a suitable healthcare use cannot be found would other employment uses be permitted.
- Papworth Everard West Central site changed from an emphasis on housing, to give a more even mix of housing, employment and community uses, with the aim of continued invigoration of the village centre.