

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** New Communities Portfolio Holder 8 March 2011  
**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director (Operational Services) / Corporate Manager  
(Planning and New Communities)

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### CAMBRIDGESHIRE RESIDENTIAL TRAVEL PLAN GUIDANCE

#### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek agreement for the Cambridgeshire Residential Travel Plan Guidance to be published for consultation.
2. This is not a key decision because the guidance does not create new policy, but provides further guidance on implementing existing policy in the Council's Local Development Framework. Approval is sought to undertake a consultation exercise. It was first published in the January 2011 Forward Plan.

#### **Recommendations**

3. That the Portfolio Holder:
  - (a) Agrees that the draft Residential Travel Plan Guidance (Appendix 1) be issued for consultation.
  - (b) Notes the consultation plan in Appendix 2.

#### **Background**

4. A Residential Travel Plan (RTP) is a package of measures which seeks to increase sustainable travel at a residential development. It does this by reducing the need for travel, reducing single-occupancy car travel and by providing and encouraging the use of more sustainable travel choices, such as walking, cycling, public transport, car sharing and car clubs.
5. The concept of Travel Plans is one that has become more popular over recent years, particularly due to the environmental and economic benefit of reducing congestion, which in turn reduces the contribution of road transport to air pollution and climate change.
6. National and regional guidance and policy does not explicitly help Local Planning Authorities to request RTPs. Local Planning Authorities in Cambridgeshire have worked together to develop the Cambridgeshire Residential Travel Plan Guidance as a means of ensuring that RTPs are provided as part of planning applications by developers. In effect this will enable City and District Councils to request RTPs from developers for residential developments. The emerging LTP3 also carries reference and support for RTPs, with them being mentioned alongside all other types of Travel Plan.
7. This document is being brought forward as Supplementary Guidance and will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in decision making if it has been subject to a) public consultation, b) Sustainability Appraisal, and c) been endorsed by County, City and District Council Members.

## **Process for preparing the Supplementary Planning Documents**

8. The purpose of Supplementary Planning Documents is to expand on policies set out in Development Plan Documents and to provide additional detail. The Council has adopted a number of Development Plan Documents (DPD) that form part of the Local Development Framework. The RTP guidance relates to Policy TR/3 Mitigating Travel Impact in the Development Control Policies DPD and policies in individual Area Action Plans for major developments that may vary from the district-wide policies. These policies seek to ensure the travel impacts of new developments are appropriately mitigated, and require a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan to accompany applications for major developments or developments likely to have significant transport implications, to demonstrate how developers will encourage sustainable travel in new developments.
9. The purpose of the RTP guidance is to explain the residential travel planning process and to specify the local requirements for RTPs. Alongside the guidance provided, the document contains templates and examples to demonstrate the requirements.
10. The RTP guidance has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal to ensure that it contributes to sustainable development, by considering all social, economic and environmental factors. The Sustainability Appraisal reveals that the RTP is likely to have positive effects in all social, environmental and economic areas, except for one social area (crime and fear of crime), where the RTP is likely to have no obvious effects.
11. The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) sets out the requirement for Assessment of plans or projects affecting Natura 2000 sites<sup>1</sup>. The first stage in carrying out an HRA is the scoping report which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 or Ramsar site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant. If it is found that there is not likely to be a significant impact then a full Appropriate Assessment would not need to be carried out. Each of the DPDs containing the parent policies for the SPD has been found to have no likely significant impact. Given the parent policies in the DPDs have been fully appraised, and SPD cannot create new policy, it is considered unnecessary to undertake an assessment of the SPD. However, as the RTP guidance will be adopted by the County Council and all District Councils, at different stages of producing their Local Development Frameworks, the County Council has undertaken a Habitats Regulations Assessment of the RTP Guidance, which showed that no adverse impacts are likely.

## **Considerations**

12. The Government's overarching planning policy objective is for sustainable development. At the heart of sustainable development is the simple idea of ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future. The RTP guidance provides details of what should be covered in the RTP to accompany applications for major residential development proposals in order to demonstrate how developers propose to increase sustainable travel in a residential developments, with resultant health and environmental benefits to local communities.

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<sup>1</sup> Natura 2000 is a Europe-wide network of sites of international importance for nature conservation established under the European Council Directive 'on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora' – (92/43/EEC 'Habitats Directive').

13. As part of the process of preparing an SPD there must be an opportunity for representations to be made on their content. If agreed by the Portfolio Holder, the SPD and its accompanying documents will be subject to six weeks of public consultation, which is anticipated will start in June 2011. A consultation plan is provided in Appendix 2 for information.
14. Following the consultation the Councils will consider the representations on the draft RTP and make any relevant changes to the RTP as a result of comments received. A report will then be made to the Portfolio holders on the representations submitted, and the Portfolio Holder will make the decision whether to adopt the document as SPD.

### Implications

15. Financial	None.
Legal	None.
Staffing	Within existing resources.
Risk Management	No significant risks. The consultation responses will highlight any issues for further consideration by the Council.
Equality and Diversity	The RTP guidance has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.
Equality Impact Assessment completed	Yes <a href="http://www.scambs.gov.uk/CouncilAndDemocracy/Equality/equalityimpactassessments.htm">http://www.scambs.gov.uk/CouncilAndDemocracy/Equality/equalityimpactassessments.htm</a>
	The EqlA has been shown to have a neutral and / or positive impact on Equal Opportunities.
Climate Change	The RTP process encourages developers to promote sustainable alternatives to the car at their sites, such as walking, cycling and public transport. In so doing, RTP could help to reduce harmful gas emissions in the county, thereby reducing the impact of climate change. The RTP will also bring benefits in terms of air quality.

### Consultations

16. Officers from all the Cambridgeshire District Councils have been consulted during the preparation of the RTP guidance. There will be the opportunity for public involvement through a six-week statutory public consultation, anticipated to start in June 2011.

### Effect on Strategic Aims

17. **Commitment to being a listening council, providing first class services accessible to all.** The consultation on the RTP will enable the Councils to receive comments on the document's contents from developers, house builders, other interested parties and the general public.
18. **Commitment to ensuring that South Cambridgeshire continues to be a safe and healthy place for all.** The Council's Local Development Framework includes a number of policies aimed at creating sustainable developments and inclusive communities. One of the requirements, for Transport Assessments and Travel Plans to be undertaken for major developments, should ensure that the full transport implications are fully considered in the development process. Residential Travel Plans accompanying planning applications will demonstrate how developers propose to increase sustainable travel in a residential developments, with resultant health and environmental benefits to local communities.

19. **Commitment to making South Cambridgeshire a place in which residents can feel proud to live.** The Council's Local Development Framework includes a number of policies aimed at creating sustainable developments and inclusive communities. One of the requirements, for Transport Assessments and Travel Plans to be undertaken for major developments, should ensure that the full transport implications are fully considered in the development process. Residential Travel Plans accompanying planning applications will demonstrate how developers propose to increase sustainable travel in a residential developments, with resultant health and environmental benefits to local communities.
20. **Commitment to assisting provision for local jobs for all.** N/A
21. **Commitment to providing a voice for rural life.** The consultation on the RTP will enable the Councils to receive comments on the document's contents from developers, house builders, other interested parties and the general public.

### **Conclusions/Summary**

22. The draft RTP guidance has been prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council in consultation with the officers from each of the City and District Councils. The purpose of the guidance is to explain the residential travel planning process and to specify the local requirements for RTPs. Alongside the guidance provided, the document also contains templates and examples to demonstrate the requirements. The report requests approval to undertake a public consultation on the draft RTP guidance.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Draft Cambridgeshire Residential Travel Plan Guidance (February 2011)

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### **Appendices:**

- 1: Draft Cambridgeshire Residential Travel Plan Guidance
- 2: Consultation Plan