

PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT

Project Name:	South Cambridgeshire Local Development Plan		
Project Sponsors:	Steve Hampson & Jo Mills		
Project Manager:	Keith Miles		
Date Issued:	07-Nov-11	Version No:	2

Background:

District Councils as local planning authorities are required to produce a Development Plan for their local authority area setting out policies and proposals for the use of land and buildings and for the conservation and enhancement of the built and natural environment. Produced under the provisions of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, these are currently known as a Local Development Frameworks.

This project concerns the review and updating of planning policies and proposals for South Cambridgeshire leading to the adoption of a new South Cambridgeshire Local Development Plan in 2015. Led by the Planning Policy Team in the Planning and New Communities section of the Council, it is a corporate project that has significant implications for service planning across the Council as well as for external stakeholders concerned with development and service/infrastructure provision.

South Cambridgeshire has an adopted Local Development Framework that covers the period to 2016 that sets out the spatial development strategy for the District, makes allocations for development and includes policies which are the starting point for determining planning applications. It comprises a number of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Area Action Plans (AAPs) produced and adopted between 2004 and 2010. These are the [Core Strategy DPD](#) - Adopted January 2007, [Development Control Policies DPD](#) - Adopted July 2007, the [Site Specific Policies DPD](#) - Adopted January 2010, the [Northstowe AAP](#) - Adopted July 2007, the [Cambridge East AAP](#) - (prepared jointly with Cambridge City Council) Adopted February 2008, the [Cambridge Southern Fringe AAP](#) - Adopted February 2008, the [North-West Cambridge AAP](#) - (prepared jointly with Cambridge City Council) - Adopted October 2009 and an [Adopted Proposals Map](#) - Published in July 2011. A number of Supplementary Planning Documents have also been produced to provide detailed guidance on a number of matters, e.g. public art.

Whilst the adopted DPDs include policies and proposals for the period to 2016, some of the AAPs include development allocations which will endure beyond 2016, e.g. Northstowe and the Cambridge fringes developments.

Policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents are required to look many years ahead in order to provide a degree of certainty for developers, service and infrastructure providers who need to make long term investment decisions as well as to give the public some certainty over the future of their locality. For example, as a guide local planning authorities are required by government to plan ahead for 15 years to ensure a continuous supply of housing land. This means reviewing and keeping plans up to date as well as regularly extending their time horizons.

The review of South Cambridgeshire's plans was intended to start earlier but has been delayed by the change in government and suggestions of changes to the planning system which have only partially materialised. An important change will be the abolition of regional plans when the Localism Bill is enacted. With their abolition, England will no longer have a two tier planning system where broad strategy has been set in regional plans. The Councils Local Development Plan will both set broad strategy and include detailed policies and proposals.

At his meeting on 8th March 2011, the New Communities Portfolio Holder agreed the programme for the replacement of the Local Development Framework suite of DPDs with a new South Cambridgeshire Local Development Plan that will cover the period to 2031. The four adopted Area Action Plans will remain in force.

The review of South Cambridgeshire's plans are taking place at the same time that Cambridge City

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Council is updating its plans. Building on many years of collaboration, the two Councils are working together on parts of the evidence base and will work closely to ensure that the two development strategies work together to provide a cogent and cohesive strategy across the 2 Districts which make up one housing market and journey to work area.

Plan review will take just over 3 years and can be broken down into three phases:

- Year 1: Evidence gathering leading to issues and options consultation
- Year 2: Plan drafting and consultation
- Year 3: Submission to the Secretary of State, examination and adoption

Project Objectives:

The objectives of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Plan (SCLDP) project are by mid 2015 to:

- Produce and adopt a 'sound' Local Plan for sustainable development in South Cambridgeshire for the period to 2031 that conforms with the new National Planning Policy Framework and incorporates:
 - A Core Strategy which sets out the broad spatial vision for South Cambridgeshire
 - Site Allocations for housing, employment and other development
 - Development Control Policies which will be used to guide decisions on planning applications for the development and use of land/buildings in South Cambridgeshire
 - A Proposals Map
- Support the Councils strategic aims and objectives particularly where they have a development or land use dimension and support the Council's new housing strategy
- Ensure that the SCLDP supports the activities of the Cambridge and Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership or any relevant successor body
- Wherever possible, to include Parish Council aspirations for neighbourhood development
- Developed a 'spatial vision' for South Cambridgeshire in co-operation with relevant local planning authorities in the Cambridge and Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership area, in particular with Cambridge City Council. This will build upon the vision and priorities set out in the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Community Strategy
- Ensure that the preferred strategy, policies and proposals are informed and underpinned by the concept of 'sustainable development'
- Plan for the timely and necessary delivery of key infrastructure in a co-ordinated, comprehensive and equitable manner, taking account of the plan, programmes and priorities of key service and infrastructure providers e.g. County Council transport strategy
- Support the delivery of a continuous supply of housing and employment development to support the long term growth of the local economy
- Engage effectively and continuously with communities and stakeholders throughout the plan-making process

IN SCOPE

A single development plan document to be known as the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Plan, comprising:

- **CORE STRATEGY**

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1. The spatial vision and strategic objectives.
2. Overarching vision for delivering sustainable development in South Cambridgeshire encompassing planning for prosperity, people and places including giving effect to the Sustainable Communities Strategy.
3. Providing a framework for neighbourhood planning.
4. Housing and employment strategy.
5. Employment guidelines and Strategic Employment Locations.
6. Housing targets and Strategic Housing Allocations.
7. The strategic approach to development in villages, affordable housing, design, retail and climate change.
8. Key infrastructure required for the delivery of the development strategy.
9. A key diagram showing the spatial strategy for South Cambridgeshire.
10. Indicators, targets and monitoring requirements for the strategy.

○ **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT**

1. Sets out the detailed policies to be used for determining planning applications encompassing development principles, green belt, housing, employment and tourism, services and facilities, natural environment, cultural heritage and travel.
2. Monitoring indicators.

○ **SITE SPECIFIC POLICIES**

1. Allocations for development and conservation designations shown on the Proposals Map.
2. Policies for the development and use of specific sites.
3. Housing trajectory.

○ **PROPOSALS MAP**

1. District-wide proposals map.
2. Area Action Plans (if needed).
3. Cambridge Fringes Inset (if needed).
4. Village Insets (if needed).

○ **Neighbourhood Planning**

1. Neighbourhood planning aspirations which are broadly consistent with the Core Strategy

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OUT OF SCOPE			
1. Neighbourhood planning aspirations which are not broadly consistent with the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Plan.			
Products / Outcomes:			
1. A replacement South Cambridgeshire Local Development Plan for sustainable development in South Cambridgeshire for the period to 2031 which incorporates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A Core Strategy which sets out the broad spatial vision for South Cambridgeshire ○ Site Allocations for housing, employment and other development ○ Development Control Policies which will be used to guide decisions on planning applications for the development and use of land/buildings in South Cambridgeshire ○ A Proposals Map 			
Assumptions and Constraints:			
1. The South Cambridgeshire Local Development Plan must be reviewed and adopted as quickly as possible in order to ensure a continuous supply of housing land and to support the economic recovery. 2. National planning policy in Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) will be replaced by a concise National Planning Policy Framework at the beginning of the plan-making process. 3. The development strategy will need to have regard to the diminished availability of funding for publicly provided services and infrastructure for the early part of the plan period. 4. The whole Council will be involved in decision-making at all key stages in plan-making including where decisions are made by the portfolio holder or by cabinet. Decisions will be made to keep plan-making on target: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Issues and options (Portfolio Holder) b. Draft submission plan (Cabinet) c. Submission plan (Council) d. Changes to meet any Examination Inspector's recommendations (Cabinet) e. Adoption (Council) 5. The public may not be fully supportive of the scale of development needed to provide for the continued growth of the local economy or to key development proposals. 6. Co-operation with Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridge City to plan for the 2 Districts as one housing market/journey to work area. 7. Internal and external stakeholders will co-operate with plan-making by providing information on service and infrastructure requirements. 8. Neighbourhood planning will wherever possible be taken forward collaboratively with Parish Councils working with the District Council to include proposals in the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Plan.			
Risks:			
Description	Potential Consequences	Current State	Mitigation & Contingencies

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Council members engage infrequently with planning policy matters and there is a risk that Full Council will not agree the submission or adoption plans.	Failure to have a replacement Local Plan in place leaving the South Cambridgeshire vulnerable to planning applications for development which it does not support.	high	Involve Full Council in all decision-making stages, even where decisions are made by the portfolio holder or by cabinet. Parish Council liaison and briefings. Comms strategy to keep wider public engaged.
That we fail to engage Parish Councils and key stakeholders effectively.	Unexpected and avoidable blockages/opposition.	low	Comms strategy to keep public and stakeholders engaged. Direct consultation at all stages of plan-making
Reduced level of staffing as a result of staff sickness, turnover or budget cuts.	Delays to the production of documents. Loss of key skills could also impact on the quality of the plans.	low	Sharing information amongst officers will lead to easier handovers.
Challenging timescales for preparing the documents in the project plan.	The production of plans will take longer than anticipated.	low	Careful project management, maintaining risk log and prioritisation of resources. If necessary, the project plan can be adjusted through the AMR.
Insufficient resources for plan-making.	The anticipated reduction in Local Government budgets will likely lead to less resource to produce the LDF.	moderate	The Council has committed to the review and has agreed to provide additional manpower as necessary to produce comprehensive policies and proposals for all sections of the community.
Changes to national planning policy, policies for affordable housing and finance e.g. TIF.	Existing planning policy statements and guidance notes will be replaced by a national planning policy framework.	moderate	It is likely that the national planning framework will devolve more decisions to the local level and so the likelihood that it will contradict local policies is fairly low. NPPF requirement for a 20% surplus of housing allocations may be a challenge.
Inability of other council service areas to feed into the LDF.	The LDF requires a great deal of engagement with other services of the council. If they do not have the time or resources to assist with the preparation of the LDF, the quality of the plans may suffer or the time it takes to produce them may increase	moderate	Project management and steering group role for EMT with regular report on progress. Maintaining good working relationships with other council services and sharing staff resources where necessary.

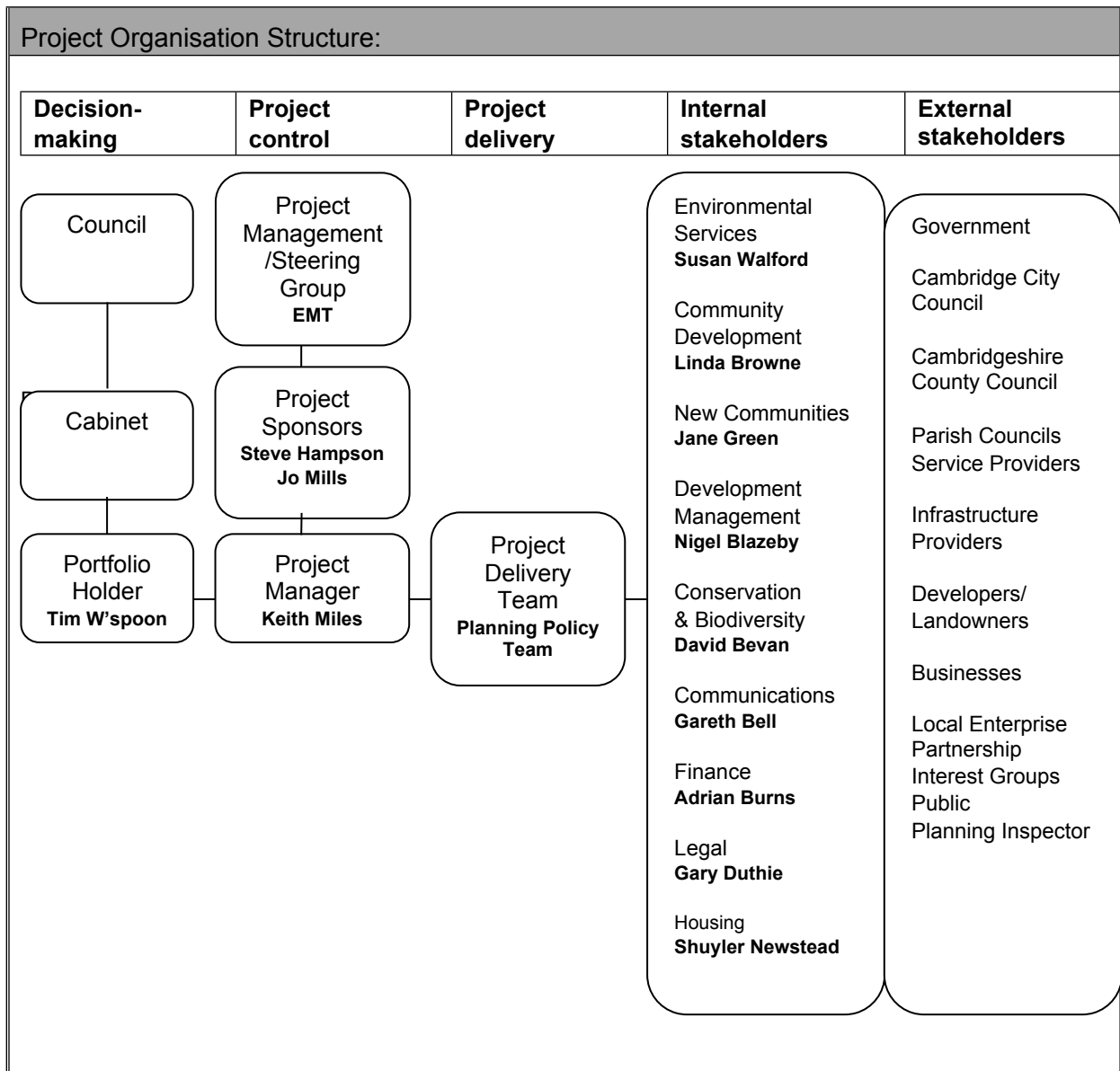
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Reduced capacity of outside organisations to engage with the LDF.	Other councils and Government agencies are also being affected by reduced resources. We rely on working collaboratively with a number of partners, particularly to address cross-boundary issues.	low	Have built successful working relationships with a number of partner organisations and the 'duty to co-operate' should ensure that they will continue to be engaged in the production of the LDF. Use LEP, County Strategy Group of District/County Councils, Chief Planning Officers and Planning Policy Forum to secure participation.
Significantly high level of public response to a consultation.	This would require a great deal of time and staff resources to process and consider the consultation responses.	low	When project planning controversial plans, additional time should be programmed for consultation analysis.
Introduction of neighbourhood plans.	The Localism Bill will introduce the ability for communities to produce a neighbourhood plan, and the Council will be obliged to assist such initiatives	moderate	It is not yet known which communities may want to bring forward a neighbourhood plan or the resources involved in assisting them in the process. Wherever possible encourage neighbourhoods to bring forward proposals for inclusion in the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Plan.
Abolition of regional spatial strategies.	The Localism Bill will revoke regional spatial strategies.	low	As the removal of regional spatial strategies has been known about for some time, LDF documents have been produced that do not rely on the presence of the East of England Plan. Target setting as a local function carries a greater risk for ensuring sufficient housing growth to match the growth of the local economy. Work with County Strategy Group of District/County Councils to ensure produce a cogent and cohesive strategy.
Legal challenge to an LDF document.	Part or all of the document would be quashed by the High Court.	low	Attention to detail and quality assurance of the processes used to identify potential pitfalls. Constant engagement with the council's legal team should also help to ensure we fully comply with the regulations.
Plans being found unsound.	A plan being found unsound will likely lead to significant delays in its adoption.	low	Preparing a good evidence base, effective engagement with stakeholders and regular liaison with neighbouring authorities.
Availability of expertise for Sustainability Appraisal and other statutory assessments.	These assessments are a statutory requirement and so if they cannot be done in house consultants will need to be commissioned.	low	We have been working to increase our knowledge and expertise in this area to ensure that the use of consultants is minimised.

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Incorporating planning for gypsies and travellers into the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Plan.	Delays occurring as a result of a high number of challenging representations, members not being able to make decisions at key stages of plan-making.	high	Incorporating planning for gypsies and travellers into the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan is itself a mitigation as members will understand the importance of not delaying plan preparation. Developing policies and proposals which are acceptable to both the settled and travelling communities.
Project Quality Plan:			
<p>The project will be successful if all of these criteria are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The plan is produced and adopted with the minimum of slippage to the 3 year timetable. 2. The main components of the plan are found 'sound' at examination. 3. The public have been fully involved in the preparation of the plan. 4. The plan is a corporate document which includes proposals needed by internal and external stakeholders relying on the plan for service or infrastructure delivery. 5. The plan gives effect to the Council's agreed aims and objectives which have a land use/spatial planning dimension. 6. Local politicians, stakeholders and the public consider that the plan reflects locally agreed priorities, needs and aspirations. 			

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Communications Plan:

Project progress will be communicated to the Executive Management Team and Portfolio Holder via highlight reports in accordance with the agreed timescales.

The service leads within the project team will be responsible for communicating with their respective service areas. The project manager will also be responsible for engaging with service areas and their teams.

The project manager will take responsibility for communicating with the planning policy team, ensuring that officers are informed of project progress and have the opportunity to discuss issues.

The project team, in conjunction with the communications manager, will develop a schedule/plan of internal and external communications for the duration of the project.

Corporate communications will be made using existing mechanisms including, corporate brief, chief executive's blog, weekly bulletin, scene magazine and the intranet.

External communications will be made as appropriate using existing mechanisms including; website, scene magazine, social media, and press releases.

Project Controls:

The project manager will maintain accurate and up to date project documentation, available upon request and including:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Project Initiation Document | 6. Issue Log |
| 2. Resource List | 7. Risk Log |
| 3. Stakeholder Map | 8. Lessons Learned Log |
| 4. Project Timeline / Task List (Gantt Chart) | 9. Highlight Reports & Requests for Change |
| 5. Milestone Plan | |

A schedule of bi-weekly project team meetings for the period of the project.

The project manager will provide a highlight report to the Executive Management Team on a monthly basis and the Portfolio Holder on a quarterly basis.

In accordance with the Council's constitution, matters requiring agreement by Cabinet and/or Council will be identified, consulted with the Executive Management Team, and scheduled for consideration within an agreed timescale.

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Timescale:															
<i>Project start: April 2011</i>								<i>Project end: July 2015</i>							
Apr 11				Apr 12				Apr 13				Apr 14			Apr 15
Evidence, stakeholder plans, scoping, issues & options															
				Draft Submission Plan											
								Submission Plan							
												Examination			
														Adoption	
Resources:															
<i>Budget: £352,000 over 3 years</i>								<i>Total Staff Work Days: This is complex and is still estimated</i>							

Authorised By:	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
Project Manager:		
Project Sponsor:		