

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) provides information on the progress the Council is making in preparing its planning policy documents and how well it is doing in terms of delivering the overall development strategy and implementing the policies included in the Local Development Framework (LDF). The key message from this year's AMR is the prolonged impact of the downturn in the economy on the rate of development, confirming the need for a policy review to put in place a strategy for the recovery. The Executive Summary highlights the headline results of this year's AMR.

### a. Progress against the Local Development Scheme

- 1.2. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) adopted by the Council in March 2010 for the 3 year period from 2010 – 2013 sets out the timetable for the production of all planning policy documents that the Council intended to progress during the monitoring year. The LDS included a programme for preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), however the Council's intentions in relation to a number of the SPDs has changed. The summary set out below and in figure 3.1 (Chapter 3) shows progress against the milestones for each of the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and SPDs listed in the March 2010 LDS.

#### *Development Plan Documents*

- 1.3. The March 2010 LDS included the Council's intention at that time to prepare a specific **Gypsy & Traveller DPD** and to undertake a review of the **Core Strategy**. It had been intended that a review of the Development Control Policies DPD and the Site Specific Policies DPD would follow in sequence consistent with the LDF approach at that time. A number of factors have influenced the Council and a different approach is now proposed.
- 1.4. The review of the **Core Strategy** has been delayed as the Council considered the implications of the Government's proposed changes to the plan-making system through the Localism Bill published in December 2010, the proposed revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy and the proposed implementation of a new National Planning Policy Framework. The Council has however continued preparing and commissioning the evidence base studies required to support the review of the Core Strategy but has not progressed to any formal stages of plan making.
- 1.5. In view of the changes in guidance at the national level, the Council has now reviewed its approach and will now be preparing a single **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan**, reflecting the Government's advice to prepare separate DPDs only if there is a good case for doing so. The Local Plan will include a review of the Core Strategy, together with a review of the Development Control Policies DPD and Site Specific Policies DPD and any update necessary to the Area Action Plans for major developments. A timetable for the preparation of the Local Plan was agreed in January 2012.

- 1.6. The Council has undertaken two Issues and Options consultations as early stages in the preparation of a separate **Gypsy & Traveller DPD**. The issue has proven to generate considerable local interest and this has resulted in a prolonged timetable for producing a plan. A review of the Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTANA) is in progress and is a key evidence base study for the Gypsy & Traveller DPD. These factors have now put the preparation of a Gypsy & Traveller DPD onto the same timetable as the new Local Plan, and taking into account the latest Government guidance that separate plans should only be prepared unusually, the Local Plan now will include policies and proposals to address the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, rather than a separate plan being prepared.

#### *Supplementary Planning Documents*

- 1.7. Three of the SPDs identified in the March 2010 LDS have now been adopted. The **Health Impact Assessment SPD** met the milestones set out in the LDS and was adopted in March 2011. The **Fen Drayton Former Land Settlement Association Estate SPD** was completed within 2 months of the milestones set out in the LDS and was adopted in May 2011. The **Orchard Park Design Guidance SPD** was adopted in March 2011, slightly delayed to allow further engagement with key stakeholders. The **Planning Obligations SPD** will now be replaced by a **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule**, and the evidence base for this is in preparation.
- 1.8. The three other SPDs identified in the March 2010 LDS will no longer be prepared due to other work priorities and insufficient resources within the Planning Service. In terms of the **Papworth Everard West Central SPD**, the Council will continue to work with stakeholders in a co-ordinated way on development proposals to deliver the objectives set out in Policy SP/10(2) of the **Site Specific Policies DPD**. The issues around a **Dwellings Associated with Rural Enterprises SPD** will be reviewed as part of the preparation of the Local Plan. Preparation of an **Historic Landscape, Parks and Gardens SPD** will be considered in future if resources permit.

## **b. Monitoring the Local Development Framework policies and Sustainability Appraisal objectives**

- 1.9. The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) includes over 90 core and local output indicators to measure the performance of the Council's adopted planning policies, and almost 50 significant effect indicators to measure change in the district against the objectives set out in the Council's Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (January 2006) and to look at the wider effects of the Local Development Framework (LDF) on the district.

### **Housing**

- 1.10. **Housing completions and housing supply.** The development strategy for South Cambridgeshire is one of supporting the economic success of the Cambridge area through continued jobs growth, with housing provision at a level, and of a quality, to allow for the economic prospects to be met. To reduce the amount of commuting in

the longer term, the aim is also to achieve a better balance between jobs and homes in and close to Cambridge. The strategy envisages a high level of in-migration to support new jobs, with average annual net in-migration at 80% across the plan period to 2016 being forecast at the time the strategy was prepared.

- 1.11. Delivery of housing is normally monitored against the housing target set out in the adopted Core Strategy, however, the Council has decided that a different approach is more appropriate at the present time. Evidence for the emerging review of the regional plan shows that as a result of the recent recession, the current development strategy, and in particular the amount of housing proposed, will now provide for development needs in the Cambridge area for almost 20 years as the economy recovers. As the economy has slowed and fewer jobs will now be created in the short to medium term, the need for housing to meet high levels of in-migration to provide the labour supply has also diminished. On this basis, the Council has concluded that the **Core Strategy** housing targets are now out of date and that the draft **East of England Plan >2031** (supported by the Cambridgeshire Development Study 2009 prepared by the Cambridgeshire local authorities) is the appropriate plan against which to assess housing delivery until the new Local Plan is prepared.
- 1.12. In the last monitoring year, 659 net additional dwellings were completed in South Cambridgeshire; this is 100 dwellings less than the number predicted in the housing trajectory included in the Annual Monitoring Report 2009-2010 and is primarily a result of slightly slower delivery than anticipated on a few specific sites. It is however an increase in the number of net additional dwellings over the preceding 2 years of the recession (610 and 611 respectively).
- 1.13. The Council has made provision for a significant supply of housing land (rounded figures): extant planning permissions provided for 2,770 dwellings as at March 2011; sites where the Council has resolved to grant planning permission will provide a further 130 dwellings; and sites allocated for housing will provide another 14,400 dwellings. Together, land is identified in plans and planning permissions for a total of 17,300 dwellings.
- 1.14. Government policy in PPS3: Housing and the draft National Planning Policy Statement is that Councils should have a rolling 5-year supply of housing land. Despite having sufficient deliverable land supply to provide approximately 5,600 new homes over the next 5 years, the Council has a technical shortfall in 5-year housing land supply against the Core Strategy target to 2016 (2.9 years supply), primarily because we are now close to the end of the plan period of 2016 which compounds the impact of the shortfall. However, against the draft East of England Plan > 2031, which effectively extends the plan period to 2031 at a similar average annual rate of delivery, there is a full 5-year land supply (5.3 years supply). The Council's position is therefore that it has demonstrated an appropriate 5-year supply of housing land.
- 1.15. The Council remains committed to the planned development strategy and believes it is the best strategy to serve the Cambridge area and support the continued economic success of the area. A new Local Plan is already in preparation that will identify the appropriate housing sites to provide for the identified needs of the district to 2031. An initial Issues & Options consultation is anticipated to take place in Summer 2012,

which will include options relating the development strategy and site options for new housing allocations, including options for the most appropriate site or sites to replace Cambridge Airport, given Marshall's decision to remain at its present site for the next 20 years at least.

- 1.16. **Gypsy & Traveller pitches:** No new permanent Gypsy & Traveller pitches were completed in the last monitoring year, however 7 pitches were granted temporary planning permission. Of these, only 1 was a new pitch, the other 6 pitches were subject to a renewal of an earlier temporary planning permission.
- 1.17. **Housing completions on previously developed land (PDL):** In the last monitoring year, 44% of dwellings completed were on PDL, although the cumulative percentage is still below the target of at least 37% as required by **Core Strategy Policy ST/3**. It had been anticipated that the percentage would increase when the major developments at Northstowe and Cambridge East, which would involve the reuse of PDL, started delivering towards the end of the plan period, however, this is now unlikely to happen as progress on the major developments has been delayed. There are also still significant 'greenfield' allocations, such as Cambourne and Orchard Park, which will continue to contribute significant numbers of completions on 'greenfield' land.
- 1.18. **Housing density:** Over the last 12 years, the average net density of dwellings completed on sites of 9 or more dwellings has fluctuated, although there is a general upward trend. It is expected that the average net density of new housing developments will increase in future monitoring years as the major developments on the edge of Cambridge and Northstowe are implemented with higher housing densities reflecting their urban character. Orchard Park has achieved net densities of over 50 dph on a significant number of completed parcels. Over the last 12 years, the completed parcels at Cambourne have achieved an average net density of 30.3 dph. In general, lower densities have been achieved at Lower Cambourne (an early phase in the construction of the settlement), and higher densities have been achieved at Upper Cambourne (a more recent phase that is still being completed). Great Cambourne includes a mixture of densities, with higher densities achieved on parcels located in and around the village centre.
- 1.19. **Affordable housing:** The availability of housing that is affordable to local people is a major issue in the district, especially as median house prices in the district have risen from 4.9 times median earnings to 7.4 times median earnings in the last 12 years. In the last monitoring year, 205 new affordable dwellings were completed; this amounts to 29% of all new dwellings completed. This is a fall compared to the high of 41% achieved in the previous monitoring year and is a reflection of the changing housing market conditions and availability of funding for affordable housing developments.
- 1.20. In the last monitoring year social rented affordable housing has been the majority tenure of affordable dwellings completed, although on individual schemes the mix of affordable tenures is determined by local circumstances. Affordable housing exception sites provided 27 new social rented affordable dwellings in the last monitoring year to meet identified local need in Coton, Bassingbourn and Wimpole.

- 1.21. In the last monitoring year, 40% of dwellings permitted on sites of two or more dwellings, where **Development Control Policy HG/3** was applicable, were affordable. The affordable dwellings secured were a mixture of onsite provision and financial contributions that have been converted into notional units that will be provided offsite. This meets the target of 40% set by the policy and is an improvement on the previous two monitoring years. In the previous monitoring year, the undersupply of affordable dwellings is a result of securing only 18% affordable dwellings as part of the redevelopment of the Bayer CropScience site, as a 70 unit extra care scheme will be provided instead of general needs affordable housing. Data for April – September 2011 also suggests that the target is on course to be met in the 2011-2012 monitoring year.
- 1.22. **Housing development by settlement category.** The development strategy for the district was changed by the adoption of the Core Strategy, which focuses the development proposed in a few major developments on the edge of Cambridge and the new town of Northstowe, and provided for more development within the village frameworks of the largest villages. Over the last 5 years, this change in development strategy can be seen to be gradually taking effect with an increase in the proportion of completions on the edge of Cambridge and at the Rural Centres, which includes the new settlement of Cambourne, and a decrease in the proportion of completions in the smaller and less sustainable villages.
- 1.23. **Housing quality.** All new development has an impact on its surroundings and the predominantly rural character of the district makes it particularly important that new development is sensitively located and designed to a high quality. The Council has assessed 24 developments completed in the last two monitoring years against the Building for Life standard. Of the 12 schemes that were completed in the last monitoring year, two developments have achieved ‘Silver’ standard by scoring well on a variety of aspects, including their design, character and layout, and integration of public spaces, pedestrian routes and car parking. Six developments have been assessed as ‘Poor’ tending to score weakly on aspects such as their character and treatment of streets and parking. All 24 developments have performed poorly in the use of advanced construction techniques and technologies and environmental performance, and many did not do well in terms of their future adaptability.
- 1.24. The Building for Life scheme is a useful tool for gaining an indication of the quality of new developments. However, it has certain limitations that may not give a true impression of the quality of a scheme. The scoring system is not a sophisticated tool and can potentially score schemes down where evidence is not available at the time of assessment. In the case of a number of the schemes scoring as ‘Poor’ this monitoring year, there has not been documentary evidence available to demonstrate a positive performance against a criteria and therefore they have been scored down. However, the Council is not complacent about development quality and is taking measures to improve performance.
- 1.25. **Accessibility to services and facilities by public transport.** Over the last six monitoring years, less than 20% of new dwellings completed in each year were within 30 minutes public transport time of all six key services (GP surgery, hospital, primary school, secondary school, employment and major retail centre). This is a reflection of

the rural nature of the district and also the changes in the provision and / or frequency of rural bus services. Access to services and facilities is a key objective of the development strategy, and as the sustainable major developments on the edge of Cambridge and at the new town of Northstowe are implemented, it is expected that accessibility to services and facilities will increase.

### **Employment and the Economy**

- 1.26. **Business floorspace completions:** In the last monitoring year, business floorspace completions were almost double the amount recorded in the previous monitoring year, which had seen the lowest business floorspace completions in the last 12 years. However, business floorspace completions are still significantly lower than they were at the start of the plan period. This change is reflection of the economic downturn and a decline in the number of speculative business developments completed. The continued success of policies supporting research and development, hi tech and biotech industries in the district can be seen in the net increase of over 186,600 sqm of B1b (research & development) use completed, largely at research parks such as Granta Park (Great Abington), Cambridge Research Park (Landbeach) and the Wellcome Institute (Hinxton).
- 1.27. Over the last 12 years, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of business floorspace completed on PDL, and in the last monitoring year it has reached a new high of 61%. At the start of the plan period, a significant proportion of business floorspace was completed on 'greenfield' sites as many of the business / research parks being developed in the district were 'greenfield' sites. However, over the last few monitoring years, significant business floorspace completions have been the result of extensions to existing buildings, change of use of buildings from other business / employment uses, and new buildings at Babraham Hall and Cambridge Research Park (Landbeach), both of which were previously developed before becoming research parks.
- 1.28. **Supply of business land:** South Cambridgeshire has a large supply of business land with planning permission; at 31 March 2011 this amounted to 97.61 ha, and of this over 60% had detailed planning permission. A significant proportion of the Council's supply of business land is from three planning permissions: an extension at Camgrain APC on the A11, Balsham, to provide additional grain storage facilities (24.8 ha); development of phases 2 and 3 at Wellcome Trust (Hinxton Hall) for research and development uses (14.8 ha), and construction of a carbon fibre precursor plant off Hinxton Road, south of Duxford (10.5 ha).
- 1.29. **Economy:** Whilst the Cambridge area has withstood the effects of the recession better than some areas, the recession has had an impact on the vitality of local economy. The number of people claiming job seekers allowance doubled in 2009, from 636 claimants in 2008 to 1,508 claimants in 2009. However, there was a reduction in the number of claimants of job seekers allowance in 2011 to 1,333 claimants. The number of active businesses in the district fell slightly in 2010, with more businesses closing than new businesses opening. The industrial composition of employee jobs shows a decline in manufacturing and construction between 2008 and 2010, a sign of the reduction in house building as a result of the recession. Although

the district has consistently shown over 80% of the working age population as economically active, the Economic Assessment 2010 (undertaken by PACEC) estimated a loss of 5,000 jobs between 2008 and 2010 in the district. There are more employed residents in the district than the number of jobs (workplace population), and whilst the number of jobs (workplace population) declined in the early part of the economic downturn they have increased in the last monitoring year, although not back to pre-recession levels.

### **Climate Change, Resources and the Environment**

- 1.30. **Carbon dioxide emissions and air quality:** A key factor affecting climate change is carbon dioxide emissions and the aim nationally, and indeed internationally, is to reduce levels of emissions of this greenhouse gas. The rate of carbon dioxide emissions per person from domestic sources, e.g. through the use of gas and electricity, has remained fairly consistent over the last five years but has shown a reduction in the last monitoring year.
- 1.31. Air quality is an issue alongside the A14 and the Council has designated an Air Quality Management Area with the objective of improving conditions in terms of levels of nitrogen dioxide and the particulate PM<sub>10</sub>. There have been gradual improvements in air quality recorded by the Council's three automatic monitoring stations alongside the A14 at Bar Hill, Impington and Orchard Park, although the reason for this improvement is unclear. It is possible that it is due to a combination of improvements in cleaner vehicle engine technologies and changing meteorological conditions.
- 1.32. **Household waste and recycling:** Over the last nine years there has been a significant increase in the proportion of waste that is recycled and composted in the district. This is the result of the Council's pro-active approach to recycling through the introduction of blue and green bins, which allow the recycling and composting of a significant amount of household waste. 56% of household waste was recycled or composted in the last monitoring year.
- 1.33. **Renewable and non-renewable resources:** The Council is committed to encouraging and enabling a reduction in the use of fossil fuels and increasing the proportion of energy used that is generated from renewable sources. In recent years, household consumption of gas and electricity in the district has fallen, while the generating potential of renewable energy sources in the district has increased. At 31 March 2011, 18 wind turbines, a solar energy farm, a biomass boiler and 8 domestic arrays of photovoltaic panels had planning permission but had not yet been installed. The outstanding planning permissions include the installation of: 13 wind turbines at Wadlow Farm, West Wrating; four wind turbines at the Tesco stores at Bar Hill, Fulbourn and Milton; a solar energy farm at Radical Farm, Chittering and a biomass boiler at Donarbon Ltd, Waterbeach.
- 1.34. In the last two monitoring years, over 85% of planning permissions granted for developments greater than 1,000 sqm or 10 dwellings, included renewable energy technologies to provide 10% renewable energy. Although the remaining planning

permissions met the thresholds set out in **Development Control Policy NE/3**, individual circumstances meant that they were not required to meet the policy.

- 1.35. Water consumption in the district has increased slightly in recent years as a result of the drier weather conditions experienced, which has resulted in higher water consumption by metered and non-metered properties. The average water consumption of non-metered properties has also risen. The water companies advise that this is as a result of more low use properties installing water meters, therefore reducing the number of low use non-metered properties, rather than an increase in water consumption.
- 1.36. **Development in locations of environmental importance:** In the last seven monitoring years no new development has been completed within, or is considered to adversely affect, nationally or internationally important nature conservation sites. 14 proposals for development in the Green Belt have been completed that fall within the definition of 'inappropriate' in terms of the uses normally acceptable in the Green Belt. All these proposals were allowed for site specific reasons that were considered to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt.
- 1.37. **Biodiversity:** In the last monitoring year, a new County Wildlife Site (CWS) at Ashley Farm Orchard, Rampton, has been defined by the Wildlife Trust, the boundary of the Woodland Grange CWS has been amended to exclude land used for car parking, and Wimpole Road CWS has been deleted as the site has deteriorated significantly so that it no longer meets the designation criteria. There are also small areas of our Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) that are assessed as 'unfavourable declining' or 'unfavourable no change', suggesting that their unique biodiversity characteristics are under threat. Natural England is working with landowners to improve the management and therefore condition of these areas of the district's SSSIs.
- 1.38. Good progress has been made in achieving priority targets in the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan. For example, in the last monitoring year, the Council has input into the design of the planned open space at the North West Cambridge development, which will include wetlands and will result in the creation of habitats for great crested newts and water voles. It has also delivered habitat enhancement of the River Granta by granting planning permission for a farm traffic crossing ford. The Council are particularly proud to win the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's best practice award for the *Saving the Fulbourn Swifts* project.