



Report To: Council
Lead Officer: Director of Planning & New Communities

30 November 2015

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE LOCAL PLAN

Consideration of further work and consequential modifications

Purpose

1. This report concerns further work carried out by the Councils on the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans following initial conclusions received from the Inspectors examining the plans in a letter dated 20 May 2015. This report and attached documentation sets out the Councils' response to the issues raised by the Inspectors and modifications to the Local Plans arising from the additional evidence. The modifications are proposed to be made available for public consultation between December 2015 and January 2016.
2. This is a key decision first published on the Forward Plan on 14th October 2015.

Recommendations

3. The Planning Portfolio Holder recommended that Full Council:
 - a) agrees the consultation document with proposed modifications (Appendix A) and sustainability appraisal (Appendix B) for public consultation between 2 December 2015 and 25 January 2016;
 - b) agrees that any amendments and editing changes that need to be made to the consultation material and proposed modifications (Appendix A) and sustainability appraisal (Appendix B) be agreed in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder;
 - c) notes the documents attached to this report as Appendices C to J and submits them as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan;
 - d) gives delegated authority to the Director of Planning and New Communities to make any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder.

Background

4. The Councils submitted the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans for examination on 28 March 2014. The separate plans were prepared in parallel with joint working throughout the process in recognition of the close functional relationship between the two areas and reflecting the duty to cooperate. This relationship has been recognised at a national level through the Greater Cambridge City Deal with Government signed in 2014, which brings up to £500 million of grant funding to help deliver infrastructure to support growth in the area with its highly successful economy.

5. Joint examination hearings on strategic issues were held between November 2014 and April 2015, including on housing and employment needs, development strategy, Green Belt, transport, infrastructure and housing supply. The Inspectors wrote to the Councils on [20 May 2015](#) in relation to three main issues and invited the Councils to undertake additional work to address those issues before the examinations progress further. The Councils agreed to undertake additional work and the examinations were formally suspended on 28 July 2015 until March 2016.
6. The following additional work has been carried out in response to the issues raised by the Inspectors:
 - Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans Sustainability Appraisal Addendum Report (Appendix B);
 - Cambridge Inner Green Belt Boundary Study (Appendix C);
 - Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Objectively Assessed Housing Need: Further Evidence (Appendix D);
 - Housing Land Supply Update, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council (Appendix E);
 - Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Development Strategy Update (Appendix F);
 - Local Plans CSRM – Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans Transport Report (Appendix G);
 - Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Infrastructure Delivery Study 2015 (Appendix H);
 - Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans Viability Update, November 2015 (Appendix I); and
 - Proposed Modifications arising from the Government's Written Ministerial Statements (Appendix J).

Where necessary, executive summaries have been included in the evidence documents to help the reader understand complex technical information. The consultation document also includes a summary of the work undertaken and the main findings.

7. The Councils have considered the additional evidence prepared against the three issues raised by the Inspectors. Section 2 of the consultation document at Appendix A provides more information on the work undertaken for the different workstreams and the outcomes of the work. The main points can be summarised as follows:
 - Housing Needs – Independent consultants have considered the issues raised by the Inspectors and responded to the national practice guidance that was published after the Local Plans were submitted to test the objectively assessed need for housing in each area. They compare this to the existing Strategic Housing Market Assessment prepared earlier using a different methodology. They conclude that the housing requirement for Cambridge contained in the submitted Local Plan does not need to be changed and that the requirement for South Cambridgeshire should be 19,377 dwellings compared with the 19,000 dwellings in the submitted Local Plan. The Councils consider the findings of the study in the Development Strategy document (Appendix F).

- Development Strategy – the Councils have prepared a document on the overall development strategy (Appendix F). A modification to the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan is included to change the housing requirement from 19,000 to 19,500, rounding the recommended figure in the Housing Needs document for policy purposes. This goes half way to incorporating the commitment through the City Deal to provide an additional 1,000 dwellings on rural exception sites over the 19,000 figure included in the submitted plan. On the basis of the independent evidence, no change is necessary to the Cambridge Local Plan.

The document draws together the evidence prepared by independent consultants on Green Belt, Transport, Infrastructure and Viability. It also takes account of the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal Addendum. It considers whether the strategy in the submitted Local Plans remains the most appropriate taking account of the outcomes of the further evidence.

The document sets out the key strategic choice facing the Councils as the distribution of growth between the two strategic options of edge of Cambridge and new settlements that sit in the middle of the development sequence. The edge of Cambridge is higher in the sequence and has advantage in terms of accessibility. The Councils have always recognised this advantage. However, it needs to be set against Green Belt considerations and the new Green Belt study confirms that major release of land would cause significant Green Belt harm. New settlements offer an alternative means of delivering significant growth without requiring development in the Green Belt but require significant infrastructure provision to connect them to higher order services and jobs. However, the evidence is that they can be made to operate sustainably by providing proper infrastructure requirements. This is confirmed by the SA Addendum.

Having weighed all those factors, the document concludes that the development strategy in the submitted plans, with limited modifications, provides the right balance for this plan period that will provide a range of deliverable sites for the plan period and beyond and considers that sustainability will be secured.

Consequential on the work on Housing Needs and Development Strategy, an updated paper on Housing Land Supply (Appendix E) has also been prepared. This includes an update on the situation in relation to Land North of Cherry Hinton where discussions with the two promoters of the site demonstrate that a larger part of the land currently allocated in the adopted Cambridge East Area Action Plan can come forward for development with the Airport remaining, making best use of suitable land at the second stage in the development sequence. The submitted Local Plans included a provision across both districts of 460 homes, the ongoing work now means that 1,200 homes can be safely provided with 780 in Cambridge and 420 in South Cambridgeshire together with provision of a primary school, a local centre and a spine road between Cherry Hinton Road and Coldham's Lane. A significant shortfall in school capacity across the City is currently forecast from 2018, which coupled with proposed development north of Newmarket Road and north of Cherry Hinton, will require the early provision of the secondary school. Residential development on land north of Coldham's Lane, Church End and Teversham Drift (R47) should not come forward before there is

an agreed approach to the delivery of sufficient secondary school capacity in the area. This development significantly improves housing land supply in Cambridge to 14,682 homes. The paper also takes a more cautious approach to the annual build out rates at new settlements based on lessons learned from Cambourne than previously assumed, but allowing for earlier starts on site for Waterbeach and Bourn Airfield if these can be achieved. Overall, the evidence in the joint housing trajectory shows that the Councils have 5 year housing land supply over the plan period.

- Written Ministerial Statements - the Councils have undertaken an audit of the changes required to policies in the Local Plans as a result of the publication of a number of Written Ministerial Statements.

This has resulted in changes to policies by both Councils relating to climate change, specifically housing construction and related sustainable development standards and affordable housing, and by the City Council in respect of residential space standards. The Viability Study tested these proposals to ensure that the changes to these policies do not have a negative impact on development viability across the two authorities.

Additional work will be undertaken by both Councils in relation to technical standards for accessibility, and by SCDC in relation to and residential space standards, to ensure that the Councils can provide information on need for these policies

8. The proposed main modifications to the Cambridge City Council Local Plan resulting from the further work can be summarised as:

- Changes to reflect the Memorandum of Understanding between the Councils (September 2014) for a joint housing trajectory for the Greater Cambridge area recognising the inter-relationship between the areas and phasing of delivery of housing.
- Changes to policies relating to the amount of development planned to come forward at Cambridge East (North of Cherry Hinton) – 1,200 dwellings of which 780 dwellings are in Cambridge.
- Changes to policies relating to climate change, specifically housing construction and related sustainable development standards in the light of amendments to national government policy.
- Changes to affordable housing policies and residential space standards to reflect changes in national government policy.

9. The proposed main modifications to the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan resulting from the further work can be summarised as:

- Amendment of the housing requirement from 19,000 new homes to 19,500 homes for the plan period 2011-2031 to reflect latest independent assessment of objectively assessed housing need.
- Changes to reflect the earlier Memorandum of Understanding between the Councils (September 2014) for a joint housing trajectory for the Greater

Cambridge area recognising the inter-relationship between the areas and phasing of delivery of housing.

- Providing flexibility in the start date of delivery at new settlements.
- Amending policies relating to the amount of development planned to come forward at Cambridge East (North of Cherry Hinton) – 1,200 dwellings of which 420 dwellings are in South Cambridgeshire.
- Identification of a provisional extension to Cambridge Biomedical Campus, to reflect latest independent Green Belt assessment, subject to further investigation of surface water flooding issues.
- Reduction in the size of the employment site adjacent to Peterhouse Technology Park, Fulbourn Road, Cambridge, to reflect latest independent Green Belt assessment.
- Changes to policies relating to climate change, specifically in relation to water efficiency, renewable energy and at the Fen Drayton Land Settlement Association site, the way in which the sustainability credentials of new homes will be judged. This is in the light of amendments to national government policy.
- Changes to housing policies to make provision for starter homes and self build to reflect changes in national government policy.

Consultation arrangements

10. Consultation arrangements include:

- Consultation between 2 December 2015 and 25 January 2016. Due to the Christmas break, additional time has been allowed for the consultation to enable as many people as possible to have the opportunity to respond to the consultation;
- Letters and emails informing consultees of consultation dates and how to view and respond to the consultation material;
- A public notice;
- All documents to be made available on the Council's website and at South Cambridgeshire Hall including a small exhibition;
- Publicising the consultation through the Council's Facebook page and Twitter as well as in our planning policy newsletter.

11. Exhibitions are to be held in South Cambridgeshire Hall in December 2015 and January 2016, and in January 2016 in Teversham, Great Shelford and the Abingtons. At the time of writing we are in discussions with Graveley about a potential exhibition in relation to their parish-led proposals.

Consideration by the Joint Strategic Transport and Spatial Planning Group and Planning Portfolio Holder

12. As part of the duty to co-operate, the committee report and its appendices were presented to the Joint Strategic Transport and Spatial Planning Group on 16 November 2015 for their consideration. In summary, the reports were well received with some discussion around the key strategy options, with strong support for the position on the Green Belt. There were also a couple of queries raised in relation to the delivery of new settlements. The group recommended that the

consultation document and sustainability appraisal be agreed by both Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council at respective committee meetings on 17 November 2015.

13. Following the Joint Strategic Transport and Spatial Planning Group meeting on 16 November 2015, the report and its appendices were presented to the Council's Planning Portfolio Holder at his meeting on 17 November 2015. Issues raised by Members attending the meeting included:
 - strong support for protecting the Green Belt around Cambridge,
 - some concerns about adequate transport provision to serve new settlements,
 - questions about the implications for future 5-year housing land supply,
 - the potential environmental impacts of the provisional proposed modification to allocate an extension to the Cambridge Biomedical Campus,
 - support for including the Parish Council led proposals in the consultation,
 - the need for a consequential amendment to a minor modification to the text of the plan for consistency with the proposed modification to the housing requirement,
 - the local member for Sawston asked that it be considered whether a further modification could be made in relation to village development and requiring that improvements be made to the transport corridor into Cambridge before development. Officers view is that it is not possible to make that change in view of the transport evidence but that the submitted Local Plan policy provides for the mitigate the impact of development as a whole on the eastern flank of Sawston to be assessed at the planning application stage.
14. The Planning Portfolio Holder agreed that the consultation document with proposed modifications to the submitted Local Plan and sustainability appraisal be submitted for consideration by Full Council on 30 November 2015 and approved for public consultation between 2 December 2015 and 25 January 2016. A limited number of technical amendments have been made to some of the appendices on the agenda to this meeting in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

Next steps

15. Provided that the documents are agreed at Full Council, public consultation will commence on 2 December 2015 and run until 25 January 2016.
16. Once the consultation has finished, the Councils will pull together a report containing all of the representations received, which will be reported back to the Portfolio Holder and Full Council in March 2016. The Councils will then submit material to the Planning Inspectors. It is anticipated that examination sessions will recommence shortly after this information is submitted to the Inspectors.

Options

17. Council has the following options:
 - (a) Agree the consultation document with proposed modifications and sustainability appraisal; or
 - (b) Agree the consultation document with amendments to the proposed modifications and sustainability appraisal; or

- (c) Not to agree the consultation document with proposed modifications and sustainability appraisal.

Implications

18. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:

Financial

19. As advised to the meeting of 9 July 2015, this is an additional stage in the Local Plan process that has not included in the main Planning Policy Local Plan budget. There is no contingency for this additional work. The Council's share of the joint work involved with Cambridge City Council is estimated to be in the order of £150,000. This will be addressed through the budget review to be undertaken shortly.

Legal

20. There are no direct legal implications of this report. Input from the planning barrister representing the Council at the Local Plan examination has been sought on the workstreams that inform the proposed Modifications.

Staffing

21. There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report. The review of the Local Plan has already been included in existing service plans.

Equality and Diversity

22. The Local Plan has been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment, which demonstrates how potential equalities issues have been, and will be addressed. None of the proposed Modifications are considered to be significant enough to require reassessment.

Climate Change

23. The Local Plan supports the delivery of sustainable development and addresses climate change issues consistent with national policy and guidance.

Consultation (including from the Youth Council)

24. The public consultation to be undertaken is detailed at paragraphs 10 and 11 of this report. All relevant Council services have been involved in drafting relevant chapters.

Effect on Strategic Aims

Aim 1: We will engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure we deliver first class services and value for money.

25. Consultation provides the opportunity for all stakeholders in the future of South Cambridgeshire to make representations on the proposed Local Plan modifications including a number of parish council proposals.

Aim 2: We will work with partners to create and sustain opportunities for employment, enterprise and world leading innovation.

26. The plan modifications include a proposed policy to allow the expansion of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus into South Cambridgeshire.

Aim 3: We will ensure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for our residents.

27. The Council has a duty to secure sustainable development. This lies at the heart of national planning policy and covers all three aspects of sustainability – economic, social and environment. The proposed modifications have a focus on sustaining and enhancing the qualities of South Cambridgeshire that in national surveys consistently identify the District as one of the best places to live in the UK.

Background Papers

Localism Act 2011:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

National Planning Policy Framework (published March 2012):

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/wp-content/themes/planning-guidance/assets/NPPF.pdf>

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2014:

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/localplan>

Appendices

Appendix A	Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Modifications Consultation Report November 2015
Appendix B	Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans SA Addendum Report
Appendix C	Cambridge Inner Green Belt Boundary Study, LDA Design
Appendix D	Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Examination – Objectively Assessed Housing Need: Further Evidence
Appendix E	Housing Land Supply Update, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council
Appendix F	Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Development Strategy Update, November 2015
Appendix G	Local Plans CSRM – Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans Transport Report, November 2015
Appendix H	Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Infrastructure Delivery Study 2015
Appendix I	Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans Viability Update, November 2015
Appendix J	Proposed Modifications arising from the Government's Written Ministerial Statements

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