

**Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Fenland District Council, Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council**

**SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening for the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD**

**1. Statements of Reasons for Determination**

- 1.1 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a tool to test whether the plans, policies and proposals can deliver sustainable development. Integrated into the SA are the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. However, the SA covers wider social and economic effects of plans, as well as the more environmentally-focused considerations in the SEA Directive.
- 1.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required that all Local Development Documents, including DPDs (now local plans) and SPDs be subject to SA prior to publication. The rationale behind this is that SPDs do not contain any new policies, but provide supplementary guidance relating to policies set out in overarching local plans that have been subject to SA.
- 1.3 However, a SPD may occasionally be found likely to give rise to significant effects which have not been formally assessed in the context of a higher-level planning document. Therefore, local authorities need to screen their SPDs to ensure that the legal requirements for SA are met where there are impacts that have not been covered in the appraisal of the parent plan or where an assessment is required by the SEA Directive.
- 1.4 Sustainability Appraisals have been undertaken for the following parent plans:
  - Sustainability Appraisal of the Cambridge Local Plan 2014. [Volume 1: Final Appraisal for Submission to the Secretary of State](#) (March 2014), and [volume 2: History of Site Allocations](#). This SA is also applicable for South Cambridgeshire District Council and their current draft Local Plan.
  - [Sustainability Appraisal of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy \(adopted 19 July 2011\)](#).
  - [Sustainability Appraisal of East Cambridgeshire District Council's Local Plan: version 2 \(updated August 2013\)](#).
  - [Sustainability Appraisal of the Fenland Core Strategy \(Submission September 2013\)](#).
  - [Sustainability Appraisal for Huntingdonshire District Council's adopted Core Strategy \(September 2009\)](#). Further SA work will inform the District Council's Local Plan to 2036 once adopted.
  - [Sustainability Appraisal for South Cambridgeshire District Council's adopted Development Control Policies DPD and Draft Final Sustainability Appraisal for submitted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan](#)

- 1.5 The Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD does not determine the use of land or constitute modifications to any of the district or city plans. Based on the assessment in Appendix 1, it is demonstrated that the SPD does not give rise to significant environmental effects.

## Appendix 1

### Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC

<b>The characteristics of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD having regard to:</b>	
<b>(1a) The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.</b>	<p>Applicable in part. The SPD does refer to a 'framework for projects' for reference purposes, but does not allocate resources against those projects.</p> <p>The framework is set by the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance as well as local policies contained in each districts local plans. The SPD provides additional guidance in relation to water and flooding, and will help to ensure successful implementation at a local level. The SPD will not, however, set the framework for the allocation or levels of development within Cambridgeshire.</p>
<b>(1b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.</b>	<p>Not applicable. The SPD sits at the bottom of the plan hierarchy and therefore does not influence other plans, but simply aims to be a supporting document to those plans. Conversely, it is influenced by and in general conformity documents at local, regional and national level.</p>
<b>(1c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.</b>	<p>The SPD clarifies and adds detail to the process of ensuring that appropriate mitigation is taken when considering flood risk, including matters of water resources or quality, arising from development, including associated environmental effects. Overall, it therefore contributes positively to the integration of environmental considerations.</p>
<b>(1d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.</b>	<p>The main aim of the SPD seeks to address environmental problems, such as flood risk, water quality and resources, by providing clear guidance in support of the planning policies contained within the adopted local plans in Cambridgeshire.</p>
<b>(1e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste</b>	<p>Applicable in part. The SPD is relevant in part in that the document seeks to provide advice and guidance to developers, householders and landowners on water protection measures (e.g. flood risk, water resources</p>

management or water protection).	and quality), and as such will help with the implementation of the requirements set out in the Water Framework Directive. However, the planning policies contained within the local plans set out the implementation of Community legislation.
<b>Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular to:</b>	
<p><b>(2a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.</b></p> <p><b>(2b) the cumulative nature of the effects.</b></p>	There are little direct or cumulative effects arising from the SPD. Again, the SPD is a supportive document to policies contained within Local Plans.
<b>(2c) the transboundary nature of the effects.</b>	The SPD covers the county of Cambridgeshire. As such, the SPD may affect the transboundary local planning authorities within the county. However, the SPD will not conflict with any policies contained within the local plans. Accordingly, the effects would be limited.
<b>(2d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents).</b>	Applicable in part. The Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD seeks to reduce the risks to human health by producing clear guidance on matters such as flood risk, and water quality, for example.
<b>(2e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).</b>	The SPD is applicable countywide; therefore it affects a population of approximately 622,200 and relates to proposed new developments within a geographical area of 1,176 square miles.
<p><b>(2f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to—</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;</b></li> <li><b>(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or</b></li> <li><b>(iii) intensive land-use; and</b></li> </ul>	There are a range of special natural characteristics in Cambridgeshire including sites of special scientific Interest, county wildlife sites and local nature reserves, and heritage assets, including, scheduled ancient monuments, areas of archaeological significance and listed buildings of various ratings. These are largely protected, conserved and enhanced by adopted planning policies, as well as national policy. The SPD is unlikely to have an impact on these areas; however the SPD does include guidance on the relevant organisations to consult if any of these characteristics might be affected by the proposed development.

**(2g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or protection status.**

There are a range of internationally designated sites in Cambridgeshire including Ramsar sites, special areas conservation and special protection Areas, as well as national and local designations including sites of special scientific interest, county wildlife sites and local nature reserves. These are protected, conserved and enhanced by adopted planning policies. These plans have been subject to the Habitat Regulations Assessment screening process and, where necessary, appropriate assessment. The SPD is unlikely to have an impact on these areas; however the SPD does include guidance on the relevant organisations to consult if any of these characteristics might be affected by the proposed development.