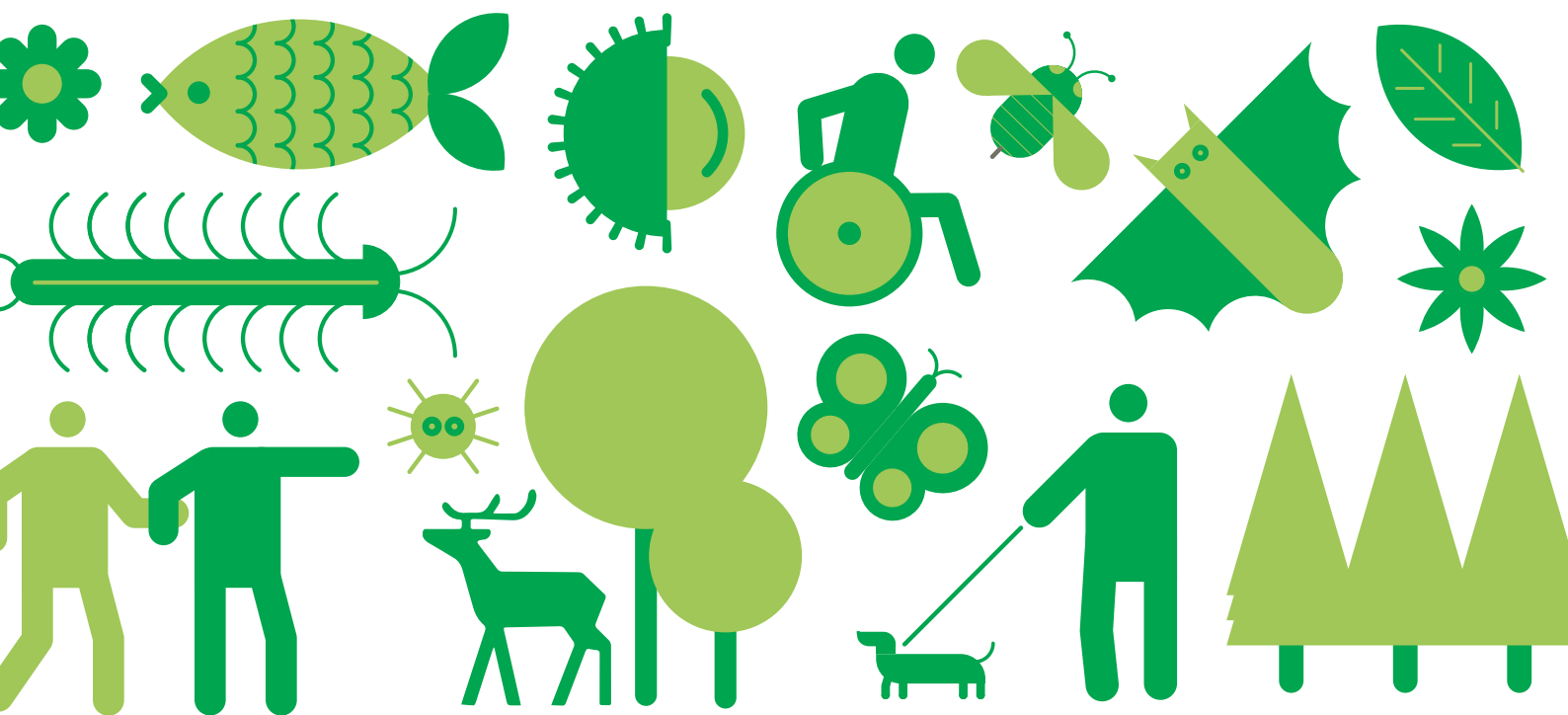


Biodiversity and Green Spaces Topic Paper



Greater Cambridge Local Plan

Topic paper published alongside the First Proposals
(Regulation 18: The Preferred Options) Consultation 2021

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1. Introduction and Purpose

This is one of eight topic papers produced to inform the consultation on the Greater Cambridge Local Plan: First Proposals. The topic papers are:

- Strategy
- Climate Change
- Green Infrastructure
- Wellbeing and Social
- Great Places
- Jobs
- Homes
- Infrastructure

All of the papers can be found on the [Greater Cambridge Shared Planning website](#).

The topic papers set out how the preferred option for each policy under the relevant Local Plan 'Theme' has been developed. As such, the topic papers support and complement the First Proposals consultation document as they provide a detailed explanation of the basis for each preferred policy approach. The policies are presented in a consistent format in each paper with sufficient information to provide a comprehensive appreciation of the background to and development of the preferred option. The content and structure for each policy option is:

- the issue the plan is seeking to respond to;
- the national, regional and local policy context that informs how the plan should address the issue;
- how consultation and engagement have informed the policy's development;
- the evidence that has informed the preferred policy option;
- the proposed policy approach and reasons why this is preferred, including alternative options considered;
- an explanation of how Sustainability Appraisal (see below) has informed development of the preferred policy option; and
- further work and next steps.

A Local Plan must be informed by consultation and engagement as well as statutory processes, such as Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment, and the requirements of national planning policy. These important elements of plan-making have, therefore, informed development of the First Proposals for the Local Plan and are the subject of separate reports, and are also available on the [Greater Cambridge Shared Planning website](#). These form part of the overall consultation and are summarised below.

Greater Cambridge Local Plan Statement of Consultation

The Statement of Consultation sets out how the Councils have undertaken consultation, and propose to undertake consultation, in preparing the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

The Statement will be updated at each stage of the plan making process; the current version supports the First Proposals (Preferred Options) stage.

The approach to Local Plan consultation is founded on the Councils' [Statement of Community Involvement](#). This sets out how and when we will involve the community and key stakeholders in preparing, altering and reviewing our plans and guidance for future development. It also explains how we will involve the community in planning applications.

The current version of the [Statement of Consultation](#) provides details of the consultation and engagement we have undertaken to date. This includes events before and after the first formal consultation on the plan, as well as details of the formal consultation itself, known as The First Conversation. The Statement summarises what have you told us so far and how we have taken this into account in developing the Local Plan.

Greater Cambridge Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal

A sustainability appraisal is a systematic process required by law that must be carried out during the preparation of a local plan. Its role is to promote sustainable development by assessing the extent to which the emerging plan, when judged against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve relevant environmental, economic and social objectives. Sustainability appraisal should be applied as an ongoing process informing the development of the plan throughout its preparation.

Reasonable alternatives are the different realistic options considered in developing the policies in the plan. They need to be sufficiently distinct to highlight the different sustainability implications of each so that meaningful comparisons can be made. The sustainability appraisal should only focus on what is needed to assess the likely significant effects of the plan.

A Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was subject to consultation alongside the First Consultation in January 2020. A sustainability appraisal was also completed on the First Conversation. In November 2020 an appraisal was carried out to inform the testing of development strategy options. These reports can be found on the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning website in the [document library](#) section.

The Greater Cambridge Local Plan First Proposals Sustainability Appraisal report has now been published, which considers the proposals and option identified in the

First Proposals report. It includes a non-technical summary of the information, providing a clear and accessible overview of the process and findings.

The sustainability appraisal report sets out the reasonable alternatives considered as the plan has evolved, including the preferred approach in each case, and assesses these against the baseline environmental, economic and social characteristics of the area.

Greater Cambridge Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment

A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) refers to a process which must be undertaken by law to determine if a plan or project may affect the protected features of a habitats site. European Sites and European Offshore Marine Sites are referred to as 'habitats sites' in national planning policy.

All plans which are not directly connected with the conservation management of a habitat site require consideration of whether the plan or project is likely to have significant effects on that site. This consideration should take into account the potential effects both of the plan/project itself and in combination with other plans or projects.

If a proposed plan or project is considered likely to have a significant effect on a protected habitats site then an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site, in view of the site's conservation objectives, must be undertaken. An appropriate assessment for a local plan should consider the impacts on sites and confirm the suitability or likely success of mitigation measures.

The HRA process began in 2020 with the publication of the HRA Scoping Report alongside the First Conversation in January 2020, which identified European sites with potential to be affected by the Local Plan. In November 2020 an assessment of the strategic spatial options was published. These reports can be found on the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning website in the [document library](#) section.

An HRA has now been carried out of the proposals in the First Proposals Report, and published to accompany the consultation.

Greater Cambridge Local Plan Duty to Cooperate: Statement of Common Ground

The purpose of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan Duty to Cooperate Statement of Common Ground is to set out the main areas of common and uncommon ground with relevant partners on strategic cross-boundary matters. It also forms part of the evidence required to demonstrate that the Councils have complied with the duty to cooperate in preparing the local plan.

The Statement of Common Ground responds to the requirement in national planning policy and guidance that strategic policy-making authorities are expected to document the activities undertaken when in the process of addressing strategic cross-boundary matters whilst cooperating. These will include the following matters that should be tailored to address local circumstances:

- working together at the outset of plan-making to identify cross-boundary matters which will need addressing;
- producing or commissioning joint research and evidence to address cross-boundary matters;
- assessing impacts of emerging policies; and
- preparing joint, or agreeing, strategic policies affecting more than one authority area to ensure development is coordinated.

The Statement of Common Ground is intended to provide the outcome at a point in time of the ongoing cooperation with relevant bodies regarding strategic cross-boundary matters. It is intended to be a concise sign-posting document. It is closely related to the First Proposals Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance and to the First Proposals Statement of Consultation.

Greater Cambridge Local Plan Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA)

The Public Sector Equality Duty, introduced under the Equality Act 2010, requires all public bodies, including Councils, to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

An EQIA provides a methodical approach to the assessment of impacts across the protected characteristics set out in legislation. An assessment should be completed during the development and review of all Council policies, strategies, procedures, projects or functions.

EQIA was carried out at the First Conversation stage at January 2020, and in relation to the testing of strategic options in November 2020. These reports can be found on the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning website in the [document library](#) section.

The Greater Cambridge Local Plan First Proposals Report Equalities Impact Assessment has now been proposed to provide an assessment of the policies and proposals in the consultation.

2. Overall Context for Biodiversity and Green Spaces

2.1 Background

The Greater Cambridge Local Plan First Conversation consultation in 2020 identified Biodiversity and Green Spaces as one of the key themes for the new local plan to address.

The consultation identified key issues relating to:

- Improving the green space network - consider how attractive, accessible and well-designed open space is created and protected.
- Achieving biodiversity net gains on future developments - how we guide developers to achieve this.
- Tree cover - consider how we can increase tree cover as part of new developments

We asked you:

- How do you think we should improve the green space network?
- How do we achieve biodiversity net gain through new developments?
- Do you agree that we should aim to increase tree cover across the area?

We have reviewed the responses you gave us, and you will find the issues raised summarised in this topic paper.

We published our initial evidence findings in November 2020 relating to the implications of different development strategy choices available to the Local Plan, and we help some workshops with stakeholders on these issues.

Since then we have been preparing the First Proposals, and further developing the evidence that supports the plan.

2.2 Proposed Approach

The following proposed policy areas are addressed in this topic paper. For each of these, further detail is provided on the national, regional and local policy context, the consultation and engagement undertaken, the evidence informing it, the proposed approach and reasons for its selection, and details of further work on the issue that will be undertaken for future stages of the plan making process.

BG/BG: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

BG/GI: Green Infrastructure

BG/TC: Improving tree canopy cover and the tree population

BG/RC: River Corridors

BG/PO: Protecting open spaces

BG/EO: Providing and Enhancing Open Spaces

2.3 Further Work and Next Steps

Taking account of feedback received, the next step would be the inclusion of a fully worked up policy in the draft Local Plan for consultation at the next stage of plan making.

Issues highlighted for further work in this paper include:

- Consider and confirm in outline terms how the administration of a biodiversity net gain policy would work in practice, including measurement, delivery and monitoring, including in light of the Environment Bill
- Consider further the relationship of a requirement to mitigate recreational impacts on designated sites with emerging specific open space standards set out at BG/EO.
- Consider any refinements required to the proposed list of Green Infrastructure strategic initiatives, drawing on responses to the consultation and engagement with key partners. Confirm the funding mechanism required to enable all development to contribute to the identified strategic initiatives.
- Confirm in more detail what specific aspects of the Cambridge Canopy Project can be supported through Local Plan policies.
- Open space evidence will be updated, including reviewing the Cambridge City Council produced the Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2011, and the South Cambridgeshire Recreation study 2013.
- The Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sports Facility Strategy will be updated

3. BG/BG Biodiversity and geodiversity

3.1 Issue the Plan is Seeking to Respond to

The Plan is seeking to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, noting the strong current international, national, regional and local priorities supporting this.

3.2 Policy Context

National Context

The [National Planning Policy Framework \(2019\) paragraphs 174-188](#) relate to Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Particularly relevant to biodiversity and geodiversity is paragraph 179b, which sets out that local plans should promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity. [Planning Practice Guidance on Biodiversity, geodiversity and ecosystems](#) provides further detail on this topic.

Further to this, the Environment Bill, due to be published later in 2021, is likely to include a mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain requirement, alongside a requirement for local areas to produce Nature Recovery Strategies.

Regional / Local Context

There is a wide range of regional and local strategy development and practical activity relating to biodiversity:

- At an Oxford-Cambridge Arc level partners including the Councils have agreed a set of agreed environmental principles which include ambitions to double the area of rich wildlife habitats and natural greenspace;
- At a Cambridgeshire & Peterborough level:
 - all local partners support ambitions to double the area of rich wildlife habitats and natural greenspace across the area, and to produce a natural capital investment plan, albeit the practical outworking of these goals has yet to be fully developed;
 - [Natural Cambridgeshire – the Local Nature Partnership](#) – has identified a number of landscape level nature initiatives within and crossing the boundaries of Greater Cambridge, including:
 - Gog Magog Hills

- West Cambridgeshire Hundreds
 - Ouse Valley/Great Ouse Wetland
 - Wicken Fen Vision
- At a local level:
 - Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Council are committed to responding to climate change and to supporting the doubling nature vision; and
 - Cambridge City Council is consulting on a draft Biodiversity Strategy, and South Cambridgeshire has adopted a [Doubling Nature Strategy](#). Both of these strategies highlight the importance of the Local Plan in supporting the doubling nature ambition.
 - The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire & Northamptonshire (WTBCN) together with Cambridge Past Present and Future (CPPF) have proposed a [Cambridge Nature Network](#) within and around Cambridge including:
 - Boulder Clay and Woodlands
 - Cambridge Fens
 - Fen-edge Orchards and Drovers
 - Gog Magog Hills
 - River Cam Corridor
 - Wicken Fen Vision South

Further detail on these topics is referred to below in relation to BG/GI: Green Infrastructure, and is also set out at chapter 2 of the Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping Baseline report, and updated in chapter 2 of the Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping Part 2 Recommendations report.

Adopted Local Plans

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 includes policy NH/4: Biodiversity, and policy NH/5: Sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance.

Policy NH/4 requires development to aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity, and seeks to protect important habitats and species. Policy NH/5 seeks to protect sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance from development that could cause adverse impacts.

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 includes Policy 69: Protection of sites of biodiversity and geodiversity importance, and Policy 70: Protection of priority species and habitats.

Policy 69 also seeks to protect sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance from development that could cause adverse impacts, and policy 70 seeks to protect important habitats and species.

3.3 Consultation and Engagement

Feedback to the First Conversation consultation regarding biodiversity and geodiversity included support for the protection of existing nature sites, and very strong support for biodiversity net gain including use of off-site contributions. A large number of responses also suggested that the plan should identify and support a nature recovery network for Greater Cambridge, to help address the biodiversity emergency at a more strategic level. A number of comments highlighted the importance for biodiversity of tackling decreasing water resources and the associated pressure on the natural environment, with suggestions for solutions including through strategic projects and on a smaller scale, via different design requirements for new development.

Formal and informal engagement with Natural England and Natural Cambridgeshire has also informed policy development.

3.4 Evidence Base

The [Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping Baseline Report](#) (November 2020) and Part 2 Recommendations Report (August 2021) have sought to provide a robust evidence base on the quantity and quality of existing GI assets – which includes biodiversity habitats and species - and networks within Greater Cambridge; and through analysis and consultation, identify specific and deliverable opportunities to enhance and expand the network – again including opportunities for biodiversity, supported by appropriate local plan policies. Further detail on the opportunities identified is set out below in relation to BG/GI: Green Infrastructure.

In relation to biodiversity net gain, the policy advice section of the Final Report advises that the following points provide justification for a minimum of 20% biodiversity net gain requirement, above the proposed 10% mandatory requirement coming forward through the Environment Bill:

- 20% biodiversity net gain is intended to result in increasing biodiversity and species abundance on development sites and is therefore likely to have a positive net effect by increasing biodiversity overall, particularly within urban areas.
- 20% net gain would help contribute towards remediating the relatively low level of designated sites and priority habitats that Greater Cambridge has compared with other English districts. This deficiency means there is a greater need to repair that loss and restore biodiversity across the area, where possible, through the planning and development process.
- 20% biodiversity net gain would better support the Councils' ambition to restore biodiversity and double nature than a lower percentage requirement
- Given that widespread application of BNG is still emerging, there is clearly further site-specific viability testing required of alternative BNG percentage

requirements. However, the [impact assessment published by the Government in relation to biodiversity net gain](#) sets out that there is little additional financial increase compared to the cost of providing 10% and 20% biodiversity net gain on individual development sites

3.5 Proposed Policy Approach and Reasons

The Proposed Policy Direction

The proposed policy direction, as set out in the First Proposals report is as follows:

The policy will require development to achieve a minimum 20% biodiversity net gain (BNG), noting that:

- BNG calculations should be submitted using the Defra Biodiversity Metric 3.0 or its successor
- BNG should be delivered on-site where possible, recognising that for smaller developments in particular, more significant and long-lasting biodiversity enhancements may be achieved via contributions towards off-site, larger scale projects.
- Where it is agreed that off-site habitat measures would bring greater biodiversity benefits than off-site measures, these must be consistent with the strategic aims of the Greater Cambridge green infrastructure network strategic initiatives (see BG3)
- The Councils will seek to use planning conditions to secure on site habitat creation and its long-term management, and obligations where BNG is on land outside the applicant's control

The policy will also seek wider environmental net gains. Ways of measuring this are currently being developed at a national level, and at the draft plan stage we will review whether and how to implement this policy requirement.

The policy will state that development proposals adversely affecting sites of biodiversity or geological importance will not normally be permitted. Exceptions will only be made where the public benefits significantly outweigh any adverse impacts. In such cases where development is permitted, we will require that the intrinsic natural features of particular interest are safeguarded or enhanced.

The policy will require development to mitigate evidenced recreational impacts on designated biodiversity and geodiversity sites, including applying Natural England's Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific importance.

Reasons for the preferred approach

Biodiversity net gain

The justification identified in the Evidence Base section above supports a minimum requirement of 20% biodiversity net gain.

While the national policy aim is to focus net gains on site, we recognise that on smaller sites in particular greater biodiversity gains may be achieved by pooling contributions towards larger scale off site projects.

National policy requirements to protect and enhance ecological networks support the approach of requiring off site habitat enhancement to align with the identified Greater Cambridge green infrastructure network strategic initiatives (see BG3).

Environmental net gain

[Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 028](#) states that Local Plans can set out policies for environmental net gain (defined as achieving overall improvements in natural capital, ecosystem services and the benefits they deliver), but notes that 'metrics to measure and monitor aspects of wider environmental net gain are under development'. The Councils fully support the principle of environmental net gain, but at present without standard metrics it is difficult to develop a clear policy implementing such a requirement. Ahead of draft plan stage we will review this point to consider whether at that point there is sufficient clarity to enable us to set out a clear policy on this topic.

Development proposals adversely affecting sites of biodiversity or geological importance

[National Planning Policy paragraphs 174-182](#) state that plans should protect sites of biodiversity or geological value (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan), and provide further requirements as to how this should be done, including referring to the 'mitigation hierarchy' (whereby harm should be preferably avoided, adequately mitigated, or compensated for as a last resort). The proposed policy approach enables the Councils to provide further specifics regarding how we will address proposals that could cause harm to sites of biodiversity or geological importance.

Recreational impacts on designated biodiversity and geodiversity sites

The national policy principles referred to above regarding protection of sites of biodiversity value by implication extends to impacts arising from recreational use. In their formal and informal communications with us during the preparation of this plan, Natural England has highlighted the impact of recreational pressure on designated sites, including identifying Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific importance. We recognise that this is a significant issue, and also note that many local sites are not in favourable condition or active management as well as suffering

from recreational pressures. Ahead of the draft plan we intend to develop clear policy requirements to address recreational impacts on designated sites, including considering further the relationship of such a requirement with emerging specific open space standards set out at BG/EO.

Alternative approaches, and reasons why they were rejected

Alternative approaches considered include:

Rely on emerging national legislation, likely to state a 10% mandatory biodiversity net gain - This alternative is not the preferred approach, as it would not bring such great benefits for biodiversity.

Require biodiversity net gain higher than 20% - This alternative is not the preferred approach as it would be likely in most instances to require significant off-site measures, whereas the national approach to net gain prioritises on-site measures. Requiring high net gain might also negatively affect development viability.

Rely on national policy for protection of sites of biodiversity importance - This alternative is not the preferred approach as we consider that additional clarity is required to set out how the principles set out in national policy should be applied at a local level.

3.6 Further Work and Next Steps

Ahead of the draft plan consultation the Councils will need to:

- consider and confirm in outline terms how the administration of a biodiversity net gain policy would work in practice, including measurement, delivery and monitoring, including in light of the Environment Bill
- consider further the relationship of a requirement to mitigate recreational impacts on designated sites with emerging specific open space standards set out at BG/EO.

4. BG/GI Green infrastructure

4.1. Issue the Plan is Seeking to Respond to

There is a need to enhance and expand the green spaces network in Greater Cambridge for wildlife - to help reverse species decline and support an increase in biodiversity, and for people - to provide recreational space bringing mental and physical health benefits, which will also reduce visitor pressure on the more vulnerable nature sites.

4.2 Policy Context

National Context

[National Planning Policy Framework](#) (2019) paragraph 20 states that there should be sufficient provision for conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation. Further to this, it notes the multifunctional benefits that green infrastructure can provide and requires plans to map and safeguard ecological networks.

Further detail is set out in section 2 of the Greater Cambridge Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping Baseline Study.

Regional / Local Context

As noted in the policy context to BG/BG, sub-regional and local partners have identified priority areas for nature recovery within and on the boundary of Greater Cambridge, as summarised in relation to BG/BG. These have provided context for our own consideration of green infrastructure priority areas, which have a slightly wider focus based on a Greater Cambridge geography.

For more detail see the Greater Cambridge Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping Part 2 Recommendations Report.

Adopted Local Plans

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 includes policy NH/6: Green Infrastructure, which seeks to enhance the green infrastructure network.

The Cambridge Local Plan 2018 includes a number of policies which relate to Green Infrastructure. Policy 8: Setting of the city seeks landscape improvements, and supports proposals which deliver the strategic green infrastructure network and priorities set out in the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy. Policy 67: seeks to protect open space. Policy 85: Infrastructure delivery, planning obligations and the

Community Infrastructure Levy lists green infrastructure as an item where investment may be required.

4.3 Consultation and Engagement

Feedback to the First Conversation consultation relevant to green infrastructure included stating that the Plan should protect existing green spaces and ensure that green space is provided on site. A number of responses stated that we should plan strategically for a green space network, connecting existing green spaces including opportunities crossing the boundary of Greater Cambridge. Comments highlighted that the Plan should help improve access to green space, including by providing significant new green spaces close to where people live, but also noted the importance of balancing public access with the need for undisturbed natural habitats.

Preparation of the Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping evidence base has involved engagement with a wide range of relevant organisations to identify opportunities and risks for each of the green infrastructure themes, thereby informing the study's conclusions. Particular engagement was undertaken with the Local Nature Partnership, Cambridge Nature Network partners, and Natural England regarding the emerging green infrastructure strategic initiatives referred to in the next section.

4.4 Evidence Base

[Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping Baseline Report](#) (November 2020), in chapters 5 and 6, identifies the existing Greater Cambridge green infrastructure network, and sets out opportunities and risks for it.

Drawing on the Baseline evidence, and on significant engagement with relevant groups as set out above, the Opportunity Mapping Part 2 Recommendations Report (August 2021) identifies the following area-specific and dispersed strategic green infrastructure initiatives, and their objectives:

1. Revitalising the chalk stream network

- Conserve and restore chalk streams to increase their ecological value, by addressing the three primary issues affecting the chalk stream network – flow pressures, channel modifications and poor water quality. Restoration measures include restoring natural flows, floodplain reconnection, channel realignment, reconnecting rivers to groundwater, removal of barriers to fish passage, and the rewilding of degraded rivers.
- Protect the East Anglian chalk groundwater resource by enhancing GI features through landscape-scale management, and improving the condition of the ecosystem by reducing pollution and contamination.

2. River Cam Corridor

- Enhance the River Cam Corridor to strengthen its existing role as a key linear GI asset across Greater Cambridge, by linking together existing active travel routes, connecting existing and proposed neighbourhoods to the Cam Corridor, improving wayfinding and interpretation, balancing accessibility improvements with nature conservation, restoring floodplains, implementing natural flood management, and increasing riparian planting.

This Strategic Initiative divides the River Cam corridor into three stretches:

- A: The northern section running from north east Cambridge to Waterbeach.
- B: The section running through the city of Cambridge.
- C: The section running south of Cambridge city.

3. Gog Magog Hills and chalkland fringe

- Conserve and enhance priority habitats, including chalk grassland and woodland.
- Provide a high quality, connected GI network to accommodate growing recreational need and enable residents to access, enjoy and learn about this part of Greater Cambridge's countryside.
- Ensure access to the countryside is managed in a way which avoids increasing recreational pressure on existing conservation sites at risk (e.g. SSSIs).

4. Enhancement of the eastern fens

- Conserve and enhance priority habitats including fen, grazing marsh and grassland (within and around the four designated SSSIs) for the benefit of wildlife.
- Create wildlife corridors to connect and expand these habitats where possible.
- Ensure negative impacts from access and recreational pressure on these sensitive ecological sites are minimised through habitat buffers and educating visitors.

5. The Great Ouse fenland arc

- Create a resilient network of fen and fen-edge habitat across the northern part of Greater Cambridge through habitat restoration, protection of peatland, sustainable soil, water and habitat management, and natural flood management.

- Enhance accessibility by linking existing and new routes to settlements and promote education of the rich geology, wildlife and heritage.

6. North Cambridge green space

- Provide new strategic green space(s) to the north of Cambridge, connected to the wider GI network by green corridors, to address the deficit in accessible GI in this area, reduce recreational pressure on existing sites and provide an important asset to meet growing demand from proposed development.

7. West Cambridge GI buffer - Coton corridor

- Enhance the recreational and habitat offer to ensure there is sufficient high-quality and accessible GI to keep pace with growing development (and associated recreational pressure) west of Cambridge. This includes improving accessibility to and between GI assets and surrounding settlements, providing more opportunities for recreation and nature (making sites 'work harder'), expanding GI where possible, and enhancing habitats.

8. Western gateway multifunctional GI corridors

- Provide opportunities to improve biodiversity by expanding and joining up the existing woodland, hedgerow and grassland habitat network. This will be delivered through new woodland planting, natural regeneration, hedgerow extension and management, and habitat restoration. Ensure opportunities for biodiversity offsets from East West rail are sought.
- Ensure negative impacts from access and recreational pressure on sensitive ecological sites (Eversden and Wimpole SAC, and woodland SSSIs) are minimised, by providing additional GI sites for recreation, promoting alternative or new access routes, and educating visitors on the value of conserving habitats.
- Improve access throughout the area for people (where it will not cause detrimental impact on ecological sites - as above) through opportunities associated with East West rail as well as along river corridors.

9. Pollinator corridors

- Create a network of linear 'pollinator corridors' by promoting locally appropriate wildflower diversity and abundance in line with the National Pollinator Strategy.

10. Expanding Greater Cambridge's 'urban forest'

- Increase tree canopy cover and its distribution, by protecting the existing tree canopy and planting new trees using locally-appropriate species, to help settlements adapt to climate change and sustainably enhance the urban environment for people and wildlife.

11. Woodland expansion and resilience

- Expand woodland areas (and hedgerows) through planting and natural regeneration, and improve their management outside urban areas to deliver benefits for carbon sequestration, create wildlife corridors, contribute to flood resilience and enhance the wider landscape.
- Mitigate pressures on woodlands, including recreational pressure, fragmentation and the impacts of climate change.

12. Urban greening and 'de-paving'

- Introduce urban greening interventions (e.g. green roofs, SuDS, street trees and pocket parks) within existing, regenerating and newly proposed urban areas across Greater Cambridge to deliver multiple benefits for people, wildlife and the environment.

13. Allotments and community gardening

- Create a patchwork of allotments and community growing sites across Greater Cambridge, delivered through expansion and upgrading of existing sites and providing new sites in areas of deficiency and new development.

14. Environmentally friendly farming

- Ensure that farming and food production across Greater Cambridge's predominantly rural landscape is undertaken in a way that maximises the delivery of ecosystem services (e.g. biodiversity, carbon sequestration, water quality, soil quality, health and wellbeing) by promoting partnership working and uptake of agri-environment schemes.

4.5 Proposed Policy Approach and Reasons

The Proposed Policy Direction

The proposed policy direction, as set out in the First Proposals report is as follows:

The policy will require all development proposals – appropriate to its type, scale and location - to include green infrastructure, providing the following varied benefits for people, wildlife and planet:

- Reinforcing and enhancing landscape and townscape, ensuring that proposed green infrastructure is appropriate to its local context
- Supporting delivery of biodiversity net gain, including by providing links between habitats within and beyond the site boundary, and connecting where appropriate to the wider ecological network (see below), whilst carefully balancing the needs of wildlife and people
- Promoting healthy living for all members of the community by providing spaces designed to be physically accessible and socially inclusive.
- Protecting and enhancing the water environment
- Enhancing access and connectivity
- Providing environmental enhancement
- Supporting climate mitigation and adaptation

To support successful delivery of green infrastructure, the policy will require proposals to demonstrate that green infrastructure has been planned:

- As an integral part of the development, so that it informs the overall development design, and so that natural features are retained in situ
- Across all phases of development
- To be successful for the lifetime of the development, including providing plans for management, maintenance and funding.

Beyond setting out green infrastructure design principles as above, we are exploring whether this policy should require development to meet a green infrastructure standard such as Building with Nature. We would welcome your views on this topic, and will confirm the preferred approach at draft plan stage.

The policy will also require development proposals to protect and enhance the wider green infrastructure network as follows:

- Require all new development to protect the existing green infrastructure assets, which will be identified on the policies map which will accompany the local plan
- Our Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping has identified a number of strategic green infrastructure initiatives which have the potential to enhance the existing network. This policy will require all new development to help deliver or contribute to support delivery of the green infrastructure strategic initiative objectives. Contributions will include the establishment, enhancement and the on-going management costs.

The list of strategic green infrastructure initiatives includes the following:

- 1: Revitalising the chalk stream network

- 2: Cam Valley Corridor
- 2A: River Cam Corridor (North East Cambridge to Waterbeach)
- 2B: River Cam Corridor (through Cambridge City)
- 2C: River Cam Corridor (south of Cambridge City)
- 3: Gog Magog Hills and chalkland fringe
- 4: Enhancement of the eastern fens
- 5: The Great Ouse fenland arc
- 6: A 'Green Lung' for North Cambridge
- 7: West Cambridge GI buffer - Coton Corridor
- 8: Western gateway multifunctional GI corridor
- Dispersed initiatives:
- 9: Woodland expansion and resilience
- 10: Expanding Greater Cambridge's 'urban forest'
- 11: Pollinator corridors
- 12: Urban greening and 'de-paving'
- 13: Allotments and community gardening
- 14: Environmentally friendly farming

You can find further information on the purpose and objectives of each of these schemes in the Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping Part 2 Recommendations Report (2021).

Reasons for the Proposed Policy Direction

Green infrastructure design

Green infrastructure is a natural environment feature that can address many of the Local Plan's themes. This policy will require all development proposals to include green infrastructure to provide a range of benefits appropriate to its type, scale and location. We identified the topics listed in the policy from a review of existing green infrastructure standards including [Building with Nature](#), [Developing with Nature](#), and London's Urban Greening Factor. Noting the cross-cutting benefits that green infrastructure can provide, additional green infrastructure design principles are included in other policies in this Plan as follows:

- Landscape, cultural heritage and sense of place: respond to local context, considering existing features within the site and its setting in relation to:
 - Landscape character (see GP/LC)
 - Local distinctiveness (see GP/PP)
- Biodiversity: Support delivery of biodiversity net gain, including by providing links between habitats within and beyond the site boundary,

and connecting where appropriate to the wider ecological network (see also BG/BG)

- Health: Creating healthy new developments drawing on the ten principles developed from the Healthy New Towns initiative (see WS/HD)
- The water environment: Protect and enhance waterbodies and plan for Sustainable Drainage Systems as multifunctional green infrastructure (see CC/FM, BG/RC)
- Access and connectivity:
 - Protect and enhance public access networks within and beyond the site, linking into footpaths and cycleways and enhancing opportunities for active travel (see GP/PP, I/ST)
 - Ensure that green infrastructure is accessible to all (see GP/QP) for the whole year round
- Environmental enhancement: Green infrastructure should be resilient to climate change, minimise the scheme's environmental impact with respect to air, soil, light, noise, and water; and enhance the quality of air, soil and water. (see WS/HS)
- Climate change mitigation
 - Supporting carbon sequestration in appropriate locations (See CC/CS)
 - Supporting urban greening (see CC/DC)

Green infrastructure design standards

A number of non-accredited and accredited green infrastructure quality standards exist to help ensure that the right type and quality of green infrastructure is provided to deliver the most benefits appropriate to its type, scale and location. Examples include [Building with Nature](#) and [Developing with Nature](#). We are exploring whether applying externally derived standards such as these would bring substantive benefits, and will confirm our preferred approach at draft plan stage.

Supporting existing green infrastructure assets and proposed green infrastructure strategic initiatives

Having identified the existing Greater Cambridge green infrastructure network and proposed enhancements via the area-specific and dispersed strategic green

infrastructure initiatives referred to above, we want to see all development protect and contribute to their enhancement, including through the design of development and through financial contributions.

Alternative approaches, and reasons why they were rejected

Alternative approaches considered were:

- No Policy – Not considered a reasonable alternative as national planning policy requires plans to address Green Infrastructure.
- Identify the green infrastructure strategic initiatives in a supplementary planning document rather than in the plan itself - This alternative is not the preferred approach, as it would not provide such strong support for the initiatives.
- Restrict development within respective green infrastructure strategic initiative areas - Not considered a reasonable alternative as the strategic initiatives include very broad areas within which it would not be appropriate to restrict development.
- Include an urban greening factor in the policy - This alternative is not the preferred approach, as we think that measurement of Biodiversity Net Gain and Urban Greening via a metric-based assessment systems would be likely to overlap, making it overly complex to run two of these concurrently. The Plan does though require urban greening measures (see BG/TC, CC/DC and CC/FM).

4.6 Further Work and Next Steps

Ahead of the draft plan consultation the Councils will need to:

- Consider any refinements required to the proposed list of strategic initiatives, drawing on responses to the consultation and engagement with key partners.
- Confirm the funding mechanism required to enable all development to contribute to the identified strategic initiatives.

5. BG/TC Improving Tree Canopy Cover and the Tree Population

5.1 Issue the Plan is Seeking to Respond to

Planting more trees of the right species in the right location, or allowing for natural regeneration, can bring a wide range of climate, biodiversity and wellbeing benefits. Low tree and tree canopy cover is recognised as a weakness within the ecological network of Greater Cambridge, both in the rural agricultural areas typified by large open fields lacking boundary features, and in more urban areas which pre-date the current requirements.

5.2 Policy Context

National Context

The [National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 174b](#) requires that plans recognise the economic and other benefits provided by trees and woodland, and at paragraph 180c requires that development resulting in loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees should be refused in most circumstances. National Planning Practice Guidance provides further details, including noting the importance of planning for trees as part of the green infrastructure network.

Regional / Local Context

Protecting and increasing tree canopy cover in local plan policies will help deliver regional and local ambitions to double nature as referred to below, and can also help meet the councils' zero carbon objectives.

Cambridge City Council has set a target for tree cover of 19% by 2030. To help deliver this, the [Cambridge City Council Citywide Tree Strategy 2016-26](#) Canopy Cover Project seeks to support Cambridge City Council's aim of achieving 19% tree cover by the 2050s, which will help the city adapt to climate change.

Within its [Doubling Nature Strategy](#), South Cambridgeshire District Council identified increasing tree canopy cover as one of the three main ways to deliver its vision of doubling nature in South Cambridgeshire by 2050.

Adopted Local Plans

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 includes policy NH/7 Ancient Woodlands and Veteran Trees which seeks to protect important trees through the planning application process.

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 includes Policy 71: Trees, which seeks to protect trees unless public benefits outweigh the harm, and developments provide replacement planting.

5.3 Consultation and Engagement

Feedback to the First Conversation consultation relevant to trees and hedgerows included comments supporting the protection of existing trees, noting their varied benefits, and also supporting the planting of new trees and woodlands in appropriate locations. Comments noted that a strategic approach should be taken to tree and hedgerow provision, noting that it is not just about the number of trees. Some comments raised the importance of balancing the priority for tree planting alongside other priorities such as the need for housing and employment, and also landscape impacts.

5.4 Evidence Base

The [Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping Baseline Report](#) (November 2020) identifies that a lack of trees is a weakness in the ecological network of Greater Cambridge, justifying the need for intervention. Further to this it identifies specific opportunities for increasing Baseline Report identifies a number of key issues in relation to trees and woodland in Greater Cambridge (more detail is set out in the study, particularly in chapter 6):

- Within Greater Cambridge, the only internationally designated nature site (Eversden and Wimpole Woods Special Area of Protection), and a significant proportion of the nationally designated sites are ancient woodlands, mostly located to the west of Cambridge.
- The low tree and grassland (of conservation value) cover are recognised as a weakness within the ecological network of Greater Cambridge, both in the rural agricultural areas typified by large open fields lacking boundary features, and in more urban areas which pre-date the current requirements for ecological enhancement above no net loss.
- Urban densification is recognised to be a constraint to urban habitats and tree cover. The poor quality and high compaction of soils in urban areas may also restrict habitat condition and carbon sequestration, and other ecosystem services.

Drawing on the Baseline Report, the final report identifies several strategic initiatives seeking to increase tree cover (see more detail at BG/GI), including:

- Strategic Initiative 8: Western gateway multifunctional GI corridors – This initiative includes a vision for new woodland planting and natural regeneration

to expand and join up existing woodlands and the hedgerow network to create a resilient landscape.

- Strategic Initiative 9: Woodland expansion and resilience – this initiative seeks both to expand woodland areas through planting and natural regeneration, and improve their management outside urban areas.
- Strategic Initiative 10: Expanding Greater Cambridge's 'urban forest' – this initiative seeks to increase cover of locally-appropriate species in the long term within urban areas in Greater Cambridge. Within the City, delivery will be led by the existing Cambridge Canopy Project, and Cambridge Tree Strategy.

5.5 Proposed Policy Approach and Reasons

The Proposed Policy Direction

The proposed policy direction, as set out in the First Proposals report is as follows:

The policy will require development proposals to:

- preserve, protect and increase the amount and distribution of tree canopy cover.
- Protect and enhance the tree population on site, including its diversity and distribution.
- protect existing trees of value (including landscape, heritage, cultural, amenity, biodiversity, ecosystem service or aesthetic value) as measured by a recognised tool such as iTree.
- protect existing hedgerows and the surrounding land that supports them, and to plant new ones where appropriate
- provide sufficient space above and below ground for trees and other vegetation to mature.
- provide appropriate replacement tree or hedgerow planting, where felling is proved necessary.

The policy will also encourage the provision of new woodland of locally appropriate species in appropriate locations.

Reasons for the Proposed Policy Direction

National planning policy and guidance recognises the many benefits provided by trees, including encouraging walking and enhanced physical and mental health; contributing to local environmental character and distinctiveness; providing habitats for wildlife; supporting sustainable drainage; mitigating climate change by storing carbon dioxide; and reducing noise and excessive heat in urban areas. Further to

this, proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework will see authorities required to make new streets tree-lined. Government has also recently launched the [England Trees Action Plan 2021-24](#). At an OxCam Arc level we have signed up to the aim of increasing tree and woodland cover across the Arc from 7.4% to 19%.

Tree canopy cover is the name given to the layer of leaves and branches that cover the ground. It is measured as a percentage of the total area. Large-canopied tree species provide a wider range of benefits because of the larger surface area of their canopy, which is why supporting an increase in canopy cover rather than just an increase in the number of trees is a priority.

The tree population or treescape includes the variety of species, ages and distribution of trees within an area. The greater the variety and distribution, the greater the biodiversity value and resilience of the tree population.

Locally, low tree and tree canopy cover is recognised as a weakness within the ecological network of Greater Cambridge, both in the rural agricultural areas typified by large open fields lacking boundary features, and in more urban areas which pre-date the current requirements for ecological enhancement above no net loss. The [Cambridge City Council Citywide Tree Strategy 2016-26](#) Canopy Cover Project South Cambridgeshire [Doubling Nature Strategy](#) referred to above seek to address these challenges.

In response to the above context, this policy seeks to ensure that development proposals increase tree canopy cover, enhance treescape, and protect existing trees of value. Where tree retention or planting is proposed in conjunction with new developments, the objective should be to achieve a harmonious relationship between trees and structures that can be sustained in the long term. The constraints imposed by trees, both above and below ground should be considered at the outset as they will inform site layout.

We recognise that in some instances felling of existing trees or hedgerows may be necessary to meet wider placemaking objectives. In such cases the policy will require replacement planting.

Hedgerows are also important biodiversity, cultural and archaeological features in South Cambridgeshire in particular, noting our relative lack of tree canopy cover, and it is important to retain and protect both hedgerows themselves and the surrounding space which supports their flourishing (known as terroir).

Groupings of trees in woodland multiply the benefits provided by individual trees. We want to encourage the provision of additional broad-leaved woodland in appropriate

locations, which could be provided at a range of scales and in different contexts, including for example micro-woods, tree belts, orchards and woodland.

Alternative approaches, and reasons why they were rejected

Alternative approaches considered were:

Rely on national policy - This alternative is not the preferred approach as it would not provide protection for trees of amenity or other value that are not part of ancient woodland or having Tree Protection Order status.

Set a specific requirement for tree canopy cover in new development. - This alternative is not the preferred approach as high canopy cover requirements could mean that woodland would dominate a development site's landscape and biodiversity provision, at the expense of a more biodiverse mix of habitats and landscapes.

5.6 Further Work and Next Steps

Ahead of the draft plan consultation the Councils will need to confirm in more detail what specific aspects of the Cambridge Canopy Project can be supported through Local Plan policies.

6. BG/RC River corridors

6.1 Issue the Plan is Seeking to Respond to

Our rivers, and in particular the River Cam and its tributaries, provide a variety of critical roles in Greater Cambridge. In addition to their functional role in water storage, biodiversity and green infrastructure, they contribute greatly to our landscape and townscape and cultural heritage, as well as our tourism economy. The local plan needs to provide a policy framework to balance this wide range of issues.

6.2 Policy Context

National Context

The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) does not make any specific reference to river corridors, but a range of requirements related to biodiversity, green infrastructure, flood risk management and landscape could be applicable.

Regional / Local Context

In relation to biodiversity, the River Cam is designated as a county wildlife site in recognition of the river's importance in linking semi-natural habitats, including ecologically-designated sites such as Stourbridge Common Local Nature Reserve and Sheep's Green and Coe Fen Local Nature Reserve with the wider countryside of South Cambridgeshire.

Adopted Local Plans

The Cambridge Local Plan 2018 includes Policy 7: The River Cam which requires that development proposals along the River Cam corridor should address a range of issues including that the proposed design of the development has taken account of the assessment in enhancing views to and from the river, that it would enhance distinctive landscape of the River Cam, take opportunities for re-naturalisation of the river, and where possible enhance public access.

The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 does not include a specific policy on river corridors.

6.3 Consultation and Engagement

Feedback to the First Conversation consultation relevant to river corridors included comments raising concern about the impact of development, including over-abstraction of the river Cam and the resulting impacts on biodiversity, and noting the

need to consider development impacts on the Great River Ouse and other water bodies beyond the boundary of Greater Cambridge. Other comments included those highlighting the importance of considering the historic landscape role of the Cam as it runs through Cambridge. A few comments suggested that we should apply the doubling nature aim to water, rivers and associated biodiversity.

6.4 Evidence Base

Our Integrated Water Management Study notes the critical impact of water abstraction on the health of the chalk streams (see CC/WE for more detail).

The Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping Part 2 Recommendations Report identifies two strategic initiatives seeking to support the protection and enhancement of the Cam and its tributaries, (see more detail at BG/GI):

- Strategic Initiative 1 - Revitalising the chalk stream network, focusing on conserving and restoring chalk streams to increase their ecological value, by addressing the three primary issues affecting the chalk stream network – flow pressures, channel modifications and poor water quality.
- Strategic Initiative 2 - River Cam Corridor, seeking to enhance the corridor to strengthen its existing role as a key linear GI asset across Greater Cambridge, by linking together existing active travel routes, connecting existing and proposed neighbourhoods to the Cam Corridor, improving wayfinding and interpretation, balancing accessibility improvements with nature conservation, restoring floodplains, implementing natural flood management, and increasing riparian planting.

The Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment identifies the key landscape features of the Cam and other river corridors in Greater Cambridge, and sets out guidance for integrating development into the landscape. Development proposals should consider this guidance to inform its response to this policy.

6.5 Proposed Policy Approach and Reasons

The Proposed Policy Direction

The proposed policy direction, as set out in the First Proposals report is as follows:

The policy will require development located along the River Cam and its tributaries to:

- Protect, enhance and restore natural features, including:
 - Support the renaturalisation of the rivers themselves – supporting the aims of the Cambridge Chalk Streams project

- Restore natural floodplains and integration of green infrastructure to protect communities at risk of flooding
- Establish riparian habitats where appropriate
- Protect and enhance the existing landscape of river corridors, referring to the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment for guidance.
- Ensure that the location, scale and design of development, protects and enhances the character, visual amenity and historic significance of river corridors and connected locations, including in particular considering views to and from rivers.
- Support enhanced access to, from and along river corridors for walking and cycling, whilst balancing this with the need to protect and enhance habitats for biodiversity, including:
 - For the river Cam, supporting the delivery of a continuous Cam Valley Trail
 - Enhancing connections between the rivers and other green spaces
 - Providing improved wayfinding and interpretation resources
- Support tourism and recreation associated with river corridors, in appropriate locations, whilst ensuring that this does not impact negatively on our rivers' other roles.

Reasons for the Proposed Policy Direction

Our rivers, and in particular the River Cam and its tributaries, provide a variety of critical roles in Greater Cambridge. The Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping Part 2 Recommendations Report and Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment identify key features to protect and opportunities for enhancement of river corridors. The policy will seek to address the following key roles, challenges and opportunities for our river corridors:

- Supporting habitats: The River Cam is designated as a county wildlife site in recognition of the river's importance in linking semi-natural habitats, including ecologically-designated sites such as Stourbridge Common Local Nature Reserve and Sheep's Green and Coe Fen Local Nature Reserve with the wider countryside of South Cambridgeshire. As noted above, the Integrated Water Management Study notes the critical impact of water abstraction on the health of the chalk streams, and the Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping Part 2 Recommendations Report identifies revitalising the chalk streams network as a priority strategic green infrastructure initiative (see CC/WE).

- **Water storage:** Our rivers are a source of flood risk. Restoration of natural flood plains where practicable and provision of green infrastructure can help reduce flood risk along the rivers itself and beyond. Wet woodland will self-set and grow where conditions are right and management allows. Providing the right conditions for trees to grow in appropriate locations in river corridors can support flood risk mitigation and biodiversity.
- **A defining role in our landscape, heritage and townscape:** As noted above, the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment identifies the key landscape features of the Cam and other river corridors in Greater Cambridge, and sets out guidance for integrating development into the landscape.
- **Supporting leisure and recreation:** the river Cam in particular provides leisure access for walking and cycling. The Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping Part 2 Recommendations Report identifies an opportunity to enhance this role to create a continuous Cam Valley Trail, and also to enhance connections between the river and other green spaces in and around Cambridge.
- **Supporting tourism:** The River Cam is an international tourist attraction, drawing many visitors each year, including for punting and travelling further afield by boat. We want to continue to support this role, but this needs to ensure that it does not harm the other roles noted above.

Alternative approaches, and reasons why they were rejected

Alternative approaches considered were:

Not to have a specific river corridors policy, relying instead on overarching green infrastructure and landscape policies - this alternative is not the preferred approach because of the need to ensure that the important cross-cutting role that our river corridors play is protected and enhanced, including in relation to biodiversity, landscape, heritage, recreation and tourism.

6.6 Further Work and Next Steps

Taking account of feedback received, the next step would be the inclusion of a fully worked up policy in the draft Local Plan for consultation at the next stage of plan making.

7. BG/PO Protecting open spaces

7.1 Issue the Plan is Seeking to Respond to

Open spaces, regardless of ownership, are a key aspect of high-quality urban environments and are fundamental to the character of an area. Attractive, accessible and well-designed open space can support and enhance the appearance of an area, creating more desirable places to live and underpin good growth. Open spaces and recreation facilities provide people with a place to relax and socialise as well as encouraging healthier lifestyles by providing opportunities for sport, informal play and daily encounters with the natural environment. Open spaces not only help support the health, social and cultural well-being of local communities but also help support strategies to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change.

An essential part of the character of Cambridge stems from its many green spaces, trees and other landscape features, including the River Cam. In South Cambridgeshire, open spaces are an integral part of a village's character and charm. These spaces not only play an important role in promoting both active and passive sport and recreational activities but also provide valuable amenity space and support for biodiversity. Their protection is therefore an important matter which the Local Plan needs to address.

7.2 Policy Context

National Context

The Government recently created the [Office for Health Promotion](#) with the intention of leading national efforts to improve and level up the health of the nation by tackling obesity, improving mental health and promoting physical activity. The new Office will enable more joined-up, sustained action between national and local government, the NHS and cross-government, where much of the wider determinants of health sit.

As well as improving public health, greenspaces also have wider environmental benefits such as increasing opportunities for wildlife, reducing the impacts of air and noise pollution, absorbing excessive rainfall helping to reduce the risk of flooding. They can also play a major role in combatting the impacts of climate change by absorbing carbon emissions and reducing temperatures by providing shade.

The importance of greenspace has also been recognised within the UK Government's '[25-year plan to improve the environment](#)' which acknowledges the essential role that the natural environment and greenspaces play in people's physical and mental health. The report states its aims are to improve population health and wellbeing by forging a closer connection between people and the natural environment.

Public Health England (PHE), has also highlighted how important greenspaces are to its work particularly with regards to avoidance of diseases associated with inactivity, combatting mental health issues and the restorative benefits contact with greenspaces can have. To this effect, in 2020 PHE released a report entitled, '[Improving access to greenspace – A new review for 2020](#)'.

This report highlights how greenspace, such as parks, woodland, fields and allotments as well as introduced natural elements such as green walls, roofs and incidental vegetation, are increasingly being recognised as an important asset for supporting health and wellbeing. Using these natural assets, can help local authorities address local issues that they face, including improving the wider aspects of health and wellbeing.

Paragraph 92 of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (2021) explains how the planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places. The should a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other; b) are safe and accessible, and include high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, including identified local health and well-being needs, examples include the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

Paragraph 93 explains how planning policies and decisions should provide social, recreational, and cultural facilities including services needed by the community. It includes the need for: (a) local authorities to plan positively for the provision of community facilities such as meeting places, sports venues, open space and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments; and (b) take account of, and supporting the delivery of local strategies to improve the health, social and cultural well-being of all sections of the community.

Paragraph 98 highlights the importance of providing access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity for the health and well-being of communities. It recommends the need for planning policies to be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport, and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.

Paragraph 99 states open spaces should not be built on unless one of three exceptions can be satisfied. These exceptions area as follows: the land is surplus to requirements; the loss can be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision.

Paragraph 100 advises planning policies and decisions to protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.

Paragraphs 101, 102 and 103 explains what is meant by a Local Green Space designation. They are important spaces communities may want to identify and protect through either local or neighbourhood plans. These designations should be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period. The green space should be: in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance; and local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.

Planning Policy Guidance provides a series of notes about healthy communities explaining its importance in sustainable communities and advising on how it should be integrated with other uses/strategies. Positive planning can make a significant contribution to creating a healthy community with the design and use of the built and natural environments, including green infrastructure. These are major determinants of health and wellbeing by creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles.

The Guidance explains how open spaces should be considered with the planning for new developments including how these may affect existing open space. Open space, which includes all open space of public value, can take many forms, from formal sports pitches to open areas within a development, linear corridors and country parks. It can provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby; have an ecological value and contribute to green infrastructure, as well as being an important part of the landscape and setting of built development, and an important component in the achievement of sustainable development. It is for local planning authorities to assess the need for open space and opportunities for new provision in their areas. These need assessments can refer to Sport England's guidance on how to complete these.

The Guidance defines a healthy place as one which supports and promotes healthy behaviours and environments and a reduction in health inequalities for people of all ages. It will provide the community with opportunities to improve their physical and mental health, and support community engagement and wellbeing. It is a place which is inclusive and promotes social interaction. It meets the needs of children and young people to grow and develop, as well as being adaptable to the needs of an increasingly elderly population and those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments.

Regional / Local Context

There are a range of nature reserves of national and local significance, in [Cambridgeshire](#) which provide people with publicly accessible opportunities to experience nature. Other sites that specifically support wildlife may not be publicly accessible.

The County Wildlife Sites Partnership (CWSP) was set up for the conservation and enhancement of habitats and species across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough through the designation of Local Sites. Sites meeting the relevant criteria are designated as County Wildlife Sites or City Wildlife Sites. Cambridgeshire County Council owns or manages several wildlife sites, including Local Sites and Protected Road Verges for their wildlife interest as part of its legal duty to conserve biodiversity.

Local Sites (City and County Wildlife Sites) are non-statutory areas of local importance for nature conservation that complement nationally and internationally designated geological and wildlife sites. Designating these areas as Local Sites raises awareness of their nature conservation importance to owners, planners and conservation bodies, to help preserve them for future generations to enjoy.

A Local Site's designation does not give anyone other than the landowner or manager control over land management however these sites should be sympathetically managed. Protecting road verges represent the largest area of unimproved grassland in the county. This important habitat supports a variety of plant and animals, including rare and scarce flowers and animals. The best examples of road verge habitat have been designated as Protected Road Verges (PRVs) to raise awareness about their importance for wildlife to landowners, land managers, utility service providers and planners.

Adopted Local Plans

The adopted Cambridge Local Plan (October 2018) includes Policy 67: Protection of open space. This policy protects open spaces from development unless the site can be satisfactorily replaced in terms of quality, quantity and access and close to the original site. In the case of school, college and university grounds, development may be permitted where it meets a demonstrable educational need and does not adversely affect playing fields or other formal sports provision on the site.

The adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) includes: Policy SC/8: Protection of Existing Recreation Areas, Allotments and Community Orchards; NH/11: Protected Village Amenity Areas; and NH/12: Local Green Space.

SC/8: Protection of Existing Recreation Areas, Allotments and Community Orchards explains how proposals involving the loss of recreation land or buildings, playing fields, allotments or community orchards except where will be refused planning

permission. The policy lists a range of circumstances when permission may be granted involving their loss. These include suitable land / facility replacement, the benefits of the proposals outweigh the loss, or the space is no longer needed.

NH/11: Protected Village Amenity Areas (PVAA) protects sites, designated as PVAAs from development which would have an adverse impact on the character, amenity, tranquillity or function of the village.

NH/12: Local Green Space (LGS) protects sites, designated as LGS from development which would have an adverse impact on the character and particular local significance placed on such green areas which make them valued by their local community. Inappropriate development would not be approved except in very special circumstances and in discussion with the local community.

7.3 Consultation and Engagement

Some of the key feedback received during the first conversation consultation included:

- Ensure everyone has access to green space.
- Maintain biodiverse green spaces.
- Identify important ecological areas in the Local Plan which can be augmented and connected, and which should be avoided by new development.
- All residents should have access to areas for growing foodstuff, caring for the natural environment, green open spaces and small woodlands.
- Open space provision should include habitat diversification and creation.
- Provide accessible and all-weather exercise areas for all ages in green spaces.

In late 2020, a series of workshops were held following the publication of 17 initial evidence base reports, commissioned to help shape the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan. As part of the discussion, some feedback raised concern about the impact of densification on green space in urban areas. On the subject of the Green Belt, it was acknowledged that people value open green space.

7.4 Evidence Base

Open Space and Recreation Strategy for Cambridge City Council

Cambridge City Council produced the [Open Space and Recreation Strategy](#) (OSRS) 2011 to support the plan-making process. The 2011 strategy reassessed open spaces within the city, which were considered as a part of the previous strategy,

evaluated a range of additional sites and included a new quality assessment of all sites surveyed. The 2011 OSRS assessed open spaces across the city for their environmental and recreational importance and subsequent protected from new development.

Local Green Spaces & Protected Village Amenity Area Assessments

The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 reviewed many sites for a range of designations include Local Green Space (LGS), Important Countryside Frontages (ICF) and Protected Village Amenity Areas (PVAA). This work was entitled Further work on [Policy NH/12: Local Green Space responding to the Inspectors' Interim Findings](#), 2017. The review process concluded 83 of the sites assessed met the NPPF criteria for LGS designation. Those not designated as such either returned to being a PVAA, became a new PVAA, or an ICF.

7.5 Proposed Policy Approach and Reasons

The Proposed Policy Direction

The proposed policy direction, as set out in the First Proposals report is as follows:

The Local Plan will continue to include policies which identify and protect open spaces, including village greens, parks, sports and recreation areas, allotments, community orchards and Protected Village Amenity Areas, and Local Green Space.

Reasons for the Proposed Policy Direction

Open spaces are an essential part of sustaining healthy communities, supporting the local environment, and encouraging social interaction with local people. Our settlements contain a wide variety of open spaces, that make significant contributions to the character of places, but also provide important local amenities. Given the important role open spaces perform in both urban and rural locations, it is essential that they are protected from development. The type of protection afforded will reflect the both the environmental and recreational qualities these sites afford, not just their immediate locale but also their wider contribution to their setting.

It also needs to be recognised, that in some exceptional cases, some development on low quality open space may be appropriate. Development would need to justify the loss with significant benefits such as contributing to area-wide strategies as well as responding to climate change. These will normally be in exceptional cases, where small areas of the open space have been identified as having limited environmental and recreational benefits, in effect these spaces offer limited public amenity. Examples include the expansion of educational facilities and new affordable homes to replaces those that have reached the end of their usable life.

The benefits of any development will need to be fully justified with better quality, alternative and accessible re-provision or with improvements to other sites nearby unless a more beneficial location can be identified. Quality improvements will take the form of multi-functional open spaces, maximising opportunities to improve their environmental and, or recreational qualities. This will be achieved by ensuring they address area-wide strategies, where practical to do so. These include public health and well-being, community and social cohesion, trees, improved flood-mitigation, drainage and biodiversity. Re-provision should provide, as a minimum access to the community it was serving. Sites in public ownership should ensure alternative re-provision is publicly accessible, where practical to do so, in order to maximise public benefit. All proposals involving the loss of any open space will be considered on its merits on a case-by-case basis.

This approach will ensure that we continue to protect our open spaces to ensure access to a wide range of open spaces for different seasons and activities, for all ages. Allowing some loss of open space, following a judicious approach will ensure only those spaces that have limited amenity value are lost and that the benefits of development are demonstrably beneficial, overall. We are developing evidence on open spaces, and this will accompany the draft plan.

Local Green Space is a designation which applies a green belt style of protection. A number of these were identified in the last South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and will be carried forward into the new plan. They are required to be demonstrably special to a local community and hold a particular local significance. Reflecting this, the neighbourhood plan process would be particularly suited to demonstrating this local value and identifying new spaces if communities wish to identify further spaces.

Alternative approaches, and reasons why they were rejected

Alternative approaches considered were:

No Policy – Not considered a reasonable alternative as this would not plan positively for the provision of open space, which is required by national planning policy and would damage the character and quality of life in settlements.

7.6 Further Work and Next Steps

Open space evidence will be updated to inform the draft Local Plan stage. This will include reviewing the Cambridge City Council produced the Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2011, and the South Cambridgeshire Recreation study 2013.

This will take account of those sites previously assessed and new sites delivered since the previous assessments, this will include sites including those which adjoin the fringes of Cambridge, south of the A14, such as Orchard Park and east of the M11 such as Eddington and Trumpington Meadows.

8. BG/EO Providing and enhancing open space

8.1 Issue the Plan is Seeking to Respond to

The importance of greenspace has been recognised for the wide range of benefits it brings, from improving human health, providing cleaner air, increasing opportunities for biodiversity to mitigating the negative impacts of climate change. This recognition means that it is vital new residential developments and large employment areas provide open spaces to support their growth, in either a rural or urban setting. In rural parts, there may be limited opportunities to access sports and recreation facilities while in urban, more densely populated areas there may already be existing pressure on these spaces. New development which will create additional demand for these spaces should contribute to these spaces accordingly.

In most circumstances, these spaces will be provided on-site, however for smaller developments, it may be more practical for new development to contribute to existing facilities, close enough to serve the development's catchment area. The mix of spaces provided will also need to take account of local circumstances to avoid making existing deficiencies worse. The non-delivery of open spaces as part of new developments in existing, more densely populated areas has exacerbated existing deficiencies with regard to access to open spaces. Consequently, this matter of non-delivery is a real issue which the Council seeks to address this matter. In wards and parishes with identified open space deficiencies, new development should not worsen existing shortage.

Open spaces, regardless of ownership, are a key aspect of high-quality urban and rural environments and are often fundamental to the character of an area. Attractive, accessible and well-designed open space can support and enhance the appearance of an area, creating more desirable places to live and underpin good growth. Open spaces and recreation facilities provide people with a place to relax and socialise as well as encouraging healthier lifestyles by providing opportunities for sport, informal play and daily encounters with the natural environment. They can also offer people the opportunity to grow their own food in allotments and community gardens and orchards.

In both new and rural settlements, open spaces help form the individual character and identity of a village as well as encourage social interaction and recreational activity. These spaces can therefore play an important role in helping communities develop greater social cohesion and avoid feelings of social isolation leading to greater community resilience.

Multifunctional spaces can help people to socialise and relax as well as encourage healthier lifestyles. These areas can also assist with climate change strategies by reducing local heat islands in urban areas. The policy will support the delivery of large-scale green spaces which may also include water spaces, in order to provide a

range of benefits in one location such as providing recreation space, providing habitats for wildlife, reducing heat island effects and reducing flood risk.

The varied nature of the area means that tailored solutions will be required. In Cambridge, urban areas may require investment in existing sites, such as improvements to the quality of sports pitches, and innovative approaches to new facilities such as creating safe jogging routes or using roof space. In the villages open space is often focused on a recreation ground. These are typically owned and managed by Parish Councils, and they will play an important role in understanding the constraints and opportunities for enhancement. New communities and major developments offer the opportunity for a bespoke approach and will be expected to include a range of accessible open spaces and facilities.

Open spaces not only help support the health, social and cultural well-being of local communities but also help support strategies to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change. This means all future open spaces, where possible will need to be high quality and low maintenance. They will need to maximise their ability to support area-wide strategies, to create and maintain healthy, resilient communities. They should be designed to take account of other relevant strategies, such those supporting biodiversity and mitigating climate change and implement these, where possible to nurture the area's overall sustainability.

8.2 Policy Context

National Context

The Government recently created the [Office for Health Promotion](#) with the intention of leading national efforts to improve and level up the health of the nation by tackling obesity, improving mental health and promoting physical activity. The new Office will enable more joined-up, sustained action between national and local government, the NHS and cross-government, where much of the wider determinants of health sit.

As well as improving public health, greenspaces also have wider environmental benefits such as increasing opportunities for wildlife, reducing the impacts of air and noise pollution, absorbing excessive rainfall helping to reduce the risk of flooding. They can also play a major role in combatting the impacts of climate change by absorbing carbon emissions and reducing temperatures by providing shade.

The importance of greenspace has also been recognised within the UK Government's '[25-year plan to improve the environment](#)' which acknowledge the essential role that the natural environment and greenspaces play in people's physical and mental health. The report states its aims are to improve population health and wellbeing by forging a closer connection between people and the natural environment.

Public Health England (PHE), has also highlighted how important greenspaces are to its work particularly with regards to avoidance of diseases associated with inactivity, combatting mental health issues and the restorative benefits contact with greenspaces can have. To this effect, in 2020 PHE released a report entitled, '[Improving access to greenspace – A new review for 2020](#)'.

This report highlights how greenspace, such as parks, woodland, fields and allotments as well as introduced natural elements such as green walls, roofs and incidental vegetation, are increasingly being recognised as an important asset for supporting health and wellbeing. Using these natural assets, can help local authorities address local issues that they face, including improving the wider aspects of health and wellbeing.

Paragraph 92 of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (2021) explains how the planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places. The should a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other; b) are safe and accessible, and include high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, including identified local health and well-being needs, examples include the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

Paragraph 93 explains how planning policies and decisions should provide social, recreational, and cultural facilities including services needed by the community. It includes the need for: (a) local authorities to plan positively for the provision of community facilities such as meeting places, sports venues, open space and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments; and (b) take account of, and supporting the delivery of local strategies to improve the health, social and cultural well-being of all sections of the community.

Paragraph 98 highlights the importance of providing access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity for the health and well-being of communities. It recommends the need for planning policies to be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport, and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.

Paragraph 99 states open spaces should not be built on unless one of three exceptions can be satisfied. These exceptions are as follows: the land is surplus to requirements; the loss can be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision.

Paragraph 100 advises planning policies and decisions to protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.

Paragraphs 101, 102 and 103 explains what is meant by a Local Green Space designation. They are important spaces communities may want to identify and protect through either local or neighbourhood plans. These designations should be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period. The green space should be: in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance; and local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.

Planning Policy Guidance provides a series of notes about healthy communities explaining its importance in sustainable communities and advising on how it should be integrated with other uses/strategies. Positive planning can make a significant contribution to creating a healthy community with the design and use of the built and natural environments, including green infrastructure. These are major determinants of health and wellbeing by creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles.

The Guidance explains how open spaces should be considered with the planning for new developments including how these may affect existing open space. Open space, which includes all open space of public value, can take many forms, from formal sports pitches to open areas within a development, linear corridors and country parks. It can provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby; have an ecological value and contribute to green infrastructure, as well as being an important part of the landscape and setting of built development, and an important component in the achievement of sustainable development. It is for local planning authorities to assess the need for open space and opportunities for new provision in their areas. These need assessments can refer to Sport England's guidance on how to complete these.

The Guidance defines a healthy place as one which supports and promotes healthy behaviours and environments and a reduction in health inequalities for people of all ages. It will provide the community with opportunities to improve their physical and mental health, and support community engagement and wellbeing. It is a place which is inclusive and promotes social interaction. It meets the needs of children and young people to grow and develop, as well as being adaptable to the needs of an increasingly elderly population and those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments.

Regional / Local Context

Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy

The [Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy](#) was designed to assist in shaping and co-ordinating the delivery of green infrastructure in the county, to provide social, environmental and economic benefits now and in the future.

This strategy is based on the analysis of public policy and key baseline data grouped into seven themes identified as important elements of green infrastructure, biodiversity, climate change, green infrastructure gateways, heritage, landscape, publicly accessible open space and rights of way. In addition, three cross-cutting/overarching issues were considered: economic development, health and well-being, and land and water management.

A 'Strategic Network' of green infrastructure priorities for Cambridgeshire was identified by mapping these themes and other important factors relating to green infrastructure to show where each theme is most important for green infrastructure in Cambridgeshire. It provides a county-wide framework upon which to provide or enhance green infrastructure in Cambridgeshire up to and beyond 2031. It is designed to offer county-wide connectivity, identify opportunities to support the delivery of the four objectives, and link into green infrastructure provision outside Cambridgeshire. It is this Strategic Network that identifies the need and the opportunities to provide additional provision.

Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping (Nov 2020)

A high quality and resilient natural environment is increasingly recognised as a 'must have', rather than 'nice to have'. It helps to mitigate and adapt to climate change, to conserve and enhance biodiversity, to improve health and wellbeing, whilst restoring and maintaining local distinctiveness. The declaration of emissions targets and a climate emergency by both Councils, as well as the 'doubling nature vision', have increased the importance of these issues locally.

The [Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping](#) study assessed Green Infrastructure assets both individually and collectively using a series of thematic maps to provide an indication of how the network is functioning against these GI themes. A desk-based review was undertaken of the non-development related risks posed by climate change, water stress, pests and diseases. Specific consideration was given to the vulnerability of international and national designated sites to recreational pressures, predicted population change and the current condition of Greater Cambridge's lowland peat resource. The desk-based assessment was supported by additional stakeholder engagement comprising an online survey and a series of technical stakeholder workshops.

The study provides maps of the individual GI theme broad opportunity zones as well as a cumulative view of all of the broad opportunity zones. The cumulative view shows the areas where GI interventions might deliver a number of ecosystem services and related benefits. These broad enhancement zones will be refined in the next stage of this study. Whilst there are locations where enhancement or creation of GI assets to support a single function will be important (for example biodiversity), it is anticipated that the areas where multiple opportunity zones overlap will inform the priority areas of search for more specific, deliverable GI project opportunities.

The mapping highlights river corridors as key areas where GI interventions could result in multiple benefits. There are large areas of multi-theme opportunity to the south east and south of Cambridge. North east of Cambridge presents multiple opportunities as do areas west of Cambridge around Bourn and Kingston. Opportunities associated with the northern fens, washes and wetlands feature in multiple themes.

Adopted Local Plans

The adopted Cambridge Local Plan (October 2018) includes Policy 68: Protection of open space. This policy requires all residential development to contribute to the provision of open space and recreation sites/facilities on-site, based upon the Open Space and Recreation Standards listed in Appendix I and regard to the Council's adopted Open Space and Recreation Strategy, Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sports Facility Strategy.

The adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) includes: Policy SC/1: Allocation for Open Space and Policy SC/7: Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments.

SC/1: Allocation for Open Space lists both existing and new sites that are allocated to meet local need for open space.

SC/7: Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments requires all housing developments to contribute towards outdoor playing space and informal open space to meet the need generated by the development in accordance with the standards listed in the policy. Where appropriate, provision will be on-site integrated into the development and to maximise the health and wellbeing of new residents.

8.3 Consultation and Engagement

Some of the key feedback received during the First Conversation consultation included views that development should contribute to open space and green infrastructure in and beyond development sites. We should create public spaces for social interaction, that are accessible and safe for people of all ages and abilities, and well connected by walking and cycling routes.

Our plans should promote healthy lifestyles, including access to areas for growing food and caring for the natural environment. We should promote outdoor activities, including by creating all-weather exercise areas. We should also consider access to more natural areas, including separate areas which specifically support wildlife.

In late 2020, a series of workshops were held following the publication of initial evidence base reports, commissioned to help shape the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan. As part of the discussion, it was mentioned that densification risks green space being lost in urban areas and that Cambridge cannot deliver higher density. On the subject of the Green Belt, it was acknowledged that people value open green space.

8.4 Evidence Base

South Cambridgeshire Healthy Communities objectives for Northstowe Area Action Plan, 2007

The [Northstowe Area Action Plan](#) makes reference to the Community Strategy's vision which is split into 6 aims one of which is to provide 'Active, Safe and Healthy Communities where residents can play a full part in community life, with a structure of thriving voluntary and community organisations.

One of the development principles is to ensure that the town of Northstowe will be developed as a balanced, viable and socially inclusive community where people can live in a healthy and safe environment, and where most of their learning needs are met.

Policy NS/19 Public Open Space and Sports Provision states that Northstowe's residents should be able to find that their sport, leisure and recreational needs are met locally so that they can lead a healthy lifestyle and enjoy a high quality of life and leisure time. The policy also states that recreational facilities and associated landscaping will be delivered early within the development such that the needs of the development are met at all times.

South Cambridgeshire Open Space in New Developments Supplementary Planning Document

The South Cambridgeshire [Open Space in New Developments](#) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) formed part of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF). The SPD expands on open space policies in the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD), adopted in July 2007, and provides additional details on how they will be implemented. Policies seek to ensure that provision of open space is addressed comprehensively to meet the needs of all new developments. Where provision cannot be made on site, off site

contributions are now sought to enable improvements to the quantity and quality of facilities in the locality.

South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Development Framework - Health Impact Assessment - Supplementary Planning Document, Adopted March 2011

The [Health Impact Assessment SPD](#) is a material consideration. For major developments, a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is required to be submitted alongside any planning application to demonstrate that the potential impacts on health have been considered at the planning and design stage.

The document provides advice and guidance on the preparation of Health Impact Assessments including the steps involved in the process and details of what should be included in the HIA to demonstrate that any health-related impacts have been fully considered.

The extract below identifies an example of a health determinant checklist. This particular list has been adapted from 'Watch out for health – a guide to healthy sustainable communities' (HUDU) (12) Healthy Lifestyles – Does the development proposal encourage and promote:

- Healthy exercise
- Opportunities for play and exercise
- Open spaces
- Green space and parks
- Playing fields
- Manage parks and spaces for everyone
- Green space within 15 minutes from any home

Open Space and Recreation Strategy for Cambridge City Council

Cambridge City Council produced the [Open Space and Recreation Strategy](#) (OSRS) 2011 to support the plan-making process. The 2011 strategy reassessed open spaces within the city, which were considered as a part of the previous strategy, evaluated a range of additional sites and included a new quality assessment of all sites surveyed. The 2011 OSRS assessed open spaces across the city for their environmental and recreational importance and subsequent protected from new development. It also assessed each city ward and concluded how future development could best support open space requirements based upon local circumstance.

South Cambridgeshire Recreation and open space study (July 2013)

The [Recreation and Open Space Study July 2013](#) investigated the quantity and quality of recreation and open space provision in the district, how this is meeting local need, and reviews the standards for open space necessary to ensure that new spaces are provided to meet the needs that have been generated by new development.

Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sports Facility Strategy for Greater Cambridge

Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, in partnership with Sport England, developed two sports strategies: a [Playing Pitch Strategy 2015-2031](#) for grass and all-weather pitches covering both areas; and an [Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2015-2031](#) to guide future provision and management of indoor sports halls, swimming pools and outdoor cycling facilities to serve existing and new communities in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.

These strategies assessed existing facilities, the future need for sport and active recreation facilities, and opportunities for new provision. The Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sports Facility Strategy take into account planned growth to 2031. These will be updated to support the growth at both North East Cambridge and the proposed growth anticipated in the new Joint Local Plan for Greater Cambridge. These documents have the purpose of identifying strategic sports facilities such as full-size artificial grass pitches and sports halls.

Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping (Nov 2020)

A high quality and resilient natural environment is increasingly recognised as a ‘must have’, rather than ‘nice to have’. It helps to mitigate and adapt to climate change, to conserve and enhance biodiversity, to improve health and wellbeing, whilst restoring and maintaining local distinctiveness. The declaration of emissions targets and a climate emergency by both Councils, as well as the ‘doubling nature vision’, have increased the importance of these issues locally.

The [Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping](#) study assessed Green Infrastructure assets both individually and collectively using a series of thematic maps to provide an indication of how the network is functioning against these GI themes. A desk-based review was undertaken of the non-development related risks posed by climate change, water stress, pests and diseases. Specific consideration was given to the vulnerability of international and national designated sites to recreational pressures, predicted population change and the current condition of Greater Cambridge’s lowland peat resource. The desk-based assessment was supported by additional stakeholder engagement comprising an online survey and a series of technical stakeholder workshops.

The study provides maps of the individual GI theme broad opportunity zones as well as a cumulative view of all of the broad opportunity zones. The cumulative view shows the areas where GI interventions might deliver a number of ecosystem services and related benefits. These broad enhancement zones will be refined in the next stage of this study. Whilst there are locations where enhancement or creation of GI assets to support a single function will be important (for example biodiversity), it is anticipated that the areas where multiple opportunity zones overlap will inform the priority areas of search for more specific, deliverable GI project opportunities.

The mapping highlights river corridors as key areas where GI interventions could result in multiple benefits. There are large areas of multi-theme opportunity to the south east and south of Cambridge. North east of Cambridge presents multiple opportunities as do areas west of Cambridge around Bourn and Kingston. Opportunities associated with the northern fens, washes and wetlands feature in multiple themes.

Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping Opportunity Part 2 Recommendations Report (2021)

Drawing on the Baseline evidence, the Opportunity Mapping Part 2 Recommendations Report (2021) identifies the following area-specific and dispersed strategic green infrastructure initiatives:

- 1: Revitalising the chalk stream network
- 2: Cam Valley Park
- 2A: Cam Valley Park (North East Cambridge to Waterbeach)
- 2B: Cam Valley Park (through Cambridge City)
- 2C: Cam Valley Park (south of Cambridge City)
- 3: Gog Magog Hills and chalkland fringe
- 4: Enhancement of the eastern fens
- 5: The Great Ouse fenland arc
- 6: A 'Green Lung' for North Cambridge
- 7: West Cambridge GI buffer - Coton Corridor
- 8: Western gateway multifunctional GI corridor
- 9: Woodland expansion and resilience
- 10: Expanding Greater Cambridge's 'urban forest'
- 11: Pollinator corridors
- 12: Urban greening and 'de-paving'
- 13: Allotments and community gardening
- 14: Environmentally friendly farming

8.5 Proposed Policy Approach and Reasons

The Proposed Policy Direction

The proposed policy direction, as set out in the First Proposals report is as follows: Open space and recreation provision will be required to be provided by new development, appropriate to the scale and location of the development. Provision will be onsite where appropriate, if not financial contributions will be sought to help improve off site facilities. This includes space for sports pitches, play space for children and teenagers, and more informal spaces, such as for dog walking. Allotments and other community food growing opportunities such as community orchards will also be sought. It is also important that green spaces are multi-functional where possible.

The type of provision sought will be guided by the needs and opportunities of the local area. This will vary across Greater Cambridge, requiring tailored solutions to individual locations.

The Councils have adopted open space standards, set out in their current local plans. These establish the quantity and accessibility of open space that should be provided, when it should be on site or is used to guide the scale of financial contribution required, guided by local opportunities and constraints.

These standards are different for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, reflecting the differences between the City with its urban character and formal parks for example, and the more rural environment of the villages. A review of the standards will be carried out to inform the draft plan to ensure they are up to date.

Reasons for the Proposed Policy Direction

It is important that a broad range of sports and recreational open spaces are provided and accessible in both new and existing communities, to create and maintain socially cohesive and healthy communities. These facilities and places need to maximise their accessibility for all and cater for age groups and abilities. While more active people may be attracted to sports activities others may prefer to participate in more relaxing pursuits such as socialising in a local park or growing their own food. Where practical, these spaces should be multi-functional and multi-seasonal, to maximise their utility and allow people to lead healthy, active lifestyles throughout the year not just when it is fair weather. These spaces can also provide valuable spaces for community activities and events which can increase opportunities for people to socialise with people they might otherwise not meet.

In addition to these spaces improving human health, they can provide opportunities to support area-wide strategies to improve biodiversity, canopy cover and help to assist with climate change strategies by reducing local heat islands in urban areas.

The policy will support the delivery of large-scale green spaces which may also include water spaces, in order to provide a range of benefits in one location such as providing recreation space, providing habitats for wildlife, reducing heat island effects and reducing flood risk. This means that it is vital new residential developments and large employment area provide open spaces to support their growth, in either a rural or urban settings.

The varied nature of the area means that tailored solutions will be required. In Cambridge, urban areas may require investment in existing sites, such as improvements to the quality of sports pitches, and innovative approaches to new facilities such as creating safe jogging routes or using roof space. In the villages open space is often focused on a recreation ground. These are typically owned and managed by Parish Councils, and they will play an important role in understanding the constraints and opportunities for enhancement. New communities and major developments offer the opportunity for a bespoke approach and will be expected to include a range of accessible open spaces and facilities.

At the moment, there are two set of open space standards for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire reflecting their traditional urban and rural character, respectively. However, many of Cambridge's urban extensions, including the proposed development at North East Cambridge straddle the boundaries with South Cambridgeshire which now includes two new towns, Cambourne and Northstowe, that are much more urban, in nature when compared to the rest of the district.

It is therefore proposed to review the area's open space standards, to reflect changes since they were last updated and to inform the draft local plan stage.

Alternative approaches, and reasons why they were rejected

Alternative approaches considered were:

No policy – Not considered a reasonable alternative as this would not plan positively for the provision of open space, which is required by national planning policy, and an important part of the vision for the area.

8.6 Further Work and Next Steps

Open Space and Recreation Strategy

Open space evidence will be updated to inform the draft Local Plan stage. This will include reviewing the Cambridge City Council produced the Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2011, and the South Cambridgeshire Recreation study 2013.

This will take account of those sites previously assessed and new sites delivered since the previous assessments, this will include sites including those which adjoin the

fringes of Cambridge, south of the A14, such as Orchard Park and east of the M11 such as Eddington and Trumpington Meadows.

Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sports Facility Strategy for Greater Cambridge

The Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sports Facility Strategy take into account planned growth to 2031. These documents have the purpose of identifying strategic sports facilities such as full-size artificial grass pitches and sports halls. They will be updated in 2021/22.

Appendix 1: First Conversation Feedback

This section of the topic paper provides a summary of the feedback from the First Conversation related to this theme, and how comments have been taken into account. A report on the consultation, and full details of the comments received can be found on the [Greater Cambridge Planning website](#).

Q12. How should the Local Plan help us improve the natural environment?

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Water supply and management	Give greater priority to the impact of development on watercourses.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green Spaces and Climate Change sections of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to rivers and watercourses
Water supply and management	Address water supply and management.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to water supply and management
Water supply and management	Create new water bodies.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to water supply and management, however the creation of new water bodies is outside the scope of the plan and sits more with the water regulatory bodies.
Water supply and management	Identify an alternative/additional source of public water supply to reduce reliance on the chalk aquifer, such as piping in water from outside the plan area.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to water supply and management

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Water supply and management	Minimise use of water from the chalk aquifer.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to water supply and management
Water supply and management	Tackle decreasing water resources and pressure on the natural environment in the Integrated Water Study.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to water supply and management
Water supply and management	Take account of the River Cam Manifesto 2019.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to water supply and management
Water supply and management	Acknowledge the role of the River Cam in the three objectives of sustainable development.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to water supply and management
Water supply and management	Increase water quality.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to water supply and management
Water supply and management	Identify opportunities for strategic projects to increase water storage.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to water supply and management
Water supply and management	Consider local designations for water bodies.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to water supply and management

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Water supply and management	All new development to have the highest standards of water efficiency.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to water efficiency measures
Water supply and management	Improve grey water management.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to water supply and management
Water supply and management	Protect the River Cam tributaries from over abstraction and enable them to adapt to climate change.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to water supply and management
Flooding	Create natural SuDS lakes.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to SUDS and floodwater management
Renewable energy	Support renewable energy.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to renewable energy projects
Retrofitting	Support retrofitting.	Noted, the Great Places section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach retrofitting where planning policy can be effective, however many elements of retrofitting are out of the scope of policy making and are more in the remit of building regulations

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Recycling	Support local recycling.	Noted, the Climate Change section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approach to waste and recycling.
Planning application requirements / documents	Require detailed statements from developers on mitigation and improvement to the natural environment.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green Spaces section of the preferred options document sets out the proposed policy approaches water supply and management begins to suggest policy approaches.
Water supply and management	Consider the restoration of mineral extraction sites as part of green infrastructure assessments.	Noted. However restoration of minerals and waste sites is within the remit of the County Council through the Minerals and Waste Plan
Water supply and management	Address accessible green space deficit through the preparation of a biodiversity and green infrastructure enhancement strategy.	Noted, connectivity of habitats have been explored by our Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project which has informed the development of policy proposals.
Water supply and management	Reference the role of green infrastructure in enhancing and conserving the historic environment and the heritage interest of landscape parks and open space.	Noted, open spaces have an important role to play in a number of the local plan themes, including the creation of great places.
Water supply and management	Place more emphasis on the relationship between development and existing green infrastructure.	Noted, as a key theme of the plan is hoped this important relationship has been emphasised.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Water supply and management	Create and maintain a green infrastructure network, linking green spaces in towns or historic spaces, and connecting villages with green corridors.	Noted, connectivity of habitats have been explored by our Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project which has informed the development of policy proposals.
Water supply and management	Increase green infrastructure connectivity.	Noted, connectivity of habitats have been explored by our Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project which has informed the development of policy proposals.
Water supply and management	Create a local ecological network linking with Habitat Opportunities Mapping.	Noted, connectivity of habitats have been explored by our Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project which has informed the development of policy proposals.
Water supply and management	Development of the Cambridge airport must include nature corridors to link together Cherry Hinton Lakes, Coldhams Common, Wilbraham Fen, and Wicken Fen 100 Year Vision.	Noted, proposals for the airport site will need to include green infrastructure.
Water supply and management	Create a strategic green infrastructure network.	Noted, connectivity of habitats have been explored by our Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project which has informed the development of policy proposals.
Water supply and management	Adopt a strategic approach for improving the natural environment.	Noted, a Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project has informed the development of policy proposals.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Water supply and management	Undertake a strategic biodiversity audit to identify biodiversity resources and areas for improvement.	Noted, a Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project has informed the development of policy proposals.
Water supply and management	Work with Huntingdonshire District Council through the Cambridgeshire Local Nature Partnership on strategic cross-boundary nature improvement projects and engage on proposals affecting the Cambridgeshire Hundreds and the small woodlands bordering South Cambridgeshire.	Noted, through the Green Infrastructure Opportunities mapping the councils have sought to engage with partners, including the local nature partnership.
Water supply and management	Support the Natural Capital Plan for Ox-Cam Arc.	Noted, the plan seeks to support environmental principles being established through the ARC.
Water supply and management	Improve green infrastructure networks which span across authorities.	Noted, connectivity of habitats have been explored by our Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project which has informed the development of policy proposals.
Water supply and management	Employ environmental or ecology consultants to maintain and restore green spaces alongside new development.	Noted, the plan has been informed by input from in house ecology officers, as well as evidence commissioned to inform the plan.
Water supply and management	New green spaces should focus on biodiversity instead of amenity.	Noted, open space and green infrastructure will need to include space for people to use and visit, but also spaces reserved for biodiversity.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Water supply and management	Retain the green spaces connecting rural and urban areas, ensuring they are suitable for wildlife.	Noted, connectivity of habitats have been explored by our Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project which has informed the development of policy proposals.
Water supply and management	Require all new residential developments to include green spaces, including trees, equal to the built-on footprint.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. This will be tested using approved metrics.
Water supply and management	Provide blue space.	Noted, space for water will be important, and is recognised in the requirement for developments to be supported by substantiable drainage systems which have potential to deliver a range of benefits.
Water supply and management	Development proposals should include recreation areas.	Noted. The Local Plan will require recreation to be provided or enhanced to support new developments.
Water supply and management	Create accessible multifunctional public open space.	Noted. The Local Plan will require recreation to be provided or enhanced to support new developments.
Water supply and management	Produce an Open Spaces Strategy with CABI and the Design Council.	Noted. The Local Plan will require recreation to be provided or enhanced to support new developments. Open spaces standards are being reviewed, and will be published at the draft local plan stage.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Water supply and management	Review the criteria for designating Protected Open Space to include a set of requirements which considers more the nature and quality of the open space, ensuring there is not a blanket approach to protecting open space	Note. Open space policies in the new Local Plan will continue to seek to protect open space. The preferred options consultation provides opportunities to comment on the approach.
Water supply and management	All development should provide garden space or an allotment site and contribute to a communal green space.	Noted, policies will seek to ensure developments are supported by open space. Allotments and community gardening has been recognised as one of the priority green infrastructure projects.
Water supply and management	Protect existing green infrastructure, including gardens, wildlife habitats green space, nature reserves, wild areas, field hedges, nature corridors and trees.	Noted, policy proposals seek to protect international, nationally and locally designated sites, and they will be identified on the policies map which will accompany the local plan.
Water supply and management	Protect rivers and surrounding areas from damaging activity and development.	Noted, a specific policy is proposed to address river corridors.
Water supply and management	Encourage farmers to plant hedgerows and plant wild flowers on grass verges.	Noted, green infrastructure schemes are likely to include a wide variety of measures, and we will work with partners to support biodiversity improvements.
Water supply and management	Encourage landowners to rewild and manage habitats.	Noted, green infrastructure schemes are likely to include a wide variety of measures, and we will work with partners to support biodiversity improvements.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Water supply and management	Support rewilding.	Noted, green infrastructure schemes are likely to include a wide variety of measures, and we will work with partners to support biodiversity improvements.
Water supply and management	Support hedge planting targets.	Noted, green infrastructure schemes are likely to include a wide variety of measures, and we will work with partners to support biodiversity improvements.
Water supply and management	Plant native species, compatible with a warm climate.	Noted, policy proposals seek to ensure developments are adapted to climate change and this will include using drought tolerant species.
Water supply and management	Support wild verges.	Noted, green infrastructure schemes are likely to include a wide variety of measures, and we will work with partners to support biodiversity improvements.
Water supply and management	Support urban greening requirements.	Noted, an urban greening factor in the policy is not the preferred approach, as we think that measurement of Biodiversity Net Gain and Urban Greening via a metric-based assessment systems would be likely to overlap, making it overly complex to run two of these concurrently. The Plan does though require urban greening measures (see BG/TC, CC/DC and CC/FM).
Water supply and management	Establish minimum standards for different habitat and vegetation types.	Noted, minimum standards will be established through the requirement to deliver biodiversity net gain.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Tree planning and protection	Provide protection for ancient woodland, ancient/veteran trees, mature trees and other existing trees.	Noted, the first proposals includes a policy setting out the approach to trees.
Tree planning and protection	Development proposals should demonstrate they can cope with the roots of mature trees and hedges.	Noted, the first proposals includes a policy setting out the approach to trees.
Tree planning and protection	Promote the maintenance and protection of existing trees and tree planting on private land.	Noted, the first proposals includes a policy setting out the approach to trees.
Tree planning and protection	Do not cut trees to widen roads.	Noted, the first proposals includes a policy setting out the approach to trees.
Tree planning and protection	Replace all hedgerows and trees removed during road works.	Noted, the first proposals includes a policy setting out the approach to trees.
Tree planning and protection	Support dispersed, mature tree planting.	Noted, the first proposals includes a policy setting out the approach to trees.
Tree planning and protection	Plant avenues of trees, plant hedges and trees along highways, plant trees on Council land, encourage landowners to plant woodland and hedges.	Noted, the first proposals includes a policy setting out the approach to trees.
Tree planning and protection	Create woodland around Cambridge.	Noted, the green infrastructure projects identified in the first proposals include woodland areas.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Tree planning and protection	Replant forests and support farmers in reforestation.	Noted, the green infrastructure projects identified in the first proposals include woodland areas.
Tree planning and protection	New and existing development must provide an increase of 20% tree cover.	Noted, although specific tree target was not considered appropriate as it could impact on wider biodiversity goals.
Tree planning and protection	Encourage community forestry.	Noted, green infrastructure schemes are likely to include a wide variety of measures, and we will work with partners to support biodiversity improvements.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Support nature-friendly management of new development.	Noted, the first proposals provides policy approaches regarding biodiversity and green infrastructure. A range of detailed points have been raised in comments which could form part of site specific proposals, or design guidance.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Establish a network of nature reserves.	Noted, a Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project has informed the development of policy proposals.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Improve the natural environment by designating areas for improvement.	Noted, a Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project has informed the development of policy proposals.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Restore natural habitats.	Noted, a Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project has informed the development of policy proposals.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Biodiversity and nature protection	Restore natural ecosystems, fens and peat bogs and soils.	Noted, a Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project has informed the development of policy proposals.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Initiate a Cambridge-based Nature Recovery Network.	Noted, a Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project has informed the development of policy proposals.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Make hedgehog holes in fences compulsory.	Noted, a range of measures will be used as part of achieving on site biodiversity gains.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Require bird boxes in new development.	Noted, a range of measures will be used as part of achieving on site biodiversity gains.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Public spaces, and health and community services to incorporate wildlife friendly features.	Noted, the first proposals provides policy approaches regarding biodiversity and green infrastructure. A range of detailed points have been raised in comments which could form part of site specific proposals, or design guidance.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Make parks suitable for wildlife.	Noted, the first proposals provides policy approaches regarding biodiversity and green infrastructure. A range of detailed points have been raised in comments which could form part of site specific proposals, or design guidance.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Biodiversity and nature protection	Build wildlife bridges.	Noted, the first proposals provides policy approaches regarding biodiversity and green infrastructure. A range of detailed points have been raised in comments which could form part of site specific proposals, or design guidance.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Set short and long term targets including biodiversity monitoring.	Noted, when the plan is drafted it will include monitoring proposals, and a monitoring report is produced annually.
Biodiversity and nature protection	All new development must have a biodiversity plan.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Only permit development where a surveying exercise of the site's biodiversity has determined no net loss of biodiversity and wildlife will ensue from the proposal.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Develop low biodiverse land instead of biodiverse areas.	Noted, the plan has sought to focus development on brownfield land where it is suitable and available.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Encourage biodiversity in Green Belt and protected land.	Noted, the plan will support biodiversity enhancement in the green belt.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Biodiversity and nature protection	New development in villages should not remove important rural spaces and should maintain connectivity for wildlife.	Noted, the plan will seek to protect important open spaces in villages.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Ensure natural environment improvements do not produce harmful impacts.	Noted, the plan will seek to achieve this.
Biodiversity and nature protection	Protect the natural environment.	Noted, the plan will seek to achieve this.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Biodiversity and nature protection	Protect and enhance existing open spaces, including the River Cam corridor, Byron's Pool/Trumpington Meadows Country Park, the Vicar's Brook corridor, Hobson's Park, Nine Wells; and enhance the value of local areas, including the green corridor between Trumpington Meadows, Hauxton Road and the M11, the land to the south of Addenbrooke's Road, between the M11 and the west side of Shelford Road, land to the west of Trumpington Road, from Trumpington village to Latham Road, to the south of Addenbrooke's Road, between the east side of Shelford Road and Granham's Road and land to the south east of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus, including White Hill towards Granham's Road and the approaches to Magog Down.	Noted, consideration of biodiversity impacts will be an important element of plan making including the site assessment process.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Biodiversity and nature protection	Provide policies for the unambiguous protection of designated nature conservation areas within the Greater Cambridge area, to include the Natura 2000, SSSI and County Wildlife Sites.	Noted, policy proposals seek to protect international, nationally and locally designated sites, and they will be identified on the policies map which will accompany the local plan.
Biodiversity net gain	Apply the doubling of nature to water, rivers and associated biodiversity.	Noted, a number of the green infrastructure initiatives identified relate to the water environment.
Biodiversity net gain	Support flexible net gain biodiversity policy which supports off-site net gain.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. Offsite contributions have potential to be pooled towards green infrastructure projects. The approach seeks delivery on site where possible, and then offsite.
Biodiversity net gain	Require smaller developments to deliver biodiversity net gain through developer contributions in a separate policy given the status of an SPD.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain.
Biodiversity net gain	Prioritise biodiversity net gain.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. Offsite contributions have potential to be pooled towards green infrastructure projects

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Biodiversity net gain	Support a net gain in green spaces and wildlife.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. Offsite contributions have potential to be pooled towards green infrastructure projects
Biodiversity net gain	Net gain should be genuine gain.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. This will be tested using approved metrics.
Biodiversity net gain	All new development should achieve a measurable 20% or 16% net gain in biodiversity.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. Offsite contributions have potential to be pooled towards green infrastructure projects
Habitat creation and enhancement	Require all new residential developments to include ponds, to encourage amphibians and insects that require fresh water.	Through the requirement for sustainable drainage system there are likely to be opportunities for new areas of blue infrastructure. Ponds could also be part of site specific biodiversity enhancement solutions.
Habitat creation and enhancement	Create extensive wetland habitats.	Noted, wetland areas are likely to form part of a number of the green infrastructure initiatives.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Habitat creation and enhancement	Identify existing nature sites for enhancement, potential areas for habitat creation, and habitat corridors that will create an ecological network in a green infrastructure SPD, produce the SPD in coordination with neighbouring authorities and key partners.	Noted, connectivity of habitats have been explored by our Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project which has informed the development of policy proposals.
Habitat creation and enhancement	Produce a biodiversity enhancement strategy.	Noted, connectivity of habitats have been explored by our Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project which has informed the development of policy proposals.
Habitat creation and enhancement	Provide bee habitats.	Noted, the first proposals provides policy approaches regarding biodiversity and green infrastructure. A range of detailed points have been raised in comments which could form part of site specific proposals, or design guidance.
Habitat creation and enhancement	Require development to provide or enhance a specified amount of habitat for indigenous species.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. This will be tested using approved metrics.
Habitat creation and enhancement	Require animal habitat enhancement or creation for every planning application.	Noted, requirements for green infrastructure and open space have been proposed.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Habitat creation and enhancement	Investigate how existing green space and habitats can be made more accessible.	Noted, design policies seek to ensure that places are created to be accessible.
Habitat creation and enhancement	Make green spaces accessible, provide wheelchair accessible routes in natural areas and raised beds in allotments.	Noted, design policies seek to ensure that places are created to be accessible.
Habitat creation and enhancement	Ensure access to nature, including green space green space.	Noted, requirements for green infrastructure and open space have been proposed.
Habitat creation and enhancement	Ensure public transport access to open space.	Noted, design policies seek to ensure that places are created to be accessible.
Habitat creation and enhancement	Leave some wildlife areas inaccessible.	Noted, open space and green infrastructure will need to include space for people to use and visit, but also spaces reserved for biodiversity.
Local Plan strategy	Prioritise the natural environment.	Noted, environmental issues are key to a number of the themes which have guided the plan.
Local Plan strategy	The environment should be the focus of the entire plan.	Noted, environmental issues are key to a number of the themes which have guided the plan.
Local Plan strategy	Support the existing approach to improving the natural environment.	Noted.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Local Plan strategy	Support a 'landscape first' approach to planning for development.	Noted, landscape considerations have played an important role in the site testing and selection process, and policy proposals seek to recognise the importance of landscape issues.
Local Plan strategy	All new development should be sustainable.	Noted, a range of policies are proposed which seek to achieve this goal.
Local Plan strategy	Work with the local farming community to protect agricultural land.	Noted, the farming community will have an important role in enhancing the green infrastructure network, the council will need to work with them to deliver many of the projects identified.
Local Plan strategy	Use RSPB Hope Farm as a model for mitigation management of farmland.	Noted, improvements to farm land are likely to play an important part in delivering the green infrastructure proposals that have been identified in the Green Infrastructure Opportunities project.
Local Plan strategy	Support new forms of agriculture beneficial for biodiversity.	Noted, although this will largely be beyond the scope of the local plan.
Local Plan strategy	Improve farmland	Noted, improvements to farm land are likely to play an important part in delivering the green infrastructure proposals that have been identified in the Green Infrastructure Opportunities project.
Local Plan strategy	Support and prioritise agroecological farming	Noted, although this will largely be beyond the scope of the local plan.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Sustainable design	Support green roofs and green walls.	Noted, green roofs and walls can be a successful part of responding to climate change and supporting biodiversity, but they will need to be appropriately located.
Sustainable design	Ensure all new development provides room for nature through design.	Noted. The Great Places policies place emphasis on nature as a key element of design consideration and providing space for it.
Sustainable design	Support high quality housing.	Noted. The preferred option seeks to ensure all housing delivered in the plan period are well designed. The preferred option includes a draft policy under the theme of Great Places that seeks to ensure housing design quality.
Local Plan policy approach	Include a policy protecting sites with biodiversity value, including Nine Wells and Hobson's Brook.	Noted, policies will seek to protect important biodiversity sites.
Local Plan policy approach	Include a policy requiring developments within the Aerodrome Safeguarding Zone to be subject to consultation with IWM.	Noted, this has been addressed in the infrastructure theme.
Local Plan policy approach	Recognise the hierarchy of international, nationally and locally designated sites across Greater Cambridge in a biodiversity policy and accompany this with a map of the existing ecological network and enhancement opportunity areas.	Noted, policy proposals seek to protect international, nationally and locally designated sites, and they will be identified on the policies map which will accompany the local plan.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Local Plan policy approach	Support small businesses contributing to the carbon neutral transition.	Noted, the First Proposals includes a range of policies which will seek to support local business.
Local Plan policy approach	Create more local jobs.	Noted, the First Proposals includes a range of policies which will seek to support local employment opportunities.
Reducing car use	Reclaim existing roads for green infrastructure, green corridors and cycling infrastructure.	Noted, this is primarily an issue for the local highway authority.
Reducing car use	Consider car free zones in new developments.	Noted. Car free low or levels of parking may be appropriate in certain circumstances, where travel alternatives are available. Approaches to parking are included in the infrastructure theme.
Reducing car use	Reduce traffic.	Noted, the strategy topic paper details how the availability of sustainable transport opportunities has influenced the development strategy proposed in the First Proposals.
Sustainable transport	Transition to hybrid or electric buses.	Noted, this is beyond the scope of plan, but is being explored by the local transport authority.
Sustainable transport	Improve public transport	Noted, policies in the infrastructure theme would require developments to support sustainable travel.
Sustainable transport	Increase the affordability of public transport.	Noted, this is beyond the scope of the local plan.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Sustainable transport	Encourage active travel.	Noted, the strategy topic paper details how the availability of sustainable transport opportunities has influenced the development strategy proposed in the First Proposals.
Sustainable transport	Provide and improve cycle paths, paving major routes with smoothly and minor routes with less impactful surfaces.	Noted, policy proposals seek to ensure developments are supported by walking and cycling networks.
Sustainable transport	Improve the safety of walking and cycling routes.	Noted, policy proposals seek to ensure developments are supported by walking and cycling networks.
Development contributions	Ensure development contributions are adequate for delivery of required new infrastructure.	Noted, the local plan will be supported by an infrastructure delivery plan which will identify what infrastructure is required, when it is needed and how it will be funded.
Opposition to development	Do not support development on the banks of the River Cam, land that feeds the aquifer, in areas of water stress or vulnerable ecologies around chalk streams.	Noted, the green infrastructure and biodiversity theme includes a policy that would ensure river corridors are properly considered in planning decisions.
Opposition to development	Do not support development in the countryside and Green Belt.	Noted, a range of options have been considered when identifying the preferred development strategy, recognising the importance of the green belt. More information can be found in the strategy topic paper.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Opposition to development	Do not support development on greenfield land.	Noted. Use of previously developed land is an important factor, but the plan has to balance a range of issues. Through the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment opportunities for brownfield development have been considered. The development strategy proposed in the preferred options has considered brownfield land opportunities alongside a range of other factors. The allocations proposed in the preferred options report include some major brownfield sites, but also some greenfield sites.
Opposition to development	Do not support development which impacts green infrastructure networks.	Noted. Informed by a green infrastructure evidence base, policy BG/GI: Green infrastructure identifies the existing green infrastructure network and the strategic initiatives intended to enhance it and addresses how development proposals should relate to green infrastructure.
Opposition to development	Do not build on flood plains.	Noted, a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been commissioned to inform the Local Plan. Developments will also be required to include sustainable drainage systems to manage water effectively.
Empty homes	Minimise empty properties.	Noted, the councils housing teams seek to address empty properties.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Growth strategy	Support densification.	Noted, the Councils have considered a range of strategy options and a large number of sites before determining the preferred approach to the development strategy. Further information on the reasoning behind the preferred approach can be found in the strategy topic paper.
Growth strategy	Support brownfield development.	Noted. Use of previously developed land is an important factor, but the plan has to balance a range of issues. Through the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment opportunities for brownfield development have been considered. The development strategy proposed in the preferred options has considered brownfield land opportunities alongside a range of other factors. The allocations proposed in the preferred options report include some major brownfield sites, but also some greenfield sites.
Growth strategy	Support development of small, medium and large-scale sites.	Noted, the Councils have considered a range of strategy options and a large number of sites before determining the preferred approach to the development strategy. Further information on the reasoning behind the preferred approach can be found in the strategy topic paper.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Growth strategy	Support development which contributes to green and blue infrastructure, and on-site biodiversity net gain.	Noted, the plan proposes to seek biodiversity net gain and the delivery of green infrastructure.
Growth strategy	New development should be in sustainable locations.	Noted, in formulating the preferred strategy the councils have considered the sustainability merits of a range of options.
Growth strategy	New development should reflect existing densities and scales.	Noted, the housing theme proposes a policy approach to development densities which would recognise local character whilst seeking to make best use of land.
Growth strategy	Support Green Belt release.	Noted: A range of growth options has been considered in determining the growth strategy for the new Local Plan, including consideration of development in the green belt versus other options.

Q13 How do you think we should improve the green space network?

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Landscape initiatives	Support landscape initiatives including the Colleges' Backs Landscape Strategy.	Noted, opportunities for synergies by working with partners to enhance GI will be supported.
Biodiversity	All new development should achieve a measurable 20% net gain in biodiversity.	Noted, a requirement for 20% net gain is proposed in the Green Infrastructure theme.
Biodiversity	Support policies ensuring green spaces delivered alongside development are high quality and biodiverse.	Noted, a requirement for 20% net gain is proposed in the Green Infrastructure theme, and opportunities to enhance the green infrastructure network are identified.
Green space benefits	Require green space to provide health and wellbeing benefits.	Noted, the importance of green infrastructure to health is acknowledged.
Green space benefits	Highlight how green spaces are community assets.	Noted, the First Proposals highlights the importance of green spaces, and proposes their protection and enhancement.
Green space standards	Adopt a greenspace or woodland standard.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Green space standards	Consider the green space standards coming out of the Natural England GI Standards project and from Future Parks Accelerator	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.
Green space standards	Apply a condition for accessible green space provision for development above a set dwelling threshold.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.
Green space standards	New development should provide reasonable sized gardens.	Noted, the homes theme includes a proposal to require external space to be available to residential developments.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	New development should provide green spaces and plants.	Noted, a requirement for 20% net gain is proposed in the Green Infrastructure theme, and opportunities to enhance the green infrastructure network are identified.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Convert poor agricultural land to green space.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Provide local dog walking spaces, high quality and accessible playing fields, long grass and wildflower areas, dense scrub areas for birds and water bodies, leaving inaccessible edges.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Provide quiet undisturbed places in the green space network.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Provide wild green spaces away from development.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Create safe and welcoming parks.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Provide onsite green space through development and off site green space through contributions.	Noted, a requirement for 20% net gain is proposed in the Green Infrastructure theme, and opportunities to enhance the green infrastructure network are identified.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Require the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace, in some cases as off-site provision.	Noted, the Green infrastructure and Biodiversity theme refers to advice by natural England on this issue.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Provide green space.	Noted, green space will be required to support new developments.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Ensure that new green infrastructure is adapted and resilient to climate change.	Noted, policy proposals seek to ensure species are selected that enhance biodiversity through the use of native planting and/or species capable of adapting to our changing climate.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Assess the provision of green infrastructure by major new development in the evidence base.	Noted, the first proposals seek to secure the multifunctional benefits of open space, and provide clear plans for enhancing the green infrastructure network. This will include identifying opportunities in association with individual strategic developments.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Consider the contribution of development to green infrastructure.	Noted, a requirement for 20% net gain is proposed in the Green Infrastructure theme, and opportunities to enhance the green infrastructure network are identified.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Convert solid riverbanks to reeds and mud.	Noted, enhancement of chalk streams and rivers is identified as an important green infrastructure project.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Identify new wild areas away from development.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project acknowledges that some areas should focus on biodiversity rather than public access.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	All new development to provide green infrastructure.	Noted, a requirement for 20% net gain is proposed in the Green Infrastructure theme, and opportunities to enhance the green infrastructure network are identified.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Plan for multi-functional green space early on, rather than planning green space around proposed site layouts. Green space and SuDS proposals should be considered early in the planning process.	Noted, the first proposals seek to secure the multifunctional benefits of open space, and provide clear plans for enhancing the green infrastructure network.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Provide allotments in or near development.	Noted, food growing opportunities is identified as an important element of green infrastructure.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	All residents should live within a short distance of green spaces.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Provide accessible walking and cycling routes through and between green spaces and to residential neighbourhoods.	Noted, policies in the infrastructure theme seek to create highly connected places.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Distinguish between recreational and biodiversity green spaces.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project acknowledges that some areas should focus on biodiversity rather than public access.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Support development which connects with the existing green space network.	Noted, policies in the infrastructure theme seek to create highly connected places.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Ensure the green space network is protected, linked, accessible, inclusive, free of pollutants, comfortable and safe, possibly through modelling.	Noted, the first proposals includes detailed policy approaches regarding green infrastructure and the enhancement of open space.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Balance public access with the need for undisturbed natural habitats.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project acknowledges that some areas should focus on biodiversity rather than public access.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Support green links along public transport corridors and between existing communities.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Create connected new green spaces within strategic developments	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Deliver sufficient strategic natural green spaces and connect green spaces as part of the Cambridge based Nature Recovery Network.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Increase the accessibility and number of green corridors.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Promote landscape and biodiversity corridors.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Recognise the importance of wildlife corridors.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Recognise the role of private green spaces for wildlife corridors.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Support connectivity of wildlife corridors.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.
Green infrastructure / green space provision	Support green bridges.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space. In addition, open space standards will be reviewed to inform the draft local plan stage.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Strategic approach	Consider cross border linkages to increase leisure opportunities and to distribute the impact of tourism.	Noted, the councils are working with a range of stakeholders on green infrastructure, including through the local nature partnership, acknowledge that large scale green infrastructure can cross boundaries.
Strategic approach	Establish a strategic green infrastructure network plan, identifying opportunities for developments to contribute to enhancements beyond their boundary and through greening of developments to strengthen links across the urban fabric.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space.
Strategic approach	Plan strategically for a green space network with a green space strategy for open space and countryside in the plan area, provide large scale and connected green space, biodiverse rich areas.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space.
Strategic approach	Take a strategic approach to the management of green infrastructure.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Strategic approach	Consider cross-boundary opportunities to improve the green space network.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space.
Policy approach for green space	Take a flexible approach to green spaces.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space.
Policy approach for green space	Support proposed measures to improve the green space network in the Issues and Options Local Plan.	Noted.
Policy approach for green space	Support the current approach to the green space network.	Noted.
Opposition to development	Do not support development in back gardens.	Noted, the housing theme includes policy approaches which would seek to ensure that the impact of garden developments is fully considered.
Opposition to development	Do not support development of or near green space.	Noted, protection of open space is identified as a policy proposal in the biodiversity and green infrastructure theme.
Opposition to development	Do not support large-scale development.	Noted, whilst a number of developments are proposed they will be required to contribute towards enhancement of the green infrastructure network.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Opposition to development	Do not support greenfield development.	Noted, whilst the preferred development strategy focuses heavily on previously developed land, an element of green field development is considered appropriate.
Opposition to development	Encourage tree planting in all new development.	Noted, the Biodiversity and green infrastructure theme includes a policy approach that would seek to protect and enhance tree coverage.
Opposition to development	Provide woodland tree belts near villages.	Noted, the Biodiversity and green infrastructure theme includes a policy approach that would seek to protect and enhance tree coverage.
Opposition to development	Plant a ring or corridor forest around Cambridge.	Noted, a number of the projects identified in the Green Infrastructure Opportunities mapping would seek to enhance tree cover in the area.
Opposition to development	Plant trees and wildflowers on all green spaces.	Noted, the First Proposals consultation would require developments to achieve biodiversity net gain, and contribute to improvements to the green infrastructure network.
Opposition to development	Designate areas of urban forest, woodland and tree belts.	Noted, a number of the projects identified in the Green Infrastructure Opportunities mapping would seek to enhance tree cover in the area.
Opposition to development	Set a target for woodland creation and tree planting and reference the Cambridge Canopy Project in the new Local Plan.	Noted, policies are proposed which would control how development impacts tree canopy cover, the tree population, and protected trees and hedgerows.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Opposition to development	Set out strategic tree and hedgerow planting requirements based on location/ provision of habitat corridors rather than just number of trees, and consider the long-term management of existing and new tree stock, for their biodiversity interest and carbon storage opportunities.	Noted, a number of the projects identified in the Green Infrastructure Opportunities mapping would seek to enhance tree cover in the area.
Transport	Support permeable car park paving.	Noted, the climate change theme proposes to require integrated water management including through the use of SUDs
Transport	Convert pavements to permeable surfaces.	Noted, the climate change theme proposes to require integrated water management including through the use of SUDs
Transport	Encourage sustainable transport.	Noted, policy proposals in the infrastructure theme seek to support connected places and enable active travel.
Transport	Improve cycling and public transport.	Noted, policy proposals in the infrastructure theme seek to support connected places and enable active travel.
Transport	Provide a plan wide network of connected footpaths and cycleways between villages, Cambridge and key employment areas.	Noted, policy proposals in the infrastructure theme seek to support connected places and enable active travel.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Improving and maintaining green space	Improve and maintain the green space network, such as by planning for the long term and releasing Green Belt land.	Noted, release of green belt has been considered as part of the testing of the available development strategy options, but only limited releases are proposed.
Improving and maintaining green space	Improve the walkway near Sainsbury's on Brook Road.	Noted. Unless associated with a specific development this is likely to be beyond the scope of the plan.
Improving and maintaining green space	Ensure long term maintenance of green spaces.	Noted, ongoing maintenance will be an important issue, and will be considered in the infrastructure delivery plan which is being prepared to support the local plan.
Natural environment protection	Do not remove grass verges.	Noted, protection of open space is identified as a policy proposal in the biodiversity and green infrastructure theme.
Natural environment protection	Do not support interference and fragmentation of green space.	Noted, protection of open space is identified as a policy proposal in the biodiversity and green infrastructure theme.
Natural environment protection	Protect the green space network.	Noted, protection of open space is identified as a policy proposal in the biodiversity and green infrastructure theme.
Natural environment protection	Protect important green spaces including designated green space in Arbury from development.	Noted, protection of open space is identified as a policy proposal in the biodiversity and green infrastructure theme.
Natural environment protection	Use stronger policy wording for the protection of green spaces.	Noted, protection of open space is identified as a policy proposal in the biodiversity and green infrastructure theme.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Natural environment protection	Protect the Green Belt.	Noted, policies are proposed which would seek to protect and enhance the green belt.
Natural environment protection	Protect wild areas.	Noted, protection of open space is identified as a policy proposal in the biodiversity and green infrastructure theme.
Natural environment protection	Reverse the loss of insect life.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space.
Solar panels and green roofs	Put solar panels on all south facing roofs of public buildings and share the electricity with the community.	Noted, policies in the climate change theme would require homes to reach net zero carbon standards.
Solar panels and green roofs	All roofs without solar panels should be green roofs.	Noted, policies in the climate change theme seek designs which respond to climate change, and encourage green and brown roofs.
Assessment / evidence base	Support the provision, connection and mapping of natural habitats, including Fen Nature Reserve, the Wilbraham River, Roman Road and Fleam Dyke.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Assessment / evidence base	Recommend the production of a green space network assessment which identifies green space usage and priorities, appropriate off-site mitigation and enhancements to improve the wide network.	Noted, the Green Infrastructure Opportunity mapping project has identified a range of projects across Greater Cambridge which could support the enhancement of biodiversity and green space.
Water	Collect rainwater at green spaces.	Noted, the climate change theme proposes to require a high level of water efficiency in new developments that would require grey water recycling.
Water	Focus net gain projects on water.	Noted, improvements to chalk streams has been identified as one of the green infrastructure projects.
Water	Require green-space to provide multi-functional benefits including flood storage and SuDS.	Noted, the climate change theme proposes to require integrated water management including through the use of SUDs
Water	Require water to be incorporated into green space.	Noted, the climate change theme proposes to require integrated water management including through the use of SUDs
Water	Stop over extraction from aquifers.	Noted, the First Proposals report identifies water availability as a key issue.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
New development proposals	Support development of 67-69 High Street, Meldreth.	Noted. Site options suggested have been tested through the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, which has considered their availability, suitability and deliverability. The consideration of development strategy options and sites is detailed in the Strategy Topic Paper. This identifies why sites have been identified as preferred options and why others have not been taken forward.
New development proposals	Support development of land off Craft Way, Steeple Morden.	Noted. Site options suggested have been tested through the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, which has considered their availability, suitability and deliverability. The consideration of development strategy options and sites is detailed in the Strategy Topic Paper. This identifies why sites have been identified as preferred options and why others have not been taken forward.
New development proposals	Support development of land to the west of Dubbs Knoll Road.	Noted. Site options suggested have been tested through the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, which has considered their availability, suitability and deliverability. The consideration of development strategy options and sites is detailed in the Strategy Topic Paper. This identifies why sites have been identified as preferred options and why others have not been taken forward.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Growth strategy	Establish garden communities.	Noted. Whilst the potential of further new settlements was considered though the strategy options assessments, the proposed options focuses additional development onto brownfield sites on the edge of Cambridge, and in the future at Cambourne where a new railway station is planned. This approach is considered more sustainable, and responds to evidence, including regarding transport and net zero carbon. More information can be found in the strategy topic paper.

Q14. How do we achieve biodiversity net gain through new developments?

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, monitoring and management.	Develop an ecological viability standard.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. Offsite contributions have potential to be pooled towards green infrastructure projects.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Set a 20% biodiversity net gain target.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. Offsite contributions have potential to be pooled towards green infrastructure projects.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Set a 10% biodiversity net gain target.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. Offsite contributions have potential to be pooled towards green infrastructure projects.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Require biodiversity measures in new builds and provide guidance on these measures in the new Local Plan.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. Offsite contributions have potential to be pooled towards green infrastructure projects.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Develop a biodiversity net gain calculator with the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) and local authorities, provide clear guidance and consult on the metric.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. This would be calculated using biodiversity metrics.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, monitoring and management.	Set out a simple and proportionate methodology in the new Local Plan to assess net gain, with a standard approach to small-scale development and a tailored approach for larger developments.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. This would be calculated using biodiversity metrics.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Support use of the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric and the Biodiversity Impact Metric.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. This would be calculated using biodiversity metrics.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Establish an aspirational target of Urban Greening Factor for development.	Noted, an urban greening factor in the policy is not the preferred approach, as we think that measurement of Biodiversity Net Gain and Urban Greening via a metric-based assessment systems would be likely to overlap, making it overly complex to run two of these concurrently. The Plan does though require urban greening measures (see BG/TC, CC/DC and CC/FM).
Targets, monitoring and management.	Require biodiversity net schemes to include long term management.	Noted, green infrastructure will require long term maintenance to be secured.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Include a mechanism to record and monitor implementation of biodiversity net gain and the delivery of both on-site and off-site habitat creation.	Noted a clear mechanism for implementing biodiversity net gain will be required. The approach is proposed by the First Proposals, and further detail will be developed as the plan progresses.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, monitoring and management.	Ensure planning conditions are implemented and monitored during the development process, statutory or legal enforcement of delivery, or financial penalties for failure to deliver net gains.	Noted, this is outside the scope of the plan.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Ensure on and off-site biodiversity management is funded in perpetuity.	Noted, green infrastructure will require long term maintenance to be secured.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Support use of the Developing with Nature Toolkit in planning applications.	Noted, the Councils are currently updating their biodiversity SPD which will provide additional guidance on how to consider and support biodiversity through planning applications.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Ensure policies are flexible to allow for on and off-site biodiversity net gain according to a site's capacity, with the possibility for contributions towards biodiversity net gain in a separate policy given the status of an SPD.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach regarding biodiversity net gain. The approach seeks delivery on site where possible, and then offsite.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Provide off-site biodiversity net gain on community or Council owned land.	Noted, this is outside the remit of the plan, but the councils will encourage biodiversity improvements.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, monitoring and management.	Require net gain from all development and consider the long lead-in time for biodiversity enhancement measures.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Develop a strategic offsetting mechanism for focused habitat creation, including on reserves.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek biodiversity net gain.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Support local, county-wide and strategic biodiversity net gain.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. Offsite contributions have potential to be pooled towards green infrastructure projects.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Support a strategic biodiversity and green infrastructure plan identifying areas for opportunity and green space deficit.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals identifies a range of green infrastructure opportunity areas.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Outline the type and location of habitat that must be delivered through biodiversity net gain and provide a framework for delivery in the new Local Plan.	Noted a clear mechanism for implementing biodiversity net gain will be required. The approach is proposed by the First Proposals, and further detail will be developed as the plan progresses.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, monitoring and management.	Support a Cambridge Nature Recovery Network, supported by a Nature Recovery Strategy, which sets out the calculation of biodiversity net gain, off-setting, and a tariff and a fee system to fund recording and monitoring by the Council.	Noted, the Nature Recovery Network has been considered through the green infrastructure opportunity mapping project which has informed the first proposals consultation.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Identify important ecological areas in the Local Plan which can be augmented and connected, and which should be avoided by new development.	Noted, the first proposals are supported by the outcome of the green infrastructure opportunity mapping project.
Targets, monitoring and management.	Reserve space for environment restoration.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach regarding biodiversity net gain. The approach seeks delivery on site where possible, and then offsite.
Evidence base	Conduct a biodiversity audit of the plan area and update condition assessment survey of all wildlife sites in the plan area.	Noted, the local plan has been informed by the green infrastructure mapping project, and biodiversity has also been an important element of the site testing process.
Evidence base	Assess the effects of recreational pressure through the HRA and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and identify mitigation measures for any adverse impacts.	Noted, the local plan will be subject to sustainability appraisal and habitats regulations assessment which will consider these issues.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Evidence base	Include costings for delivering biodiversity and green infrastructure requirements of the Local Plan in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	Noted, green infrastructure requirements will be addressed by the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
Open space provision	Provide green spaces, including combined and separate wildlife and recreation spaces, alongside development.	Noted, open space and green infrastructure will need to include space for people to use and visit, but also spaces reserved for biodiversity.
Open space provision	Open space provision should include habitat diversification and creation.	Noted, open space and green infrastructure will need to include space for people to use and visit, but also spaces reserved for biodiversity.
Open space provision	Ensure everyone has access to green space.	Noted, the local plan will seek to protect and enhance open spaces.
Development proposals	Recognise the role of new development, particularly large-scale development, in supporting the delivery of biodiversity net gain and creating wildlife corridors, and assess development on its potential for biodiversity enhancement.	Noted, the role of major sites in supporting green infrastructure delivery has been recognised.
Development proposals	Design should reflect the report "Homes for people and wildlife - How to build housing in a nature-friendly way" from the Wildlife Trust.	Noted, the Councils are currently updating their biodiversity SPD which will provide additional guidance on how to consider and support biodiversity through planning applications.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Development proposals	Allocate sites with low ecological value to allow for significant biodiversity net gain.	Noted. The plan has sought to focus on brownfield land opportunities, and avoid areas which would harm valued biodiversity assets.
Development proposals	Support development of land at Longstowe Estate.	Noted, sites submitted have been considered and tested to inform the plan making process.
Development proposals	Do not support the fragmentation of green space and disruption of wildlife corridors.	Noted, the plan will seek to support the enhancement of biodiversity networks.
Development proposals	Allocate brownfield or agricultural land to achieve biodiversity net gain.	Noted, the local plan sees to focus development of brownfield areas.
Development proposals	Support Green Belt development, particularly where it is green and connected to the natural environment.	Noted, a range of options have been considered when identifying the preferred development strategy, recognising the importance of the green belt. More information can be found in the strategy topic paper.
Development proposals	Convert unused student accommodation to residential use.	Noted, the Councils will assess all sites submitted for inclusion as allocations in the new Local Plan.
Development proposals	Do not support development on the Green Belt, and existing habitat spaces, green spaces and gardens.	Noted, a range of options have been considered when identifying the preferred development strategy, recognising the importance of the green belt. More information can be found in the strategy topic paper.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Development proposals	Require environmental impact statements to take into account the impact of housing development on adjacent green sites.	Noted, developments will be required to consider their impacts on biodiversity.
Development proposals	Consider banning cat ownership with covenants for housing development near sensitive green sites.	Noted, this is beyond the scope of the new Local Plan.
Development proposals	Consider the impact of medium-scale sites on green sites.	Noted, the Councils will assess all sites submitted for inclusion as allocations in the new Local Plan, and this will include consideration of their impact on green infrastructure.
Development proposals	Do not support densification.	Noted, a range of development strategy options have been considered to inform the first proposals.
Development proposals	Support densification.	Noted, a range of development strategy options have been considered to inform the first proposals.
Development proposals	Ensure high occupancy rates, including reduce empty properties.	Noted, although occupancy rates are beyond the scope of the plan.
Development proposals	New houses should be built with bigger gardens and green spaces, reducing the space provided for cars and roads.	Noted, there are a range of issues to consider when considering garden size and the relationship with development density. These including making best use of land in order to reduce the need for greenfield land, and also providing higher densities in accessible areas.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Water management	Tackle decreasing water resources and pressure on the natural environment in the Integrated Water Study, relating it to the LNRS and green infrastructure work, and identify opportunities for strategic sustainable water management projects to increase water storage, protect and enhance rivers and streams, incorporate extensive wetland habitat creation and restore degraded peat soils, and implement multi-functional SUDS.	Noted, a range of these points have been identified through the green infrastructure opportunities mapping project.
Climate change mitigation and adaptation	Do not support green walls and roofs.	Noted, green roofs and walls can be a successful part of responding to climate change and supporting biodiversity, but they will need to be appropriately located.
Climate change mitigation and adaptation	Support existing projects including green roofs and vertical gardens.	Noted, green roofs and walls can be a successful part of responding to climate change and supporting biodiversity, but they will need to be appropriately located.
Climate change mitigation and adaptation	Reduce the need to travel to decrease emissions.	Noted, the strategy topic paper details how the availability of sustainable transport opportunities has influenced the development strategy proposed in the First Proposals.

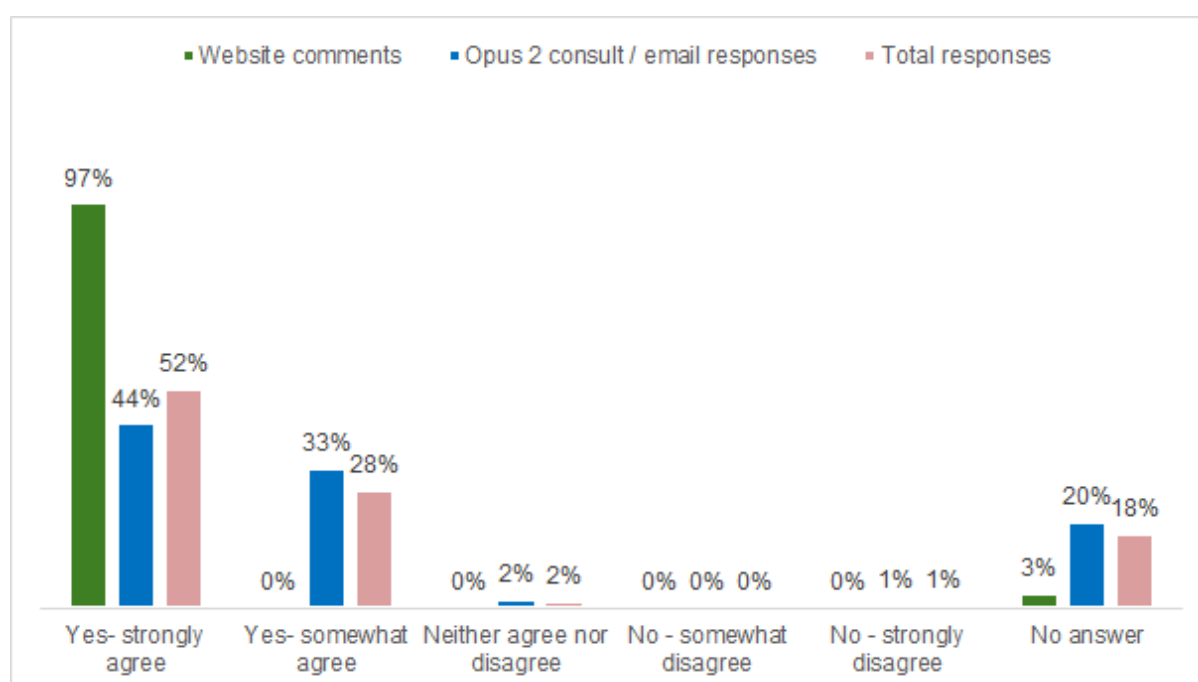
Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Climate change mitigation and adaptation	Provide resilient habitats and plants.	Noted, policy proposals seek to ensure developments are adapted to climate change and this will include using drought tolerant species.
Climate change mitigation and adaptation	Restrict and discourage domestic use of herbicides and pesticides.	Noted, while the Local Plan supports the protection of the environment, the management of herbicides and pesticides is beyond the scope of the Local Plan.
Climate change mitigation and adaptation	Development proposals should consider climate change.	Noted, Climate change is a key theme for the new Local Plan.
Climate change mitigation and adaptation	Support composting.	Noted, the proposed policies include requiring approaches to support sustainable waste management.
Features and initiatives to achieve biodiversity net gain	Achieve biodiversity net gain through initiatives like resource efficiency, biodiversity monitoring and reporting.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. Offsite contributions have potential to be pooled towards green infrastructure projects.
Features and initiatives to achieve biodiversity net gain	Achieve biodiversity net gain through allotment provision, community woodlands and woodland walks.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. Offsite contributions have potential to be pooled towards green infrastructure projects.
Features and initiatives to achieve biodiversity net gain	Achieve biodiversity net gain through SuDS, including permanent water holding designs.	Noted, the potential wide range of benefits of Suds has been recognised in the policy proposals.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Features and initiatives to achieve biodiversity net gain	Achieve biodiversity net gain through careful landscape design, including meadows/wild, undisturbed grass, rewilding, tree and flower planting, water bodies with restricted edge access, connectivity features between green areas including trees, hedgerows, ditches and watercourses, wildlife tunnels and bridges, and planting along all residential streets and cycleways.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. Offsite contributions have potential to be pooled towards green infrastructure projects. The projects that could be delivered will include a range of these detailed measures.
Features and initiatives to achieve biodiversity net gain	Support positive management of habitats, replacing existing trees and plants where appropriate.	Noted. Policies will seek to secure positive management of habitats.
Features and initiatives to achieve biodiversity net gain	Private gardens should have deep soil, a minimum of one tree and no astro turf, shared spaces on estates should have space for wildflowers.	Noted, a number of these detailed points will be beyond the scope of the plan, but policies will seek to secure biodiversity net gain and delivery of new green spaces.
Features and initiatives to achieve biodiversity net gain	Insert bat and swift boxes in the building structure of new development, public buildings and landscaping, and help fund nest box schemes.	Noted, such measures are often used as part of achieving on site biodiversity gains.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Features and initiatives to achieve biodiversity net gain	Use building materials that support biodiversity.	Noted, requiring biodiversity net gain on site could be supported by measures that form part of buildings themselves.
Features and initiatives to achieve biodiversity net gain	Use hedges or living screens instead of fences around new development, and fences with gaps.	Noted, this is a point currently addressed in our emerging biodiversity SPD, which states, 'Applicants, where appropriate, will be required to plant mixed native species hedges with trees to define boundaries in open countryside as opposed to the erection of fences that may hinder the natural movement of animals.'
Features and initiatives to achieve biodiversity net gain	Place greater emphasis on habitat creation and their interconnectedness in biodiversity net gain policies.	Noted, connectivity of habitats have been explored by our Green Infrastructure opportunity mapping project which has informed the development of policy proposals.
Features and initiatives to achieve biodiversity net gain	Do not support paving over front and rear gardens, and removing trees and plants, and consider covenants.	Noted, the long term management of front and rear gardens is beyond the scope of the Local Plan.
Features and initiatives to achieve biodiversity net gain	Ensure planting schemes deliver a mix of plants suitable for hotter conditions and native species.	Noted, policy proposals seek to ensure developments are adapted to climate change and this will include using drought tolerant species.
Features and initiatives to achieve biodiversity net gain	Provide information for the public for garden improvements.	Noted, this is beyond the scope of the new Local Plan.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
General policy recommendations	Recognise the hierarchy of international, nationally and locally designated sites across Greater Cambridge in a biodiversity policy and accompany this with a map of the existing ecological network and enhancement opportunity areas.	Noted, policy proposals seek to protect international, nationally and locally designated sites, and they will be identified on the policies map which will accompany the local plan.
General policy recommendations	Consult with local experts and Environment Committees on Parish Councils.	Noted, the green infrastructure opportunity mapping process sought to engage with local stakeholders.
General policy recommendations	Acknowledge the significance of invasive non-native species (INNS) and their impacts on wildlife and the environment in the new Local Plan.	Noted, the emerging Biodiversity SPD states that where proposals at development sites are likely to result in the spread of non-native invasive plant species the development may not be permitted until suitable measures have been agreed and / or undertaken to control the invasive species. detailed wording can be included in the draft local plan.
General policy recommendations	Prioritise biodiversity in the new Local Plan.	Noted, The protection of the natural environment will be a key priority for the new Local Plan.
General policy recommendations	Support the existing approach to protecting natural areas and the provision of new green space with large-scale development.	Noted, the plan will continue to seek new green space to accompany large scale developments.
General policy recommendations	Do not support light pollution.	Noted, the great places theme proposes to include a policy which would address forms of pollution.

Q15 Do you agree that we should aim to increase tree cover across the area?



29 website comments and 156 Opus 2 Consult/email responses were received to this question.

There was strong agreement to this question, with 80% either agreeing or strongly agreeing overall. Among web respondents, 97% strongly agreed.

76% of website commenters (22 in total) and 85% of Opus 2 Consult/email respondents (156) left a written comment.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, protection and management	Support a policy and covenants on the maintenance and protection of trees.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, seeking to protect important trees and provide enhanced tree cover through development.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, protection and management	Make it illegal to fell trees and retain mature trees.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, seeking to protect important trees and provide enhanced tree cover through development.
Targets, protection and management	Retain trees along St Neots Road in Hardwick.	Noted protection of specific trees beyond areas identified as allocation is beyond the scope of the local plan.
Targets, protection and management	Extend protection of trees at Nine Wells and Hobson's Brook to cover the entire brook.	Noted protection of specific trees beyond areas identified as allocation is beyond the scope of the local plan.
Targets, protection and management	Increase enforcement and provide education of Tree Preservation Orders.	Noted, this is beyond the scope of the plan.
Targets, protection and management	Include tree cover increase, woodland access and tree canopy expansion targets in the new Local Plan.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, seeking to protect important trees and provide enhanced tree cover through development.
Targets, protection and management	Set a minimum tree cover standard for development, such as woods of one hectare or more for urban extensions.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, seeking to protect important trees and provide enhanced tree cover through development.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, protection and management	Support a flexible policy which allows for on and off-site provision of trees.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, seeking to protect important trees and provide enhanced tree cover through development.
Targets, protection and management	Assess the maximisation of biodiversity net gains to determine the extent of increased tree cover and balance the two.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain.
Targets, protection and management	Require a percentage biodiversity net gain for all developments and allow smaller developments to deliver net gain through contributions in a separate policy given the status of an SPD.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain.
Targets, protection and management	Pool contributions for tree planting and biodiversity net gain.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach that would seek 20% biodiversity net gain. Offsite contributions have potential to be pooled towards green infrastructure projects.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, protection and management	Recognise the hierarchy of international, nationally and locally designated sites across Greater Cambridge in a biodiversity policy and accompany this with a map of the existing ecological network and enhancement opportunity areas.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy approach to protecting important designated sites, and a range of green infrastructure opportunity areas have been identified.
Targets, protection and management	Align carbon offsetting with biodiversity offsetting. Consider tree planting holistically and its secondary benefits, including air conditioning.	Noted wider benefits of tree planting in response to climate change such as to help with urban cooling, are recognised in the policy proposals.
Targets, protection and management	Plant trees not just for offsetting.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, seeking to protect important trees and provide enhanced tree cover through development.
Targets, protection and management	Encourage landowners to plant trees instead of developing on their land. Encourage landowners to plant trees, rewild and manage habitats.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals identifies a range of green infrastructure opportunity areas, many of which could support additional planting and rewilding.
Targets, protection and management	Reduce pollution.	Noted, the transport policies in the infrastructure theme propose to set requirements for measures to encourage sustainable travel.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, protection and management	Invest in sustainable energy schemes	Noted, the climate change theme proposes policy approaches which would support delivery of renewable energy.
Targets, protection and management	Include open spaces in residential developments, retain existing trees, and ensure residents have access to trees.	Noted, the local plan will seek to protect and enhance open spaces.
Targets, protection and management	Support a Cambridge Nature Recovery Network and include guidance on how development can contribute to the network in the new Local Plan, supported by a Nature Recovery Strategy which sets out the calculation of biodiversity net gain, off-setting, a tariff and a fee system to fund recording and monitoring by the Council.	Noted, the Nature Recovery Network has been considered through the green infrastructure opportunity mapping project which has informed the first proposals consultation.
Targets, protection and management	Produce a Green Infrastructure SPD identifying opportunities for new and existing woodland sites, woodland restoration and habitat opportunities.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals identifies a range of green infrastructure opportunity areas.
Targets, protection and management	Support public access to woodlands.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals identifies a range of green infrastructure opportunity areas.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, protection and management	New woodlands should be connected to existing woodland or biodiverse sites to create wildlife corridors.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals identifies a range of green infrastructure opportunity areas.
Targets, protection and management	Support new meadows, natural wilding, connected green spaces and animal habitat enhancement.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals identifies a range of green infrastructure opportunity areas.
Targets, protection and management	Expand historic forms of carbon storage.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals identifies a range of green infrastructure opportunity areas. The benefits in terms of carbon storage are recognised.
Targets, protection and management	Protect and provide hedges.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, seeking to protect important trees and provide enhanced tree cover through development. The importance of hedgerows is also addressed by the policy proposal.
Targets, protection and management	Support a tree strategy which covers protecting biodiverse rich habitats, managing trees, regenerating woodland and planting suitable species.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals identifies a range of green infrastructure opportunity areas.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, protection and management	Agree to increase tree cover across the area. Incorporate new tree cover with glades or clearings. Increasing tree coverage is a priority.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, seeking to protect important trees and provide enhanced tree cover through development.
Targets, protection and management	Focus on ecological outcomes instead of planting native species.	Noted, policies will seek to deliver appropriate habitats and species. Further guidance is included in the biodiversity supplementary planning document.
Targets, protection and management	Support a mosaic of habitat creation instead of blanket tree cover.	Noted, green infrastructure proposals seek to reflect the local environment.
Targets, protection and management	Plant native, mature, biodiverse, disease resistant and carbon sequestering tree species, tolerant to extreme weather events including drought.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, including choosing the correct species.
Targets, protection and management	Ensure tree planting is in the right location, is sensitive to its surroundings, does not destroy valuable a habitat, and take a different approach to agricultural and non-agricultural areas.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, including choosing the correct species. Trees will only be one element of wider policies to support nature and deliver biodiversity net gain.
Targets, protection and management	Support natural tree regeneration.	Noted.
Targets, protection and management	Replace old and unattractive trees and hedges.	Noted, whether trees are retained or replaced would be considered on a site specific basis.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, protection and management	Require sufficient land for tree planting along with recreational green space, wildlife habitats, flood attenuation and climate mitigation in developments.	Noted, policy proposals would seek a range of types of open space and biodiversity enhancement in association with new developments.
Targets, protection and management	Balance tree planting with housing and employment growth.	Noted, the plan will seek to meet development needs along with providing enhancements to biodiversity and green infrastructure.
Targets, protection and management	Balance tree planting with changes to landscape character, impacts on features such as drainage and habitat enhancement.	Noted, it is acknowledged that tree planting will not be appropriate for every type of habitat.
Targets, protection and management	Support, update and extend the Cambridge Tree Strategy to South Cambridgeshire District Council in the new Local Plan.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, seeking to protect important trees and provide enhanced tree cover through development.
Targets, protection and management	Consult with experts, including ecologists to determine appropriate tree species and local volunteer tree planting groups.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, including choosing the correct species.
Targets, protection and management	Provide information on appropriate trees, rules on planting in communal spaces and encourage initiatives around tree planting.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, including choosing the correct species.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, protection and management	Work with partners to identify county wide tree planting.	Noted, the councils are engaging with partners on the delivery of green infrastructure.
Targets, protection and management	Take a different approach to tree planting in agricultural and non-agricultural areas.	Noted, Green infrastructure and biodiversity improvements will need to be balanced with the importance of agricultural land.
Targets, protection and management	Increase tree cover in strategic and site-specific levels including the West Cambridge Hundreds landscape area, existing and new woodlands outside Cambridge, on and off-site new development, field edges as tree belts, in urban areas, Parker's Piece, between Cheney Way and Mays Way, urban greenspaces, road verges including key roads into Cambridge, gardens and workplaces.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals identifies a range of green infrastructure opportunity areas. This includes the west Cambridge hundreds.
Targets, protection and management	Support a community forest, covering much of Green Belt south east of Cambridge or Marshalls Airport site, or a 'Town Forest' on agricultural land.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals identifies a range of green infrastructure opportunity areas. However the airport site is considered an opportunity for sustainable development to meet the needs of the area.
Targets, protection and management	Avoid tree planting on peatland, grassland and high-grade agricultural land.	Noted, it is acknowledged that tree planting will not be appropriate for every type of habitat.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, protection and management	Do not support scattered planting or mini forests of non-native species.	Noted, it is acknowledged that tree planting will not be appropriate for every type of habitat.
Targets, protection and management	Increase tree cover on roads, especially busy roads, and separate cycleways from car lanes with sensitive planting of trees or shrubbery.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, including seeking to enhance the tree canopy cover in Cambridge.
Targets, protection and management	Use the Green Belt review to inform tree planting near new development.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals identifies a range of green infrastructure opportunity areas, this includes areas in the Cambridge green belt.
Targets, protection and management	Use biodiversity opportunity mapping to determine new woodlands.	Noted, potential for new woodland areas have been identified by the green infrastructure opportunity mapping project.
Targets, protection and management	Include costings for delivering biodiversity and green infrastructure requirements of the Local Plan in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	Noted, the Infrastructure delivery plan will identify costs of infrastructure required to support and enable development.
Targets, protection and management	Address accessible green space deficit through the preparation of a biodiversity and green infrastructure enhancement strategy.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals identifies a range of green infrastructure opportunity areas.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, protection and management	Assess the effects of recreational pressure through the HRA and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and identify mitigation measures for any adverse impacts.	Noted, the local plan will be subject to sustainability appraisal and habitats regulations assessment which will consider these issues.
Targets, protection and management	Overlap between Local Nature Recovery Strategies and the Integrated Water Management Study to ensure successful water management with tree planting.	Noted, the potential wide range of benefits of Suds has been recognised in the policy proposals.
Targets, protection and management	Tackle decreasing water resources and pressure on the natural environment in the Integrated Water Study and identify opportunities for strategic projects to increase water storage, incorporating extensive wetland habitat creation and restoration of degraded peat soils, and implementation of multi-functional SUDS.	Noted, the potential wide range of benefits of Suds has been recognised in the policy proposals. The integrated water management study has considered the availability of water resources in the area.
Targets, protection and management	Plant trees along with delivering SuDS.	Noted, the potential wide range of benefits of Suds has been recognised in the policy proposals.
Targets, protection and management	Do not pave private gardens.	Noted, the housing theme includes policy approaches that would consider the loss of residential gardens.

Overarching theme / topic	Summary of issues raised in comments	How the comments have been taken into account
Targets, protection and management	Support development proposals, including rural development with potential for increased tree coverage.	Noted.
Targets, protection and management	Retain the Green Belt.	Noted, a range of options have been considered when identifying the preferred development strategy, recognising the importance of the green belt. More information can be found in the strategy topic paper.
Targets, protection and management	Balance tree planting with housing and employment growth.	Noted, the Biodiversity and Green infrastructure theme of the First Proposals include a policy regarding trees and tree cover, seeking to protect important trees and provide enhanced tree cover through development.
Targets, protection and management	Consider permitting carbon neutral burials in woodland.	Noted, this is beyond the scope of the plan.

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