



Cambridge City Council  
**Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee**

**Date:** Tuesday, 19 March 2024

**Time:** 5.30 pm

**Venue:** Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Market Square, Cambridge, CB2 3QJ [access the building via Peashill entrance]

**Contact:** [democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk), tel:01223 457000

**Agenda**

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes (Pages 3 - 12)
- 4 Public Questions

**Decisions for the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure**

- 5 Greater Cambridge Local Plan Timetable (Pages 13 - 34)
- 6 Statement of Community Involvement (Pages 35 - 162)

**Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee Members:** Nestor (Chair), Baigent (Vice-Chair), Bick, Divkovic, Porrer, Pounds, Swift and Tong

**Alternates:** Bennett, Griffin, Lee, Payne and Todd-Jones

**Executive Councillors:** Thornburrow (Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure)

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## PLANNING AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 January 2024

5.30 - 6.55 pm

**Present:** Councillors Nestor (Chair), Baigent (Vice-Chair), Bick, Divkovic, Porrer, Pounds, Swift and Tong

Executive Councillor: Thornburrow (Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure)

Officers:

Joint Director, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning and 3C Building Control: Stephen Kelly

Deputy Director, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning and 3C Building Control: Heather Jones

Planning Policy Manger, Jonathan Dixon

Principal Conservation Officer, Susan Smith

Senior Policy Planner, Mark Deas

Principal Planning Policy Officer, Jenny Nuttycombe

Committee Manager: Claire Tunnicliffe

Meeting Producer: Boris Herzog

### FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

#### 24/1/PnT Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

#### 24/2/PnT Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor Baigent	All	Personal: A member of CamCyle
Councillor Porrer	24/4/PnT	Personal: Employed by Anglia Ruskin University

#### 24/3/PnT Minutes

Before the minutes were approved Councillor Baigent advised he had requested a report would be brought back to Committee on the progress of the Government's Cambridge 2040 programme and this had been missed in the minutes.

This had been noted in item 23/37/PnT, minute reference x1, although no reference had been made to Cambridge 2040 programme, which stated the following:

*Officers from various departments across the three local authorities had held several conversations with the Department of Levelling Up, Homes England and the Cambridge Delivery Group through Peter Freeman in respect of the work of the Cambridge Delivery Group. Further information on these meetings could be brought back to the Committee; noted the request for a précis of the topics discussed.*

The Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development advised that no report had been brought to the Committee as the programme was still in the formation stage. A report would be brought back at a later date when the detail had been finalised.

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2023 were then approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## **24/4/PnT Public Questions**

Q1)

- i. Regarding Item 6, The Greater Cambridge Authority Monitoring Report as published, para 3.71 on Page 49, please could the Executive Councillor provide an update on where the Council is regarding a new municipal swimming pool and the University of Cambridge's long overdue swimming pool plans in West Cambridge. Does the Council have a message to Cambridge University students on what they could do to persuade their University to prioritise the construction of the swimming pool that still has not been built?
- ii. Finally, what impact has the Secretary of State's announcement re "Cambridge 2040" had on the council's ability to prepare "updated Playing Pitch and Indoor Sports Facility Strategies along with an Outdoor Courts and Rink Strategy"?

The Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure said the following:

- i. Work began in April 2023 on the new Perse sports and swimming complex which would be used by the Perse School, as well as being

- available for public use, as part of the School's commitment to community benefit.
- ii. As part of the emerging evidence base to inform the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, the Council had commissioned updates of the Greater Cambridge Playing Pitch Strategy, along with the Greater Cambridge Indoor Sports Facility Strategy (covering sports halls, indoor sports & swimming pools).
  - iii. The Council had also commissioned a Greater Cambridge Outdoor Courts & Rinks Strategy (covering Multi-Use Games Areas, outdoor courts e.g. tennis, netball and rinks e.g. bowling greens)
  - iv. As part of the Indoor Sports Facility Strategy update, consultants had been in discussions with the University of Cambridge about their proposal for a swimming pool at West Cambridge. Part of those discussion were to highlight there was a seven-year time limit before which a payment would be required to be made towards swimming facilities.
  - v. It was also an objective of the existing Indoor Sports Facility Strategy for the new growth settlements in South Cambridgeshire to deliver a new swimming pool which will help meet subregional needs.
  - vi. A new pool for Northstowe was in the very early planning stages but section 106 contributions (S106) had been secured through each phase. Funding was also included in the S106 for Waterbeach.
  - vii. Cambourne West had delivered funding to the town council who were exploring delivery.
  - viii. The Council had highlighted to Government the need to focus on addressing key issues that impacted on delivering sustainable development in the area, including water scarcity and sustainable transport infrastructure. These issues also made it difficult to move forward with the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, through which Officers were working hard to respond to local development needs. An update on the emerging Local Plan would be brought to the March Planning and Transport Committee.

Supplementary public question:

- i. Had been following the Secretary of State's comments regarding 2040, looked forward to him providing substantial funding for the brand-new concert hall on Harvey Road by Parker's Piece, expanding a new museum of Cambridge at the top of Castle Hill and a revamped Guildhall.
- ii. Astonished that the University of Cambridge had still not delivered on the swimming pool. Would encourage students to complain on this issue as this was promised to the students and their student societies; this should

be an election issue for students. Understood from the consultants that this was not a priority. Claimed that the Pro-Vice Chancellor had shown very little interest in the project.

- iii. Would like to highlight the centenary of the first woman Mayor of Cambridge, Eva Hartree who warned developers about the challenges that would be faced with the development of Cambridge, which still applied today.

The Executive Councillor thanked the member of the public for their comments.

Q2)

- i. This question was about item 11 on the Agenda of the Planning Committee meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024: 22-02066-FUL Owlstone Croft Planning Process Overview Report.
- ii. The item had been held in secret “following a public interest test the public is likely to be excluded by virtue of paragraph 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972”.
- iii. It was acknowledged there was an ongoing application for a Judicial Review of the Planning Inspector’s decision to allow Queens’ College appeal. However, there was widespread concern among residents about this complete and catastrophic failure of the planning system and it seems no attempt whatsoever has been made to ask residents or local organisations such as Friends of Paradise, Newnham Croft Primary School or the South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum to provide details of their concerns about what went wrong that could feed into such a report.
- iv. If the report presented to the planning committee was drafted without this input by an Officer or Officers of the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service surely this would have been just a case of a failing student marking his/her own homework?
- v. Could the Executive Councillor now provide reassurance to residents that a full call for evidence of concerns will now be made and an open and independent inquest into this planning process fiasco carried out by the council?

The Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure said the following:

- i. Confirmed that the report had been discussed at the end of the Planning Committee in private session.
- ii. Believed it was important that the Committee had this opportunity to discuss the matter as the Committee had made the original decision;

discussed that planning committee and what had happened leading to that meeting and subsequently. The Case Officer had also provided feedback concerning the appeal.

- iii. The application was now under Judicial Review and therefore could not discuss this until the outcome was known.
- iv. It was the intention to undertake discussions with residents and local organisations when the Judicial Review had been concluded.

Supplementary public question:

- i. In relation to the Owlstone Croft application residents were concerned at how the planning performance agreement process was used by Queens College to enable numerous pre-application meetings with Council Officers which were not all minuted, along with extensive use of conditions. Residents and Councillors were not able to scrutinise appropriately the fine detail of this prior to the consideration of the planning committee.
- ii. Sought confirmation that all the issues that had been highlighted would be included in an open and independent inquest into the application.

The Executive Councillor responded:

- i. Following a review of the pre-application process there would be more Councillor involvement at the earlier stages.
- ii. Would be happy to contact the public speaker when the pre-application was in the public domain.

Q3)

“There is now solid statistical evidence that 2023 was the warmest year on record, and it is predicted that periods of extremely high temperature will become the norm under the current global heating scenario. The August 2023 House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee report (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/123208/pdf/>) makes useful recommendations, in Section B, for cooler buildings and behavioural change, based on evidence from the UK Health Security Agency. These include (but are not limited to): external and internal shading of windows and open areas; reflective coatings for windows, exterior walls, roofs, and paving; and improved ventilation. It also recommends improving public awareness of behavioural changes needed in hot weather and that tend to be poorly understood, such as closing windows (as well as curtains) when directly exposed to sunlight and using an electric fan. What action is the Council taking to mitigate overheating in both new and old homes in the city, and to reduce health risks to residents from high temperatures?”

The Executive Councillor replied with the following:

- i. The issue of overheating was often raised by Planning Committee Members when considering applications as it was such an important subject matter and one that needed to be taken seriously.
- ii. Overheating in new homes was now dealt with under Building Regulations, with all new homes having to comply with the requirements of Part O (overheating). Overheating could be dealt with in a variety of ways, considering the amount of glazing depending on the orientation it faces, external shading on homes including shutters, roof overhangs and depth of window reveals, ensuring adequate natural ventilation including ensuring flats benefit from cross ventilation wherever possible.
- iii. The Council would often ask applicants to demonstrate how they have met the requirements of Part O of the Building Regulations as part of the design of their proposals and have guidance in the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD as to how to reduce any overheating risk, as well as advice on how to mitigate the wider risk of increased temperatures using landscaping, drainage features and the use of cool materials.
- iv. Further detail on this matter was also being incorporated into a climate change adaptation policy as part of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.
- v. The Council had very little control on the matter of overheating on existing buildings and would encourage more trees to be planted in the right places to aid with this issue.
- vi. The Council recently held a planning forum with Resident Associations where the urban heat map and the temperatures in the built-up environment was discussed.

## **24/5/PnT Proposed Designation of a Conservation Area at Howes Place**

### **Matter for Decision**

Howes Place, off Huntingdon Road, had been identified as an area to be considered for designation as a Conservation Area following the 2008/9 Suburbs and Approaches Study

### **Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure**

Approved the designation of a conservation area at Howes Place, the boundary of which was shown on the Townscape Map in the Appendix in the Officer's report.



**Reason for the Decision**

As set out in the Officer's report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

**Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee received a report from the Principal Conservation Officer

In response to Members' questions the Principal Conservation Officer and Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development said the following:

- i. Any trees within the boundary of the conservation area had additional protection without a Tree Protection Order (TPO). Any work required to those trees would require prior authorisation from Tree Officers.
- ii. The target for the periodic review of the Council's Conservation Area designations and boundaries was every five years, although this was not absolute. This work had to be undertaken alongside other projects.
- iii. Currently undertaking a five-year programme of conservation area reviews with the aim of completing five per year. A schedule of reviews had out been outlined for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. Information on the programme could be circulated to the Committee Members.
- iv. Noted the comments that Howes Place was a good example of an area where social history and natural history intersected.

The Committee voted **unanimously** to endorse the Officer recommendations.

The Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Transport approved the recommendations.

**Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted).****24/6/PnT Greater Cambridge Authority Monitoring Report 2022-23****Matter for Decision**

The report referred to the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) for Greater Cambridge 2022-2023.

**Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure**

- I. Approved the Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council - Authority Monitoring Report for Greater Cambridge 2022-2023 (included as Appendix A) for publication on the Councils' websites.
- II. Agreed to delegate any further minor editing changes to the Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council - Authority Monitoring Report for Greater Cambridge 2022-2023 to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure.

### **Reason for the Decision**

As set out in the Officer's report.

### **Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

### **Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee received a report from the Senior Policy Planner.

In response to Members' questions the Senior Policy Planner and Planning Policy Manager, Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development said the following:

- i. The joint consideration of five-year housing supply and delivery across Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire had been agreed by both Planning Inspectors when assessing the Local Plans.
- ii. Government reporting of the Housing Delivery Test currently reported Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire separately. Officers had requested to DLUHC were assessed jointly but this has not yet been changed. Further efforts would be made to highlight the issue to DLUHC.
- iii. Both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire meet the threshold on the latest Housing Delivery Test results such that no action was required. Consequences of not meeting the test were set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Where a Council falls below 95% of the housing requirement it must publish an action plan showing how it will increase housing delivery.
- iv. Acknowledged it was difficult to monitor the change of use for retail units that did not require planning permission. Officers were monitoring permissions using both the old use class order and the new use class order so there was a consistent data set from 2011.
- v. Where retail units did not require planning permission for a change of use, a planning permission may still be required if building work was being undertaken.

- vi. Several of the district centres within Cambridge were being monitored by Officers visiting the sites and recording the use of each property.
- vii. Officers had been engaging with CBC (Cambridge Biomedical Campus) Ltd as part of the Local Plan to seek to agree a coherent set of development principles for the site within an SPD.
- viii. The Government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites set out the need to identify need and secure provision for sites for gypsies, travellers and travelling show people. A new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment was currently being completed to identify the scale and nature of need which would inform the emerging Local Plan.
- ix. The AMR included planning data on sites permitted for travellers sites and data from the Traveller Caravan Count.
- x. The current affordable housing policy thresholds do not appear to be causing a viability issue regarding the delivery of affordable housing; all residential permissions in Cambridge meeting the threshold have delivered or exceeded the required level of affordable housing.
- xi. Student accommodation was monitored in line with Local Plan policies.
- xii. Noted the comment that colleges were buying domestic properties in the city and converting them to student accommodation on a small scale each time that did not require any regulatory approval.
- xiii. Work had been undertaken on the current Local Plan to understand the student accommodation needs in terms of provision. A new survey was being undertaken by Officers and the issue of colleges buying domestic properties would be reported to those Officers to investigate the matter.
- xiv. The subject of wellbeing was one of the four main threads of the Local Plan. The pandemic had highlighted the importance of the open spaces within the community. It was important to note the conclusions of the health communities on a range of issues including childhood activity levels and obesity. A careful and considered view on how the Council could promote activity, reduce loneliness, improve community and a sense of belonging through open spaces would be required. It's not about a particular quantum of space, but how spaces support achieving healthy outcomes, and we want to explore this further through the joint local plan.

The Executive Councillor stated that she welcomed the range of questions that had been put forward, particularly the comments on class E and student accommodation. The report had been presented to address the Local Plan requirements, but the data could be used far more widely than Local Plan monitoring.

The Committee voted **unanimously** to endorse the Officer recommendations.

The Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Transport approved the recommendations.

**Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted).**

None

**24/7/PnT To Note Record of Urgent Decision Taken by the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure**

**24/8/PnT Response to the Uttlesford's Draft Local Plan 2021- 2041 (Regulation 18) Consultation**

The decision was noted.

The meeting ended at 6.55 pm

**CHAIR**



## GREATER CAMBRIDGE LOCAL PLAN TIMETABLE

**To:**

Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure

Planning & Transport Scrutiny Committee 19/03/2024

**Report by:**

Stephen Kelly, Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development  
Tel: 07734 370866 Email: [stephen.kelly@greatercambridgeplanning.org](mailto:stephen.kelly@greatercambridgeplanning.org)

**Wards affected:**

All

Not a Key Decision

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update regarding the Local Plan Timetable (previously called the Local Development Scheme (LDS)), which is a timetable for the production of new or revised development plan documents that set out the planning policy framework for Greater Cambridge. It is prepared jointly between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council as the plans in preparation are both joint plans for the authorities combined area. The Councils are required to keep the Timetable up to date.
- 1.2 The latest LDS was agreed by the Councils in 2022. However, continuing uncertainties regarding key external dependencies for the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan (GCLP) - in particular relating to water availability and transport strategy, and more recently the Government's programme for Greater Cambridge - have meant that the timetable expectations agreed in 2022 cannot now be met. Officers recommend an indicative revised timetable for

preparing the GCLP under the new plan-making system, which would achieve Gateway 1, the start of the formal 30-month process, by autumn/winter 2025.

- 1.3 The report also provides an update in respect of the timetable for the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (NECAAP). In particular, this takes account of the latest timetable for the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant (CWWTP) Development Consent Order (DCO) process seeking to relocate the CWWTP to Honey Hill, given both the NECAAP and the GCLP preferred option strategy are predicated on the relocation taking place. The future of the NECAAP will be kept under review once timings are clearer and taking into account the implications of, and options provided by, the new plan making system. This will be done in the context of seeking to provide a clear planning framework for this key strategic site as soon as possible.

## **2 Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- a. Agree that The Local Plan Timetable Update at Appendix 1 be added as an Addendum to the Greater Cambridge Local Development Scheme 2022 and published on the Greater Cambridge Planning website.
- b. Write to DLUHC, together with the Lead Member for Planning at South Cambridgeshire District Council, providing an update on the plan making timetable for Greater Cambridge reflecting the contents of this report.
- c. Agree that the Greater Cambridge local planning authorities should explore further with Government the opportunity to be a 'front-runner' pilot for the new plan-making process.
- d. Agree that a further report with a proposed specific timetable for both plans be brought to Members when there is clarity on the external dependencies of water, transport the WWTP DCO and the new plan-making system.

## **3 Background**

### **Background: Local Plan Timetable**

- 3.1 The Local Plan Timetable (previously called the Local Development Scheme (LDS), a change made by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act

2023) identifies the expected timings for the production of new or revised documents that set out the planning policy framework for Greater Cambridge. The Councils are required to keep the timetable up to date. In a Written Ministerial Statement by Michael Gove in December 2023, all Councils were requested to provide updates on their timetables to the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC). The latest timetable was agreed by the Councils in 2022. That document listed the below expected future timings for the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan (GCLP) and North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (NECAAP), both being prepared jointly between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council. These timings are now out of date or cannot be met and will need to be updated once there is sufficient certainty to identify revised programmes. This report proposes an Addendum to the LDS as contained at Appendix 1 setting out an updated indicative timetable for the GCLP and position on the NECAAP.

**Table 1: Plan-making stages as set out in the adopted LDS 2022**

<i>Plan</i>	<i>Draft Plan stage</i>	<i>Proposed Submission consultation</i>	<i>Submission to government</i>
GCLP	Autumn/Winter 2023	Autumn 2024  Note: to follow the outcome of CWWTP DCO	Summer/Autumn 2025  Note: subject to the outcome of CWWTP DCO
NECAAP	Summer 2020 (completed)	Autumn 2024  Note: Proposed Submission plan agreed in January 2022 for consultation to follow the outcome of CWWTP DCO	Summer/Autumn 2025  Note: subject to the outcome of CWWTP DCO

**Key dependencies for determining a future GCLP timetable**

3.2 The primary external determinants of the future GCLP timetable centre upon water availability, the transport strategy, the CWWTP DCO and the new national plan-making system. The Government has also made a number of statements promoting much higher growth levels for Cambridge than in the emerging Joint Local Plan. The Cambridge 2040 initiative may also have implications for the local plan timetable that are unresolved at this time. These are all considered below.

## *Water supply*

- 3.3 Water supply has become an increasingly significant issue for planning in Greater Cambridge in recent months. Development needs in the adopted Local Plans were met by Cambridge Water's current Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) adopted in 2019. Concerns regarding the impact of water abstraction levels on the health of water courses were identified in the Councils' Integrated Water Management Study, firstly as part of the assessment of strategic spatial options considered for the new GCLP (2020) and then as part of the Outline Water Cycle Study (2021) which provided part of the evidence base for the level of development needs identified at the time of the First Proposals. The study anticipated that the new Regional Water Plan and Cambridge Water's detailed Water Resource Management Plan would provide clarity on the water supply position. The outcome of the WRMP process is still awaited. In the meantime, concerns about the adequacy of the water supply and impacts on the environment, linked to the impacts of climate change, led to the Environment Agency objecting to a number of large-scale planning applications, including those in the adopted local plans, and raising objections to the emerging WRMP 2024. This has created delays in delivery of sites that have been identified to meet the development needs for homes and jobs in the area. The seriousness of the issue was highlighted by Council Leaders in letters to government Ministers, urging them to take steps to resolve the issues.
- 3.4 Government has established a Cambridge Water Scarcity Group that brings together relevant government departments and other stakeholders, including local authority officers. In his speech in July 2023, the Secretary of State, Michael Gove MP, described the purpose of the group as being 'to identify and accelerate plans to address water constraints'. It went on to say that 'The Group will include all relevant partners to understand what it would take to accelerate building the proposed new Fens Reservoir and enabling Cambridge to reach its economic potential'. About £9m has been identified by government to address the water supply issues. A range of actions are being developed by the group focusing on bringing forward supply options, reducing demand through efficiency measures in new and existing buildings, and measures to improve the resilience of our watercourses.
- 3.5 Whilst these are positive steps, this work is at an early stage. The statutory process for agreeing Cambridge Water's WRMP 2024 has continued to be delayed. On the advice of the Environment Agency, Defra has requested that further information is provided by Cambridge



Water and they submit a revised WRMP by the end of February 2024. It is not yet clear when, and on what basis, a final decision will be made.

- 3.6 We have set out at each plan making stage the need for confirmation that a sustainable water supply is available to support development needs. We do not yet know the outcome in terms of water availability to inform the new local plan and in particular how much development can be planned for based upon available water supplies and whether or not this would meet our objectively assessed need for jobs and homes in full (subject also to other planning considerations including deliverability). We continue to engage with the Environment Agency, Cambridge Water, central government and other relevant stakeholders to seek to understand the evolving position. As soon as there is clarity on water supply, our consultants will update our Water Cycle Study to understand the number of jobs and homes that can be supported by a sustainable water supply throughout the plan period as new water infrastructure comes forward, in particular the planned water transfer anticipated in 2032 and new Fens Reservoir around 2036, and in the context of further future planned reductions in water abstraction licences.

### *Transport Strategy*

- 3.7 To ensure an appropriate development strategy in the GCLP, it is important that it is integrated with a Transport Strategy that ensures development can happen without significant adverse transport impacts, as well as ensuring that the plan addresses the challenges of climate change and local environmental impacts, and that the development strategy is supported by sustainable travel options.
- 3.8 Transport modelling of previous stages of plan-making reflected the transport strategy contained in both the County Council's former Transport Strategy for the Cambridge area and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) Local Transport and Connectivity Plan. The earlier GCLP proposals therefore included an assumption regarding traffic reductions in the Cambridge urban area, but did not assume any particular scheme. This was to be delivered by the Greater Cambridge Partnership's (GCP) City Access proposals. Assumptions were also made about the role of the transport corridors and their impact on traffic movement alongside other planned infrastructure schemes including all the GCP radial public transport schemes.

- 3.9 The recent decision by the GCP Board not to take forward the Making Connections proposal as part of the wider City Access programme, and to pause the Cambridge South East Transport Scheme (CSETS) due to rising programme costs, means that further work is underway, including additional transport modelling, to consider the implications of this decision upon the assumptions contained within the earlier agreed transport strategies.
- 3.10 Once there is greater clarity, discussions will be required with the Combined Authority, the County Council and GCP to seek to understand what alternative proposals to enable more reliable journeys into and around the city might look like and what their impact may be, with the goal of identifying a transport strategy and its implications that could support the emerging GCLP whilst addressing wider climate, air quality, and place objectives. At this stage it is not clear how quickly this matter will be resolved.

### **Government's planning reforms**

- 3.11 It is expected that by Autumn 2024 Government will make changes to how local plans are prepared, including the contents of plans, how they are consulted on, and the process that needs to be undertaken, with the overall aim of streamlining plan-making. Key proposed changes include:
- a) the formal stages of a local plan review are expected to be completed within 30 months;
  - b) the formal process involves two public consultations, the first to test the emerging plan and the second on the draft plan itself, and three Gateway reviews designed to allow independent review of an authority's plan-making process to reduce risk further down the line;
  - c) the proposal to create National Development Management policies;
  - d) the first cohort of "front runner" plans under the new system could start in autumn 2024, with remaining authorities grouped into sequential 6-month plan-making commencement windows ("waves");
  - e) whilst the intention is for there to be a single local plan for an area, new supplementary plans are to be introduced to respond to opportunities for specific sites quickly and positively outside of, and potentially ahead of, the local plan process, that would have the same weight as a local plan; and
  - f) Plans seeking to be adopted under the current system will need to be submitted by 30 June 2025 and adopted by 31 December 2026.

3.12 The Councils responded to the Government's consultation on these proposed changes in autumn 2023, which relate to wider changes to the planning system that will take place via the implementation of the [Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023](#). The transitional arrangements to the new system provide for emerging local plans to progress under the current plan-making system if they are submitted for independent public examination by end of June 2025. Given the external dependencies addressed in this report, including the CWWTP relocation DCO where a decision is not now anticipated until autumn 2024 (see below), it is not possible to set a realistic timetable that would enable the GCLP to meet the currently stated deadline for submission under the current system, even if the programme were to be compressed. As such the GCLP is now expected to need to be prepared under the new plan-making system, as discussed later in this report.

### **North East Cambridge Area - Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant relocation**

- 3.13 Effective and efficient development of the North East Cambridge site is dependent on the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant (CWWTP) via a separate Development Consent Order (DCO) process that Anglian Water is undertaking. Publication of the Proposed Submission version of the GCLP is dependent on the outcome of the DCO process; this is the same for the NECAAP, noting that the Councils agreed in January 2022 a Proposed Submission NECAAP for future public consultation, contingent upon the separate Development Control Order being undertaken by Anglian Water for the relocation of the Waste Water Treatment Plant being approved.
- 3.14 At the time of the earlier timetable's agreement, officers were expecting the DCO to be submitted by Anglian Water in Autumn 2022. The DCO was submitted in April 2023. The DCO Examination process is ongoing with a decision expected by the end of 2024, albeit this date could be affected by a general election. A number of land parcels within the NEC area are already coming forward with planning applications ahead of the NECAAP or GCLP. Delivery of larger scale individual development parcels within North East Cambridge also remain subject to resolution of the water issue outlined above. The future of the NECAAP will be kept under review once timings are clearer and taking into account the implications of, and options provided by, the new plan making system and including taking into account the other issues raised in this report.

This will be done in the context of seeking to provide a clear planning framework for this key strategic site as soon as possible.

### **Cambridge 2040/Cambridge Delivery Group**

- 3.15 In Summer 2023, the Government announced its intention to significantly increase levels of development in Cambridge beyond the levels outlined in the First Proposals. It has established a “Cambridge Delivery Group” to progress that ambition. Peter Freeman, the Chair of Homes England, has been appointed to lead that programme and the Group have subsequently commissioned a number of studies. Engagement with Peter Freeman and the team of civil servants tasked with bringing forward the Government’s proposals has been ongoing since that time. As referred to in the Water Supply section, in the autumn of 2023, the Government also established a “Water Scarcity Group” with dedicated funding to explore the particular challenges associated with water scarcity that impact the area’s current and potential future growth.
- 3.16 Senior officers and the Leaders of the Councils are in regular dialogue with the project team to seek to understand how and in what way the Government’s ambitions will interact with, and impact on, the Local Plan process. The continued requirement in the NPPF that the local plan is “justified,” means that the plan and strategy will need to be tested against and supported by evidence. If brought forward, government’s ambitions for a significant quantum of additional new homes and jobs would be expected to impact upon the conclusions drawn in the evidential studies and modelling that the Councils have already prepared, as are required to support the progression and examination of their joint Local Plan. Given the current uncertainty over when the specific form of Government’s Cambridge 2040 ambitions will be known, officers are not at present able to determine what the impact of this national project on the local plan preparation timetable will be.

### **Additional factors that could affect the future programme**

- 3.17 Other uncertainties that could affect the Local Plan Timetable include confirmation of the development opportunity around the proposed Cambourne station associated with East West Rail, and the forthcoming general election.

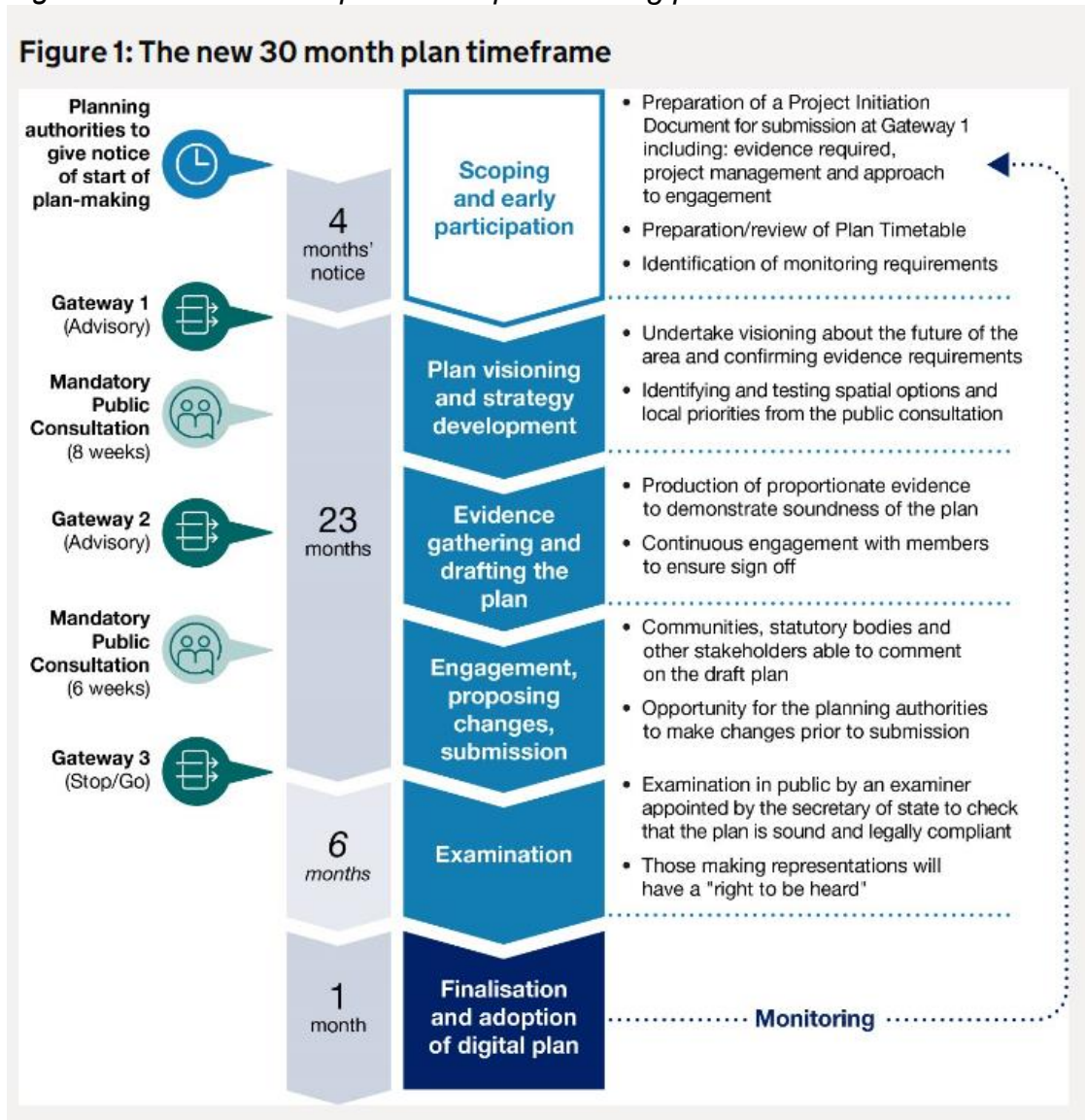
### **What this all means for the GCLP Timetable**

- 3.18 In the context of ongoing uncertainties in relation to water supply, transport strategy, the new plan-making system and Government’s

Cambridge 2040 proposals, one thing that has become clear is that it will not be possible to progress the GCLP under the current plan-making system if the cut-off date for the transitional arrangements remains as end of June 2025. Officers are therefore exploring with government the potential for being a “front runner” for the new planning process, including the potential merits and opportunities it could bring and in order to minimise any further delay to the emerging GCLP. These include the new system including a prescribed period for plan making and examination that has the potential to ensure a much more expedient process than the Councils experienced for the 2018 Local Plans. It seems reasonable to assume that adoption of the GCLP under the new system would likely be similar to that if the Councils were able to progress under the current system, and potentially earlier.

- 3.19 As a part of engagement with DLUCH on this topic, officers continue to seek further clarity as to how work completed to date on the emerging GCLP could be adapted to meet the requirements of the new system. It is understood that Government will publish new regulations and guidance for the new plan-making system in autumn 2024. Until such time as we have clarity on the specific requirements of the new system it is difficult to set a specific detailed local plan timetable. However, it is not unreasonable to say that an indicative timetable for a local plan under the new system, on the basis of current understanding, is to achieve Gateway 1, the start of the formal 30-month process, by autumn/winter 2025. The new plan-making process and the Government’s prescribed timeline for their preparation is included as Figure 1 below. Once there is more clarity on the full range of current external uncertainties, including details of the new plan-making process and whether the Councils are accepted as front-runners, officers will be able to bring a more specific timetable for the full plan-making process to Members.

Figure 1: Government's prescribed plan-making process and timetable



**Conclusion: next steps**

3.20 In summary, ongoing uncertainty regarding a range of key external determinants that are not within the control of the Councils mean that it is only possible at the present time to provide an indicative revised timetable for the GCLP as set out at paragraph 3.19. The NECAAP will be kept under review as set out at paragraph 3.14. Officers are continuing to develop elements of planning policy that are not contingent on these external matters and to monitor closely the progress being made on the matters above. The indicative timetable is therefore to look to transition the GCLP into the new plan-making system with the formal stages starting by autumn/winter 2025. Officers will bring specific timetables for the plans at the earliest opportunity once the external uncertainties are resolved. In line with the Written Ministerial Statement requirements, we will also respond to the

requirement for a timetable on the basis of the terms set out in this report. As such, an Addendum to the 2022 LDS is proposed, and the Local Plan webpages will be updated to reflect this report.

## **4 Implications**

### **a) Financial Implications**

The Shared Planning Service programme for the Local Plan is being jointly funded by Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. The impact of some of the issues identified in this report were not explicitly anticipated at the time that the original budget for the Local Plans were set. Nevertheless, the service has to date managed its costs within the existing budget envelope. Some additional funding has already been identified by the Government to support engagement with the Council on its ambitions for growth. The Shared Planning Service is in ongoing discussions around how that additional funding might be secured. In the event of significant additional work being required as a result of the wider issues identified above, the service will need to review the available budget for the Local Plan against its other ongoing priorities.

### **b) Staffing Implications**

There are no immediate staffing implications from this report. Delivery of the plans proposed includes assumptions about the staff resources required. In the event of significant additional staff resources being required, to deliver the plans proposed, the service will need to review its available staff resources against wider programme priorities. See also a) Financial implications above.

### **c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

There is no decision to be made as part of this report in relation to the content of emerging development plans. The development plans will each be subject to Equalities Impact Assessment at each stage during their development.

### **d) Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

There is no decision to be made as part of this report in relation to the content of emerging development plans. Notwithstanding, development plans provide an opportunity to address the aspects of the environment that can be influenced by the planning system. These aspects will be considered by a range of evidence including via a Sustainability Appraisal as the plans are prepared. One of the big themes for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan identified in The First Proposals is climate change.



Evidence has been produced to inform the plan, including a study on how the plan can assist with the journey towards net zero carbon.

#### **e) Procurement Implications**

There are no immediate procurement implications from this report. In the event of significant additional evidence being required to deliver the plans proposed, including for example if updates were needed to account for the delay in the plan-making timetable, the service will need to review its available budget against wider programme priorities. See also a) Financial implications above.

#### **f) Community Safety Implications**

There is no decision to be made as part of this report in relation to the content of emerging development plans.

### **5 Consultation and communication considerations**

Consultation and engagement are a key element of the plan making. Future stages of the Local Plan and NECAAP, whenever they take place, will involve consultations meeting the Councils' Statement of Community Involvement. As described in the main body of the report, officers recommend that the issues raised in the report should be communicated via an addendum to the published LDS on the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning website.

### **6 Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- [Greater Cambridge Local Development Scheme \(greatercambridgeplanning.org\)](https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org), August 2022
- [Greater Cambridge First Proposals consultation commentary regarding water availability, November 2021](#)
- [Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board papers, 28 September 2023](#)
- [Long-term plan for housing: Secretary of State's speech - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- [Joint statement from local leaders and the Combined Authority Mayor on Cambridge 2040 announcement - Cambridge City Council](#), 19 December 2023
- [Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: consultation on implementation of plan-making reforms - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)



- [Government response to the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy consultation - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-reforms-to-national-planning-policy-consultation) ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- [Agenda for Cabinet on Thursday, 28 September 2023, 10.00 a.m. \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk/2023/09/28/agenda-for-cabinet-on-thursday-28-september-2023-10-00-a-m), includes Response to Consultation on Plan-making reforms implementation
- [Decision - Response to Consultation on Plan-making reforms Implementation \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk/2023/10/07/decision-response-to-consultation-on-plan-making-reforms-implementation), 7 October 2023

## **7 Appendices**

Appendix 1: Local Plan Timetable Update - Addendum to the Greater Cambridge Development Scheme 2022

## **8 Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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[jonathan.dixon@greatercambridgeplanning.org](mailto:jonathan.dixon@greatercambridgeplanning.org)

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## Appendix 1:

# Local Plan Timetable Update - Addendum to the Greater Cambridge Local Development Scheme 2022, March 2024

## Introduction

1. This Greater Cambridge Local Development Scheme Addendum provides an update regarding the Local Plan Timetable (previously called the Local Development Scheme (LDS)), which is a timetable for the production of new or revised development plan documents that set out the planning policy framework for Greater Cambridge. It is prepared jointly between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council as the plans in preparation are both joint plans for the authorities combined area. The Councils are required to keep the Timetable up to date.
2. The latest LDS was agreed by the Councils in 2022. However, continuing uncertainties regarding key external dependencies for the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan (GCLP) - in particular relating to water availability and transport strategy, and more recently the Government's programme for Greater Cambridge - have meant that the timetable expectations agreed in 2022 cannot now be met. Officers recommend an indicative revised timetable for preparing the GCLP under the new plan-making system, which would achieve Gateway 1, the start of the formal 30-month process, by autumn/winter 2025.
3. The Addendum also provides an update in respect of the timetable for the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (NECAAP). In particular, this takes account of the latest timetable for the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant (CWWTP) Development Consent Order (DCO) process seeking to relocate the CWWTP to Honey Hill, given both the NECAAP and the GCLP preferred option strategy are predicated on the relocation taking place. The future of the NECAAP will be kept under review once timings are clearer and taking into account the implications of, and options provided by, the new plan making system. This will be done in the context of seeking to provide a clear planning framework for this key strategic site as soon as possible.
4. A specific timetable for both plans will be published when there is clarity on the external dependencies of water, transport the WWTP DCO and the new plan-making system.

## Background: Local Plan Timetable

5. The Local Plan Timetable (previously called the Local Development Scheme (LDS), a change made by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023) identifies the expected timings for the production of new or revised documents that set out the planning policy framework for Greater Cambridge. The Councils are required to keep the timetable up to date. In a Written Ministerial Statement by Michael Gove in December 2023, all Councils were requested to provide updates on their timetables to the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC). The latest timetable was agreed by the Councils in 2022. That document listed the below expected future timings for the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan (GCLP) and North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (NECAAP), both being prepared jointly between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council. These timings are now out of date or cannot be met and will need to be updated once there is sufficient certainty to identify revised programmes. This Addendum to the LDS sets out an updated indicative timetable for the GCLP and position on the NECAAP.

**Table 1: Plan-making stages as set out in the adopted LDS 2022**

Plan	Draft Plan stage	Proposed Submission consultation	Submission to government
GCLP	Autumn/Winter 2023	Autumn 2024  Note: to follow the outcome of CWWTP DCO	Summer/Autumn 2025  Note: subject to the outcome of CWWTP DCO
NECAAP	Summer 2020 (completed)	Autumn 2024  Note: Proposed Submission plan agreed in January 2022 for consultation to follow the outcome of CWWTP DCO	Summer/Autumn 2025  Note: subject to the outcome of CWWTP DCO

## Key dependencies for determining a future GCLP timetable

6. The primary external determinants of the future GCLP timetable centre upon water availability, the transport strategy, the CWWTP DCO and the new national plan-making system. The Government has also made a number of statements promoting much higher growth levels for Cambridge than in the emerging Joint Local Plan. The Cambridge 2040 initiative may also have

implications for the local plan timetable that are unresolved at this time. These are all considered below.

## Water supply

7. Water supply has become an increasingly significant issue for planning in Greater Cambridge in recent months. Development needs in the adopted Local Plans were met by Cambridge Water's current Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) adopted in 2019. Concerns regarding the impact of water abstraction levels on the health of water courses were identified in the Councils' Integrated Water Management Study, firstly as part of the assessment of strategic spatial options considered for the new GCLP (2020) and then as part of the Outline Water Cycle Study (2021) which provided part of the evidence base for the level of development needs identified at the time of the First Proposals. The study anticipated that the new Regional Water Plan and Cambridge Water's detailed Water Resource Management Plan would provide clarity on the water supply position. The outcome of the WRMP process is still awaited. In the meantime, concerns about the adequacy of the water supply and impacts on the environment, linked to the impacts of climate change, led to the Environment Agency objecting to a number of large-scale planning applications, including those in the adopted local plans, and raising objections to the emerging WRMP 2024. This has created delays in delivery of sites that have been identified to meet the development needs for homes and jobs in the area. The seriousness of the issue was highlighted by Council Leaders in letters to government Ministers, urging them to take steps to resolve the issues.
8. Government has established a Cambridge Water Scarcity Group that brings together relevant government departments and other stakeholders, including local authority officers. In his speech in July 2023, the Secretary of State, Michael Gove MP, described the purpose of the group as being 'to identify and accelerate plans to address water constraints'. It went on to say that 'The Group will include all relevant partners to understand what it would take to accelerate building the proposed new Fens Reservoir and enabling Cambridge to reach its economic potential'. About £9m has been identified by government to address the water supply issues. A range of actions are being developed by the group focusing on bringing forward supply options, reducing demand through efficiency measures in new and existing buildings, and measures to improve the resilience of our watercourses.
9. Whilst these are positive steps, this work is at an early stage. The statutory process for agreeing Cambridge Water's WRMP 2024 has continued to be delayed. On the advice of the Environment Agency, Defra has requested that further information is provided by Cambridge Water and they submit a revised WRMP by the end of February 2024. It is not yet clear when, and on what basis, a final decision will be made.

10. We have set out at each plan making stage the need for confirmation that a sustainable water supply is available to support development needs. We do not yet know the outcome in terms of water availability to inform the new local plan and in particular how much development can be planned for based upon available water supplies and whether or not this would meet our objectively assessed need for jobs and homes in full (subject also to other planning considerations including deliverability). We continue to engage with the Environment Agency, Cambridge Water, central government and other relevant stakeholders to seek to understand the evolving position. As soon as there is clarity on water supply, our consultants will update our Water Cycle Study to understand the number of jobs and homes that can be supported by a sustainable water supply throughout the plan period as new water infrastructure comes forward, in particular the planned water transfer anticipated in 2032 and new Fens Reservoir around 2036, and in the context of further future planned reductions in water abstraction licences.

## Transport Strategy

11. To ensure an appropriate development strategy in the GCLP, it is important that it is integrated with a Transport Strategy that ensures development can happen without significant adverse transport impacts as well as ensuring that the plan addresses the challenges of climate change and local environmental impacts and that the development strategy is supported by sustainable travel options.
12. Transport modelling of previous stages of plan-making reflected the transport strategy contained in both the County Council's former Transport Strategy for the Cambridge area and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) Local Transport and Connectivity Plan. The earlier GCLP proposals therefore included an assumption regarding traffic reductions in the Cambridge urban area, but did not assume any particular scheme. This was to be delivered by the Greater Cambridge Partnership's (GCP) City Access proposals. Assumptions were also made about the role of the transport corridors and their impact on traffic movement alongside other planned infrastructure schemes including all the GCP radial public transport schemes.
13. The recent decision by the GCP Board not to take forward the Making Connections proposal as part of the wider City Access programme, and to pause the Cambridge South East Transport Scheme (CSETS) due to rising programme costs, means that further work is underway, including additional transport modelling, to consider the implications of this decision upon the assumptions contained within the earlier agreed transport strategies.
14. Once there is greater clarity, discussions will be required with the Combined Authority, the County Council and GCP to seek to understand what alternative proposals to enable more reliable journeys into and around the city might look like and what their impact may be, with the goal of identifying a transport

strategy and its implications that could support the emerging GCLP whilst addressing wider climate, air quality, and place objectives. At this stage it is not clear how quickly this matter will be resolved.

### Government's planning reforms

15. It is expected that by Autumn 2024 Government will make changes to how local plans are prepared, including the contents of plans, how they are consulted on, and the process that needs to be undertaken, with the overall aim of streamlining plan-making. Key proposed changes include:
- a) the formal stages of a local plan review are expected to be completed within 30 months;
  - b) the formal process involves two public consultations, the first to test the emerging plan and the second on the draft plan itself, and three Gateway reviews designed to allow independent review of an authority's plan-making process to reduce risk further down the line;
  - c) the proposal to create National Development Management policies;
  - d) the first cohort of "front runner" plans under the new system could start in autumn 2024, with remaining authorities grouped into sequential 6-month plan-making commencement windows ("waves");
  - e) whilst the intention is for there to be a single local plan for an area, new supplementary plans are to be introduced to respond to opportunities for specific sites quickly and positively outside of, and potentially ahead of, the local plan process, that would have the same weight as a local plan; and
  - f) Plans seeking to be adopted under the current system will need to be submitted by 30 June 2025 and adopted by 31 December 2026.
16. The Councils responded to the Government's consultation on these proposed changes in autumn 2023, which relate to wider changes to the planning system that will take place via the implementation of the [Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023](#). The transitional arrangements to the new system provide for emerging local plans to progress under the current plan-making system if they are submitted for independent public examination by end of June 2025. Given the external dependencies addressed in this LDS Addendum, including the CWWTP relocation DCO where a decision is not now anticipated until autumn 2024 (see below), it is not possible to set a realistic timetable that would enable the GCLP to meet the currently stated deadline for submission under the current system, even if the programme were to be compressed. As such the GCLP is now expected to need to be prepared under the new plan-making system, as discussed later in this Addendum.

### North East Cambridge Area - Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant relocation

17. Effective and efficient development of the North East Cambridge site is dependent on the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant (CWWTP) via a separate Development Consent Order (DCO) process that



Anglian Water is undertaking. Publication of the Proposed Submission version of the GCLP is dependent on the outcome of the DCO process; this is the same for the NECAAP, noting that the Councils agreed in January 2022 a Proposed Submission NECAAP for future public consultation, contingent upon the separate Development Control Order being undertaken by Anglian Water for the relocation of the Waste Water Treatment Plant being approved.

18. At the time of the earlier timetable's agreement, officers were expecting the DCO to be submitted by Anglian Water in Autumn 2022. The DCO was submitted in April 2023. The DCO Examination process is ongoing with a decision expected by the end of 2024, albeit this date could be affected by a general election. A number of land parcels within the NEC area are already coming forward with planning applications ahead of the NECAAP or GCLP. Delivery of larger scale individual development parcels within North East Cambridge also remain subject to resolution of the water issue outlined above. The future of the NECAAP will be kept under review once timings are clearer and taking into account the implications of, and options provided by, the new plan making system and including taking into account the other issues raised in this Local Plan Timetable Addendum. This will be done in the context of seeking to provide a clear planning framework for this key strategic site as soon as possible.

### **Cambridge 2040/Cambridge Delivery Group**

19. In Summer 2023, the Government announced its intention to significantly increase levels of development in Cambridge beyond the levels outlined in the First Proposals. It has established a "Cambridge Delivery Group" to progress that ambition. Peter Freeman, the Chair of Homes England, has been appointed to lead that programme and the Group have subsequently commissioned a number of studies. Engagement with Peter Freeman and the team of civil servants tasked with bringing forward the Government's proposals has been ongoing since that time. As referred to in the Water Supply section, in the autumn of 2023, the Government also established a "Water Scarcity Group" with dedicated funding to explore the particular challenges associated with water scarcity that impact the area's current and potential future growth.
20. Senior officers and the Leaders of the Councils are in regular dialogue with the project team to seek to understand how and in what way the Government's ambitions will interact with, and impact on, the Local Plan process. The continued requirement in the NPPF that the local plan is "justified," means that the plan and strategy will need to be tested against and supported by evidence. If brought forward, government's ambitions for a significant quantum of additional new homes and jobs would be expected to impact upon the conclusions drawn in the evidential studies and modelling that the Councils have already prepared, as are required to support the progression and examination of their joint Local Plan. Given the current uncertainty over when the specific form of Government's Cambridge 2040 ambitions will be known,



officers are not at present able to determine what the impact of this national project on the local plan preparation timetable will be.

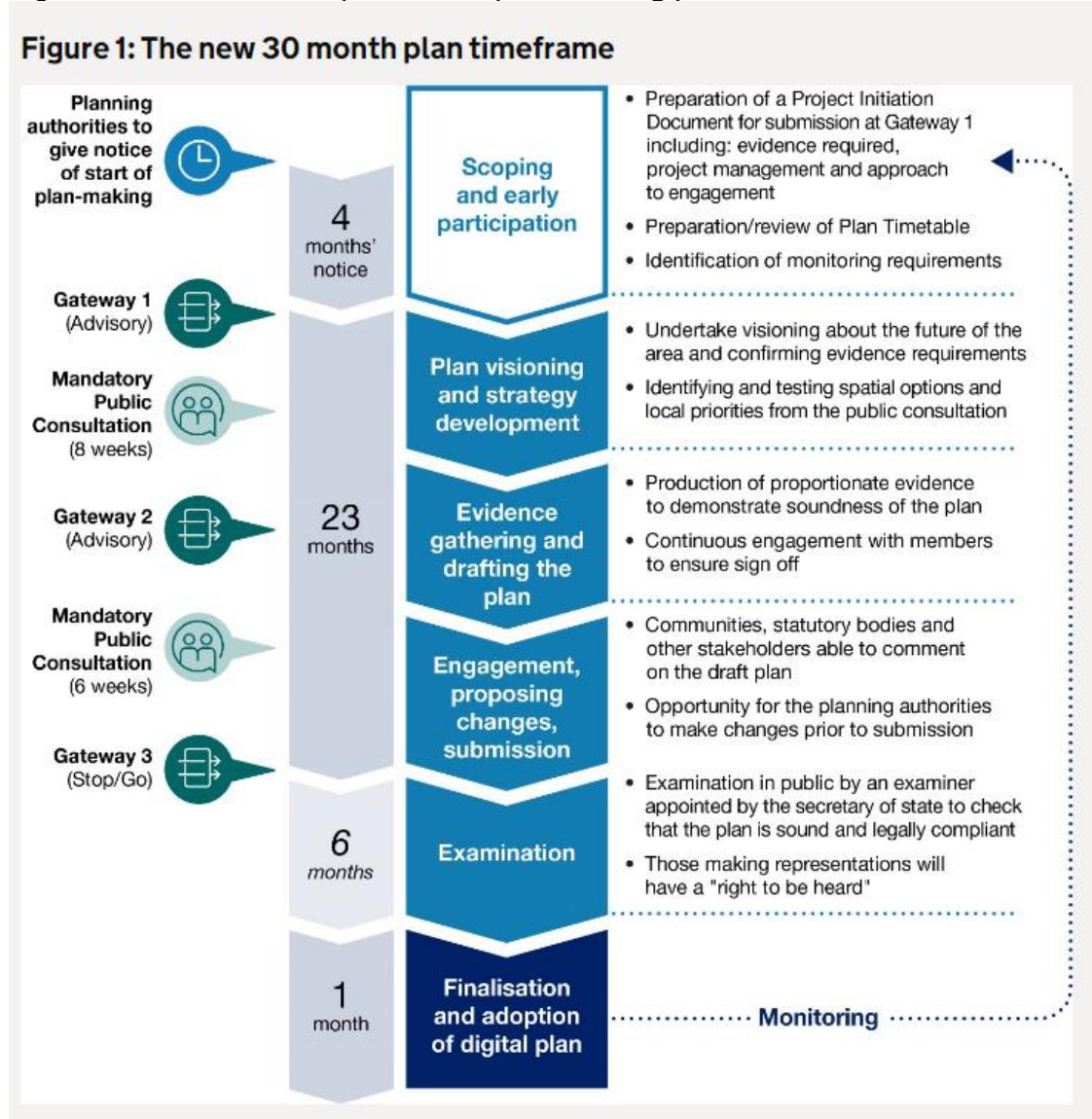
## **Additional factors that could affect the future programme**

21. Other uncertainties that could affect the Local Plan Timetable include confirmation of the development opportunity around the proposed Cambourne station associated with East West Rail, and the forthcoming general election.

## **What this all means for the GCLP Timetable**

22. In the context of ongoing uncertainties in relation to water supply, transport strategy, the new plan-making system and Government's Cambridge 2040 proposals, one thing that has become clear is that it will not be possible to progress the GCLP under the current plan-making system if the cut-off date for the transitional arrangements remains as end of June 2025. Officers are therefore exploring with government the potential for being a "front runner" for the new planning process, including the potential merits and opportunities it could bring and in order to minimise any further delay to the emerging GCLP. These include the new system including a prescribed period for plan making and examination that has the potential to ensure a much more expedient process than the Councils experienced for the 2018 Local Plans. It seems reasonable to assume that adoption of the GCLP under the new system would likely be similar to that if the Councils were able to progress under the current system, and potentially earlier.
23. As a part of engagement with DLUCH on this topic, officers continue to seek further clarity as to how work completed to date on the emerging GCLP could be adapted to meet the requirements of the new system. It is understood that Government will publish new regulations and guidance for the new plan-making system in autumn 2024. Until such time as we have clarity on the specific requirements of the new system it is difficult to set a specific detailed local plan timetable. However, it is not unreasonable to say that an indicative timetable for a local plan under the new system, on the basis of current understanding, is to achieve Gateway 1, the start of the formal 30-month process, by autumn/winter 2025. The new plan-making process and the Government's prescribed timeline for their preparation is included as Figure 1 below. Once there is more clarity on the full range of current external uncertainties, including details of the new plan-making process and whether the Councils are accepted as front-runners, officers will be able to bring a more specific timetable for the full plan-making process to Members.

Figure 1: Government's prescribed plan-making process and timetable



## Conclusion: next steps

24. In summary, ongoing uncertainty regarding a range of key external determinants that are not within the control of the Councils mean that it is only possible at the present time to provide an indicative revised timetable for the GCLP as set out at paragraph 23. The NECAAP will be kept under review as set out at paragraph 18. Officers are continuing to develop elements of planning policy that are not contingent on these external matters and to monitor closely the progress being made on the matters above. The indicative timetable is therefore to look to transition the GCLP into the new plan-making system with the formal stages starting by autumn/winter 2025. Officers will bring specific timetables for the plans at the earliest opportunity once the external uncertainties are resolved.

## STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

**To:**

Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure

Planning & Transport Scrutiny Committee, 19 March 2024

**Report by:**

Stephen Kelly, Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development

Email: [stephen.kelly@greatercambridgeplanning.org](mailto:stephen.kelly@greatercambridgeplanning.org)

**Wards affected:**

All

### Key Decision

## 1. Executive Summary

1. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the Council will engage on planning matters and must be reviewed at least every five years. This report presents a reviewed and updated draft SCI and seeks agreement following a period of public consultation for its consideration and adoption. The review of the SCI has considered matters including enhanced digital opportunities, lessons learned since the Covid-19 pandemic, opportunities to enhance participation on planning applications including youth engagement, and has reviewed the neighbourhood plan support offer.

## 2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to agree:

1. Consider the main issues raised in the public consultation, agree responses to the representations received and agree proposed changes to the Statement of Community Involvement as set out in the Statement of Consultation (Appendix 1 of this report);
2. Subject to (a), adopt the amended Greater Cambridge Statement of Community Involvement (Appendix 2); and
3. Delegate to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for planning policy and transport and the Chair and Spokesperson for the Planning Policy and Transport Scrutiny Committee, the authority to make any necessary editing changes to the SCI prior to publication.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) introduced the requirement for local authorities to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement, and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) requires local planning authorities to review their SCIs at least every five years. The current Greater Cambridge SCI was adopted in 2019. It is now over four years old, and the review gives the opportunity to consult and consider responses and publish a new SCI before the five years expires. It should be noted that the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 does not include a requirement to produce an SCI in anticipation that setting out consultation approaches will be part of the early stages of the new local plan making process when this is brought in.
- 3.2 The SCI sets out how to engage in the planning process in Greater Cambridge. The SCI describes how the public, businesses, interest groups and individuals can get involved in influencing the local planning policy, the planning application process and neighbourhood planning, and help to shape where we live and work.

#### **The Statement of Community Involvement Review**

- 3.3 The SCI provides an introduction to the overall planning process, then moves into detail about how stakeholders can get involved in the preparation of plans including Local Plans (which includes Area Action Plans), supplementary planning documents and neighbourhood plans. A further section identifies the mechanisms by which stakeholders will be provided an opportunity to engage in the planning application process. An overview of the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan or Order is provided, followed by the broad support available to community groups that are preparing such documents.
- 3.4 Whilst there is no mandatory requirement for consultation on a draft SCI, Cabinet in September 2023 agreed, to a consultation period of six weeks. The draft document was published on the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning website and stakeholders were notified to seek their views. There were two 'in-person' consultation events at Northstowe Market on Sunday 22 October 2023 and The Meadows Community Centre on Friday 27 October 2023 where members of the public were invited to find out more about the SCI and give their views. An online webinar was held on Thursday 16 November 2023 when members of the public participated in a question-and-answer session with officers.
- 3.5 There were a total of 53 representations received during the consultation period from a total of 24 separate individuals or organisations. This is more than the representations received from the previous SCI consultation and is typical of a document of this nature. There was general support for the aims and approach of the draft SCI. The Statement of Consultation (Appendix 1) details the comments received, provides a summary of the main issues raised, and how they have been taken into account. A summary of the changes to the SCI include:

- Clarified key terms and definitions, corrected typographical errors and ensured correct hyperlinks are included;
- Updated references to planning legislation;
- Amended paragraphs in the SCI which were unclear to the reader, including the scope of community development forums, clarifying what a development plan is, the monitoring of policy documents; and
- The statutory and non-statutory consultee listed has been amended to ensure the correct organisations are listed.

## **4. Implications**

### **(a) Financial Implications**

The revised draft SCI does not introduce additional costs, and also seeks to make good use of digital opportunities for consultation. The SCI outlines the community engagement and delivery of consultations of which the costs will be covered by funding for specific projects or programmes, or through planning application fees from pre-application advice. In specific cases, the costs charged to applicants reflect the cost to the Council for providing support and consultation services. This ensures that those who benefit financially from the Councils Planning Service make an appropriate contribution to the cost of service delivery.

The SCI also details the neighbourhood plan making support offer to Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Forums. This includes funding for the Strategic Environmental Assessment screening, has been increased from £1,000 to £2,000 maximum, and the offer of up to £1000 for a health check has been removed, reflecting experience as to where the Councils can offer most value to the process.

### **(b) Staffing Implications**

There are no specific staffing implications of this review. It is currently anticipated that completing the SCI review can be delivered within our existing staffing resources. This will be kept under review alongside other work priorities.

### **(c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

The Greater Cambridge SCI has been informed by an equalities impact assessment. This has considered to have a positive effect on providing digital engagement and consultation through our websites to groups who may have previously felt excluded whilst at the same time ensuring people who cannot or do not have access to digital communication means are not digitally excluded by use of suitable means of communication, for example, use of large print, audio or braille.

### **(d) Environmental Implications**

There are no direct implications. The Greater Cambridge SCI review considers opportunities to use digital and electronic communication which may help in reducing the need to travel.

### **(e) Procurement Implications**

None.

### **(f) Community Safety Implications**

There are no direct community safety implications arising from the report, although the positive engagement opportunities sought by the draft SCI may help with community wellbeing.

## **5. Consultation and communication considerations**

There were a total of 53 representations received during the consultation period and they have been considered when preparing the SCI attached at Appendix 1. The communication of the results of the consultation, and of the final adopted document will follow standard procedure and will be in keeping with expectations and agreed approaches of both Councils.

## **6. Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

### **Earlier versions of the SCI**

[Statement of Community Involvement 2019](#)

[Statement of Community Involvement Addendum June 2020](#)

[Statement of Community Involvement Updated Addendum December 2020](#)

## **7. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Statement of Consultation

Appendix 2: Greater Cambridge Statement of Community Involvement March 2024

Appendix 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

## **8. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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# **Greater Cambridge Statement of Community Involvement**

## **Statement of Consultation – Adoption Stage**

**March 2024**

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 Local Planning Authorities are currently required under Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to prepare and review a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) requires Local Planning Authorities to review their SCI every five years. It should be note that the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 does not include a requirement to produce an SCI in anticipation that setting out consultation approaches will be part of the early stages of the new plan making process when this is commenced.

## 2. Background

2.1 The Greater Cambridge Statement of Community Involvement sets out how Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Councils will consult on planning policy documents, planning applications and advise and support the preparation of neighbourhood plans. The methods of consultation publicity set out in the SCI identifies the minimum standards that the councils will apply when fulfilling their statutory duties.

2.2 The SCI is structured in five chapters:

- Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the SCI, setting out why a new SCI has been prepared and a general overview of the planning system.
- Chapter 2 sets out how residents, businesses and stakeholders can participate in the planning process and sets out the formal planning stages.
- Chapter 3 explains in detail how the community can engage in the plan making process, including setting out how the councils will consult on planning policy documents including Local Plans, Supplementary Planning Documents and neighbourhood plans.
- Chapter 4 explains the development management process and how the community can engage, including how to be involved at pre-application stage, how to submit representations when an application is being consulted on and how to participate in the decision making process or at planning appeals.
- Chapter 5 sets out how in certain circumstances the community can be involved in the allocation of planning obligation funds.
- Chapter 6 provides a high level overview of how the councils will provide advice and support for neighbourhood planning.

- Chapter 7 identifies how the councils will monitor and review public engagement related to planning.

### **3. Preparation of the draft Statement of Community Involvement**

3.1 In preparing the draft SCI, informal consultation was carried out with a range of officers from within the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service including representatives from Development Management, Built and Natural Environment, Policy, Strategic Sites, S106, Compliance and Application Support. Once drafted, sections of the SCI were reviewed by relevant technical officers within the service, with suggested amendments incorporated into the draft document.

### **4. Public consultation on the draft Statement of Community Involvement**

4.1 The SCI was approved for public consultation at the Cambridge City Council Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee on 28 September 2023 and at the South Cambridgeshire District Council Cabinet meeting on 28 September 2023.

4.2 The consultation on the draft SCI took place for six weeks from 18 October to 29 November 2023.

4.3 The Equality Impact Assessment supporting document was made available alongside the draft SCI.

4.4 There are no specific regulations for consulting on a Statement of Community Involvement, however, in order to take a comprehensive approach, the Councils consulted widely on the draft SCI. The consultation followed the approach taken to adopting the 2019 version of the SCI that included directly notifying the Specific Consultation Bodies, other Local Authorities, Parish Councils and Residents' Associations, developers and agents, and a range of other national, regional and local organisations, and other individuals who wish to be kept informed of planning policy consultations.

4.5 To engage more widely with the local community, businesses and stakeholders in the Greater Cambridge area, other methods of notification used were:

- Publicising on the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning [website](#)
- Posts on social media platforms including Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn

4.6 Two in person events and one online webinar were held during the consultation period, as follows:

- Northstowe Market: 9:30am to 12:30pm on Sunday 22 October 2023 (Northstowe Hub, The Community Centre, 1 The Green, Pathfinder Way, Northstowe CB24 1FD)
- Café Drop in, The Meadows Community Centre: 11am to 2pm on Friday 27 October (299 Arbury Rd, Cambridge CB4 2JL)
- Webinar on Microsoft Teams: 6pm to 7pm on Thursday 16 November 2023.

4.7 A summary of the questions raised at the consultation events include:

- What is the process for neighbourhood plan groups to update or review their plan?
- How can S106 agreements be enforced and what are the trigger points for the Local Planning Authority when residents don't feel that they have been honoured?
- Why isn't it mandatory for developers to engage with communities in the planning process?
- Why don't the community forums cover all areas of Greater Cambridge?

## 5. Consultation methodology

5.1 During the consultation period (Wednesday 18 October 2023 to Wednesday 29 November 2023) the draft SCI and associated supporting documents were available to view on the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning website at:

[www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/about-us/statement-of-community-involvement/](http://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/about-us/statement-of-community-involvement/) and comments could be submitted using the online consultation system.

5.2 The draft SCI was made available for inspection at the following locations during normal opening hours at:

- Cambridge City Council's Customer Service Centre (Mandela House, 4 Regent Street, Cambridge, CB2 1BY)
- South Cambridgeshire District Council Reception (South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne, Cambridge, CB23 6EA)
- Cambridge Central Library (7 Lion Yard Cambridge CB2 3QD)

5.3 The following contact email address, telephone number and address for the Planning Policy Team were included on all publicity materials allowing those experiencing difficulties accessing the documents online to seek assistance. Officers were able to facilitate alternative methods for viewing the documents and for comments to be submitted including via email or post.

- Email: [local.plan@greatercambridgeplanning.org](mailto:local.plan@greatercambridgeplanning.org)

- Telephone: 01954 713694
- Address: Planning Policy, Cambridge City Council, PO Box 700, Cambridge, CB1 0JH

## 6. Representations received

6.1 10 separate individuals or organisations responded to the consultation through the online consultation system. 11 further responses were submitted by email and three were submitted by written response. Therefore, a total of 24 individuals or organisations responded.

6.2 The above respondents provided 52 comments. Overall, the comments supported the intent and requirements set out in the draft SCI. The number of comments received for each chapter of the SCI are set out in Table 1 below:

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Number of reps received</b>
Chapter 1: Introduction	14
Chapter 2: How can I get involved in the planning process?	8
Chapter 3: Our methods for community engagement in planning policy	4
Chapter 4: Methods for community engagement at the planning application stage	10
Chapter 5: How can the community be involved in the allocation of planning obligation funds?	4
Chapter 6: How the local community can prepare a neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order	4
Chapter 7: Monitoring and review	1
Appendix 1: Glossary	0
Appendix 2: Consultation Bodies for Plan-making	4

Appendix 3: Council offices where planning consultation documents will be made available for public inspection	1
Appendix 4: Statutory requirements for consulting on planning applications	0
Appendix 5: Consultation Bodies for a planning application	5
Background documents: Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)	0

6.3 After the close of the consultation, the key issues raised were considered by the Councils and changes were made to the SCI, where appropriate. These are set out in the following section under each chapter heading of the SCI along with a summary of how they have been addressed.

## 7. Summary tables of main issues raised during consultation and how they have been addressed

### 7.1 Introduction

Total representations received: 14

Main issues raised in representations	Councils' assessment	Proposed modifications
<p>General support for the aims and approach of the draft SCI including from Historic England and Natural England. Four 'no comment' responses. National Highways welcome acknowledgement as a statutory consultee.</p>	<p>General support is noted and welcomed.</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>
<p>The SCI shouldn't focus solely on "online" processes. It should consider what should be done for people who are engaging digitally who find it difficult and off-putting.</p>	<p>The SCI supports both online and offline engagement and consultation and this is set out throughout the document.</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>
<p>The digital maps and software are slow, difficult to use and of poor quality so should be upgraded to a high standard to be user-friendly. It would be more useful to refer to the interactive map which</p>	<p>The Council sets out to produce high quality maps that are user-friendly. Paragraph 3.7 refers to the First Proposals consultation and the corresponding map rather than other adopted local plan maps. We are continuing to</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>



includes layers for the adopted local plans rather than just the First Proposals map.	review our digital tools and websites to improve the quality of our mapping facilities.	
The SCI should use less planning jargon. It should define what a SEA/strategic environmental assessment screening is and clarify the meaning of a neighbourhood planning health check.	The SCI minimises where planning jargon or acronyms are used. Appendix 1: Glossary, sets out terms and definitions of any abbreviations used, including SEA. The definitions of strategic environmental assessments and health checks are set out and explained in detail in Chapter 6: How the local community can prepare a neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order.	No proposed modifications.
Paragraph 1.4 has a factual error with the date referring to the Covid-19 pandemic.	Paragraph 1.4 reflects correct dates when referring to the Covid- 19 pandemic. Noted that there is a factual error.	Amend paragraph 1.4 to reflect correct dates for the Covid-19 pandemic to read as follows: In June 2020 and December 2020 GCSP published an addendum.
Sustainability should be a thread throughout all planning decisions including conservation and this anomaly should be addressed.	Sustainable development is a thread throughout planning decision making. Paragraphs 8 and 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) set out how planning can contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and in planning decision making and these are referred to in paragraphs 1.12 and 1.13 of the SCI.	Insert reference in paragraph 1.13 of the SCI to paragraph 11 of the NPPF, to read as follows: The Local Planning Authorities are responsible for making decisions to guide where sustainable development takes place

		guided by paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the local development plan.
The right type, mix and design of housing should have much stronger local input. Can developers be mandated to consider the needs of accessibility in providing smaller dwellings.	Housing types and design is an issue that is addressed through the adopted Development Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) where relevant. The SCI supports early developer engagement with local communities to understand local needs and aspirations.	No proposed modifications.
There should be an executive summary at the beginning of the document to demonstrate the changes that have been made.	The changes from the adopted 2019 SCI and amendments made to the draft SCI for consultation were set out in the Committee Reports as well as the introduction of the consultation version of the SCI. The purpose of the SCI is to set out how the Councils will engage on planning matters and highlights of the updates to previous versions of the SCI are not appropriate.	No proposed modifications.
The document format is difficult to read online in when scrolling up and down to read the two columns.	The format of the document has been amended to be user friendly for both reading online and in print version.	Amend the format of the document to remove two columns and just have paragraphs in one column.

<p>The consultation system used to consult on the SCI is not very user friendly.</p>	<p>Comments duly noted on the process of submitting representations as part of the consultation on the SCI. The Councils are reviewing how the consultation system can be improved and we welcome user feedback.</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>
<p>It is disappointing that the drop-in events were launched so close to the beginning of the consultation, therefore there was very little notice provided for people who may have been interested in attending. In addition, both were located in the north of the city and nothing really convenient for parishes in more southerly districts.</p>	<p>We set out to engage and consult with our communities and make use of the resources available to the Councils in ensuring a comprehensive consultation. The in person events were launched prior to the start of the consultation and the online webinar was held to facilitate engagement for those who were not able to attend the in person events. The events received positive feedback and a good level of attendance. Comments on the lead in time of our events are duly noted. In future consultations the Councils will seek to give longer lead in times where practical, and we will review the preparation of in person and online events.</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>

## 7.2 How can I get involved in the planning process?

Total representations received: 8

Main issues raised in representations	Councils' assessment	Proposed modification
Natural England support the principle of meaningful and early engagement with communities, organisations, and statutory bodies in local planning matters.	General support is noted and welcomed.	No proposed modifications.
The forum examples provided in paragraph 2.5 do not make smaller South Cambridgeshire parish councils feel included. Could hubs or joint areas be created to include these small villages or parishes? There is no community forum for the southern edge of Cambridge including the biomedical campus.	We wish to engage with all our parishes. Whilst the areas forums focus on specific areas of major change, we also regularly hold more general district wide parish forums. We note the comments regarding areas that could be addressed by additional areas forums and will consider these with our Communities team colleagues.	No proposed modifications.
It is important to engage with youth in early stages of development to understand their aspirations.	The SCI supports youth engagement and considers the importance of early engagement. Paragraphs 4.14 to 4.16 set out the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning youth engagement	No proposed modifications.

	service that provides opportunities for young people to be involved in planning proposals.	
To reach those without internet access and who may not regularly use outdoor spaces, could notice be given in appropriate newsletters and or through local newspapers.	We are legally required to publish in “a newspaper circulating in the locality in which the land to which the application relates is situated.” Publishing in the Cambridge Independent provides an appropriate area circulation. Having to publish additional notices in local newsletters/papers of each village would incur significant additional costs for the Council with respect to additional time/resources and the actual cost of having to advertise, and is not considered practicable. If local newsletters wish to use the information on planning matters or consultations it is available from our website.	No proposed modifications.
Longer time periods should be allowed for consultations, graduated by size of development. Notification letters take 3 to 5 days of the 21 day period.	The 21 day consultation period is set out by the Development Management Procedure Order (2015). Whilst officer discretion on a case by case basis can allow slightly longer times where it is felt necessary, it would not be appropriate for this to be extended as the norm on all applications. The Council has a duty to meet statutory targets for determining applications within 8 or 13 weeks depending on their size and adding further consultation time beyond	No proposed modifications.

	<p>this as a norm would potentially jeopardise the ability for the Local Planning Authority to meet these targets.</p>	
<p>Unless it is mandated that developers should work with parish councils before submitting plans, the needs of local people will not be met.</p>	<p>The Councils are unable to require developers to undertake engagement, and we follow guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Councils strongly encourage developer engagement and paragraph 2.3 recognises the significant role that developers play in engaging with local communities. This paragraph has been amended to identify parish councils and residents associations.</p>	<p>Amend paragraph 2.3 to identify parish councils and residents' associations.</p>
<p>The document talks about 'how I can get involved' but does not talk about how residents can make representations to their parish council prior to applications being received by the Local Planning Authority. The lack of information about the parish council role shows lack of recognition about the role that they play.</p>	<p>The Councils recognise the important role that ward and parish councils play in residents being involved in planning process. Paragraph 2.2 of the SCI sets out how in addition to the formal planning stages, residents can speak with local ward or parish Councillors about planning matters or proposals. Paragraph 4.22 also sets out how residents can present their views to Councillors before a planning application is determined.</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>

The hyperlinks in paragraph 2.5 to Northstowe and Waterbeach forums do not work.	The hyperlinks in paragraph 2.5 to Northstowe and Waterbeach forums have been amended.	Amend the hyperlinks in paragraph 2.5 to Northstowe and Waterbeach forums.
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### 7.3 Our methods for community engagement in planning policy

Total representations received: 4

<b>Main issues raised in representations</b>	<b>Councils' assessment</b>	<b>Proposed Modification</b>
Historic England welcome the acknowledgement as a statutory consultee under duty to co-operate.	General support is noted and welcomed.	No proposed modifications.
The SCI should use less planning jargon. It should define what is meant by 'local' in the context of a 'local plan' for people who are not familiar with Council processes. It should define what a design code is, an SPD, an NDO, and an Action Plan.	The Councils continue to strive to make our documents more accessible and to minimise jargon where we can. The SCI tries to minimise where planning jargon or acronyms are used. Appendix 1: Glossary, sets out terms and definitions of any abbreviations used, including SPD and NDO. The definition of local plans is set out in paragraph 3.4 where it explains what it means in a local context. Design codes are referenced as an example of an SPD.	Amend Appendix 1: Glossary to insert definitions of all acronyms. Amend text referring to Action Plans in paragraph 3.2 to read clarify definition.

	Explanation of Action Plans are set out in paragraph 3.2.	
The hyperlink in paragraph 3.14 to neighbourhood plans does not work.	The hyperlink in paragraph 3.14 to neighbourhood plans has been amended.	Amend hyperlink in paragraph 3.14 to neighbourhood plans has been amended.
What is the decision criteria for the involvement of people in the process of preparing a local plan document?	As part of preparing local plans, the Councils involve the public in engagement at various consultation stages as set out in the SCI. The Councils will typically engage more than set out in national planning regulations. Paragraphs 3.32 to 3.27 explain how individuals and organisations are involved in the planning process.	No proposed modifications.
How do you know you have been missed during the consultation stages?	The Councils endeavour to engage with our communities and notify them of consultation stages through methods set out in paragraph 3.22. Those who have requested of different stages will be notified at each stage of consultation when preparing the local plan. We encourage our communities to stay informed by signing up to the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service self search and save facility 'Public Access' that allows you to choose what you are notified of. Later in the year (2024),	No proposed modifications.



	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning will be providing training on the use of Public Access to raise awareness of its use.	
Secondary and tertiary healthcare is not mentioned in paragraphs 3.1. There is no link between hospital provision and the local plan. There is no reference to hospitals in paragraph 3.4.	Services and facilities such as healthcare are generally classed as infrastructure and include primary, secondary and tertiary services so although they are not explicitly referred to, they are included under the term infrastructure.	No proposed modifications.
The Local Development Scheme update in paragraph 3.9 is overdue.	Comment duly noted. It is not appropriate to include it in the SCI. The Local Development Scheme is set out on both Councils websites and an updated report on the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan is an item on the agenda at the same meeting that is considering the adoption of the SCI.	No proposed modifications.
In paragraph 3.28, as well as the Local Nature Partnership, the SCI should consider engaging (where appropriate and relevant) with Hobson's Conduit Trust, the Cam Valley Forum and other interest groups.	Paragraph 3.28 has been modified to include local interest groups, forums and Trusts and use the Local Nature Partnership as an example of an independent voice for the natural environment.	Modify paragraph 3.28 to read as follows: The Councils are also committed to cooperating with local interest groups, forums and Trusts and have regard to their activities which are relevant to local plan making.

<p>Has the Council set up an open register of organisations which can be invited for consultations? This will allow for a wider range of responses and make sure all communities are represented.</p>	<p>Anyone is able to register to be notified of our consultations as set out in paragraph 3.29. We encourage all members of our communities to be involved so that they are represented in consultation engagement.</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>
<p>Local community centres can act as local billboards for consultations.</p>	<p>Where appropriate, the Councils would consider advertising a consultation at public locations and buildings, such as community centres, libraries or railway stations.</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>
<p>Can the Councils local social workers recommend on under represented groups?</p>	<p>The Local Planning Authority often works with other Council services to identify under represented groups ahead of site specific or Greater Cambridge wide consultations.</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>
<p>Has there been outreach to religious centres?</p>	<p>Through both in-person and online consultation events we seek to engage with as broader range of people from our local communities as possible. In order to try and encourage community participation, the Councils will often promote consultations in public locations that are largely accessible to all members of the community and online through the Councils social media.</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>

## 7.4 Methods for community engagement at the planning application stage

Total representations received: 10

Main issues raised in representations	Councils' assessment	Proposed modification
<p>Why is it not mandatory for developers to engage with the local community in pre-application discussions? Engagement should not be an option. Discussions should be mandated varying on the size of the village and parishes would be interested in developments of 5 or more dwellings or 1 or more business units.</p>	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that developers should, not must, engage with the community on new developments. It doesn't provide any detail of the extent of this engagement or when in the process it should take place. The draft SCI sets out that we feel that early engagement is the most effective way to hear our local community's concerns and aspirations for a scheme so they can inform proposals from the very beginning. Paragraph 4.7 provides examples of good pre-application and early developer engagement with our communities.</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>
<p>It is important to hear feedback from consultations so we know what is happening next in planning decisions.</p>	<p>Paragraph 4.2 sets out that all applications and decisions are available to view online. Paragraph 4.20 explains how notifications of planning applications are published on 'Public Access', that provides a self search and save function that allows you to choose what you are</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>

	notified of. Paragraph 4.30 explains what happens once an application has been determined, with decisions made available to view online through 'Public Access'.	
Pre-application advice and consultation could be expanded to encourage communication between the applicant, Planning Officer and the community. During the pre-application stage there is no joined up communication between these groups leading to applicant bringing forward proposals that area not supported by the local community.	As set out in paragraph 4.4, the SCI encourages early engagement with developers. Local views and concerns can also be addressed in area forums set out in paragraph 2.5, where developers are encouraged to present emerging schemes at an early stage in order to gain local community feedback and to facilitate dialogue with local representatives.	No proposed modifications.
In the map function, it would be useful to include a search button that excludes tree applications. The map should ensure that the City boundary isn't taken as a 'hard edge' when determining who may be interested in planning applications either side of the boundary.	The Council sets out to produce high quality maps that are user-friendly. Comments on the functionality of the maps for planning applications are duly noted.	No proposed modifications.
There should be a Development Control Forum for important applications considered by the JDCC.	There are ongoing reviews of both Council's committee processes currently being undertaken with Councillors from each of the Councils by the Greater Cambridge Shared	No proposed modifications.

	Planning service. The review is considering whether the Development Control Forum should be expanded to JDCC and SCDC or otherwise modified.	
The SCI should specify which Council is responsible for different types of applications. For example, minerals, waste, energy, infrastructure.	Paragraph 1.113 sets out the responsibilities of the Councils and GCSP, including the role in determining applications. It identifies when other infrastructure proposals are dealt with and who by.	No proposed modifications.
What is the threshold to engage in the youth engagement service in paragraph 4.14 to 4.16?	Paragraphs 4.14 to 4.16 identifies that the youth engagement service provides opportunities for young people to be involved in major planning applications.	Amend paragraph 4.15 to identify the threshold for youth engagement to read as follows: '...Giving young people opportunities to be involved in major planning applications'.
How will the councils ensure that developers take all material concerns on board and adapt development to meet local need?	The Councils are unable to require developers to undertake engagement, and we follow guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Councils strongly encourage developer engagement and paragraph 2.3 recognises the significant role that developers play in engaging with local communities.	Amend paragraph 2.3 to identify parish councils and residents associations.

	Paragraph 2.3 has been amended to identify parish councils and residents associations.	
Why is the word 'or' rather than 'and' used between 'site notice' and 'neighbour notification'?	Not all schemes require a neighbour notification. We have amended paragraph 4.25 a link to guidance provided which sets out when a site notice is required.	Insert link in paragraph 4.25 to Article 15 of the Development Management Procedure Order (2015) that sets out when a site notice is required.
Tree protection feels as though it is being watered down with Parish Council notification effectively optional. The current tree team not serving TPOs on trees requested for protection by landowners, parishioners and the parish Council.	The approach set out in the SCI has not changed since the previously adopted SCI from 2019. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on trees are managed case by case and go through the scheme of delegation process. They are treated as part of the statutory process and Tree Officers endeavour to work with parish councils and our communities when considering TPOs, however, we make use of the resources available to the Councils and follow national planning regulations and the constitution of the Councils. Feedback will be passed onto the Built and Natural Environment team for consideration.	No proposed modifications.

## 7.5 How can the community be involved in the allocation of planning obligation funds?

Total representations received: 4

Main issues raised in representations	Councils' assessment	Proposed modifications
How do the Section 106 agreements work? Are they index linked?	Paragraph 5.1 sets out how and when it is required to enter into a planning obligation S106 agreement. It is considered appropriate to have additional detail on planning platters like this and the SCI provides a link to an online guidance video.	No proposed modifications.
Hospitals and related infrastructure must be considered in the context of the allocation of funding raised through development.	References to services and facilities such as healthcare are generally included under the term infrastructure throughout the SCI and are considered in relevant planning applications. Health related infrastructure is also considered through plan making, informed by engagement with health service providers.	No proposed modifications.
Biodiversity Net Gain must be considered within the same Parish boundary as the development before offering off site in one location across the whole of South Cambridgeshire.	The SCI seeks to provide an overview of the issue, but does not determine how the system operates. Biodiversity Net Gain is subject to	No proposed modifications.

	specific national guidance and regulations regarding the approach to off site credits.	
The SCI is not the place to identify Biodiversity Net Gain intentions. It should be established in a planning policy within a Local Plan which is tested through examination.	Paragraph 5.5 sets out the Councils, and indeed national, requirements to deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain. It is acknowledged that 20% Biodiversity Net Gain is an aspiration. Further details on these points can be found in the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document.	Amend paragraph 5.5 to clarify wording on Biodiversity Net Gain requirements and aspirations.
The document is well meaning, however it doesn't describe what residents can do when they feel they are not being listened to, or have been misunderstood.	Comments duly noted. Paragraph 2.2 sets out how residents can be involved in the planning process and how residents can speak to local ward or parish councillors on planning matters. We will clarify on our website how people can escalate concerns with our Planning Officers.	No proposed modifications.

## 7.6 How the local community can prepare a neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order

Total representations received: 4

Main issues raised in representations	Councils' assessment	Proposed modifications



<p>Historic England welcome notification of proposed neighbourhood planning areas as well as consultation on draft plans.</p>	<p>Comment duly noted. The Councils will continue to consult on draft neighbourhood plans at the appropriate statutory stages.</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>
<p>Paragraph 6.3 could provide an example of where no planning application is required.</p>	<p>Paragraph 6.3 sets out examples of what a neighbourhood development order (NDO) can achieve. Paragraph 6.3 has been amended to provide examples.</p>	<p>Amend paragraph 6.3 to clarify what a neighbourhood development order (NDO) is and provide examples.</p>
<p>For small communities and parish councils with limited resource, it is difficult to produce a neighbourhood plan. There needs to be support packages available as well as funding if they are going to be able to do this.</p>	<p>Comment duly noted. Paragraph 6.4 sets out how the Councils will support communities in preparing a neighbourhood plan. Paragraph 6.4 has been amended to provide additional guidance.</p>	<p>Amend paragraph 6.4 to provide more guidance on how parish councils and neighbourhood forums can seek funding and support from the Local Planning Authority.</p>
<p>Community Led Plans which are recommendation for small communities to create should have a level of statutory recognition.</p>	<p>The SCI sets out guidance on the preparation of neighbourhood plans which hold statutory weighting and once adopted are part of the statutory Development Plan for the area. The Councils encourage communities to consider the options available that are most appropriate to their local area.</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>

<p>The Support Offer says there will be regular workshops and seminars and support from the Council in keeping the momentum going. Leads of neighbourhood plan groups have had to push volunteers and arrange evidence collecting to keep the momentum going.</p>	<p>The SCI sets out the how the Local Planning Authorities will provide advice and support for neighbourhood planning. It sets out the different stages in which the Local Planning Authorities can meet with neighbourhood planning groups to advise on sources of evidence and guidance documents to support groups in the preparation of their plan. The Councils are currently updating the Neighbourhood Plan Toolkit to reflect up to date guidance on each stage of preparing a neighbourhood plan including the officer support offer available at the various Plan making stages.</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>
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## 7.7 Monitoring and review

Total representations received: 1

<b>Main issues raised in representations</b>	<b>Councils' assessment</b>	<b>Proposed modifications</b>
<p>There is no mention of monitoring of supplementary planning documents, including neighbourhood plans. Inspectors expect parish councils to produce technical monitoring reports which is a burden on parishes. This requires professional planning expertise,</p>	<p>Through the Authority Monitoring Report (which is published annually) we monitor the effectiveness of our planning policies, many of which are supported by SPDs. We do keep the effectiveness of our adopted SPDs under review and update SPDs when required. The Authority Monitoring Review also monitors the</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>

and it is requested that some support be provided by Greater Cambridge Planning to parish councils to fulfil this requirement.	neighbourhood plans that are adopted and those that are being prepared. Neighbourhood plan guidance from Locality advises that it is primarily the responsibility of the parish council or neighbourhood forum to monitor the policies and provides guidance on the issue. The Councils' support groups who are looking to undertake a review of their adopted neighbourhood plan.	
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### 7.8 Appendix 1: Glossary

Representations received	Main issues raised in representations	Councils' assessment	Proposed modifications
0	No issues raised in representations.	No assessment required.	No proposed modifications.

### 7.9 Appendix 2: Consultation Bodies for Plan-making

Total representations received: 4

Main issues raised in representations	Councils' assessment	Proposed modifications

<p>The approach and aims set out in the statement of community involvement are supported by the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). From a flood risk perspective community involvement is particularly important to ensure an understanding of local issues and how future development may impact flood risk on a local scale. It is our understanding that we will continue to be consulted as usual.</p>	<p>Comments duly noted. The Councils will continue to consult the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).</p>	<p>No proposed modifications.</p>
<p>Table 5 does not include Central Bedfordshire as a neighbouring Planning Authority and it needs to be added in.</p>	<p>Comment duly noted. Modification proposed to include Central Bedfordshire as a neighbouring Planning Authority.</p>	<p>Amend table 5 to include Central Bedfordshire.</p>
<p>Is the health body list complete and up to date?</p>	<p>The list has been amended to reflect the status of health bodies as statutory and non-statutory health bodies.</p>	<p>Amend the Specific Consultation Bodies list to read as follows: a Primary Care Trust established under section 18 of the National Health Service Act 2006(g) or continued in existence by virtue of that section; (formerly known as Clinical Commissioning Groups, now</p>

		known as Integrated Care Boards (ICBS)).
Should the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (or the Mayor) be mentioned?	Comment duly noted. Modification proposed to include Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.	Amend the Duty to Co-operate Bodies list to read as follows: Each Integrated Transport Authority (including Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority).
Chalk stream-related charities/interest groups should be consulted, where appropriate.	The SCI states that the Local Planning Authorities will also consult with other bodies that are considered appropriate. The list in Appendix 2 under the heading General Consultation Bodies includes 'special interest groups'.	No proposed modifications.
Reference made to the NHS Commissioning Board is out of date and demonstrates ignorance of current NHS structures.	The Council has consulted with the NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care Board to ensure the correct references are made in Appendix 2 and 5 to the health care structures.	Amend the Specific Consultation Bodies list in Appendix 2 and insert the additional health bodies into the Statutory Consultees list: Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care Board, in Appendix 5.

### 7.10 Appendix 3: Council offices where planning consultation documents will be made available for public inspection

Total representations received: 1

Main issues raised in representations	Councils' assessment	Proposed modifications
Could documents relating to significant developments just inside of South Cambridgeshire on the south or east sides also be made available at the City Council's offices, where they will be much more conveniently located for inspection?	The SCI sets out how the Councils will consult on documents and make them available for public inspection at both Council offices. Table 8 in Appendix 3 provides contact details for the Councils if people are unable to access the documents and are seeking further guidance.	No proposed modifications.

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### 7.11 Appendix 4: Statutory requirements for consulting on planning applications

Representations received	Main issues raised in reps	Councils' assessment	Proposed modifications
0	No issues raised in representations.	No assessment required.	No proposed modifications.

### 7.12 Appendix 5: Consultation Bodies for a planning application

Total representations received: 2

<b>Main issues raised in reps</b>	<b>Councils' assessment</b>	<b>Proposed modifications</b>
Anglian Water supports the SCI and welcomes specific reference to Anglian Water with regard to listed consultees for relevant planning applications.	General support is noted and welcomed.	
No healthcare-related bodies are listed in this Appendix as well as chalk-stream related interest groups.	The list has been amended to reflect the status of health bodies as statutory and non-statutory health bodies. The list in Appendix 2 under the heading General Consultation Bodies includes 'special interest groups'.	Insert the additional health bodies into the Non-Statutory Consultees list: Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System (Estates), Public Health (Cambridgeshire County Council), Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust, Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust, North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust, Royal Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, East of England Ambulance Service

		NHS Trust. Interest groups are referenced in Appendix 2.
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### 7.13 Background documents: Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Representations received	Main issues raised in reps	Councils' assessment	Proposed modifications
0	No issues raised in representations.	No assessment required.	No proposed modifications.

## 8. Summary tables of additional proposed minor modifications

Paragraph / Section	Proposed modification
Statement of our intention to engage with our communities	Amend the paragraphs to reflect up to date quotes from Cllr. Dr. Tumi Hawkins and Cllr. Katie Thornburrow.
Why is the Statement of Community Involvement being reviewed?	Amend the header to paragraph 1.9 to read as follows: Why has a new Statement of Community Involvement been prepared? Amend text in paragraph 1.9 to reflect the current stage of the SCI rather than consultation version.
Paragraph 1.11	Insert link to Proptech programme.



	Delete text to be consistent with Chapter 6: Updates to our neighbourhood planning support offer reflecting experience gained, including refocusing our funding offer on Strategic Environmental Assessment screening rather than a health check.
Paragraph 1.12	Update link to the latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.
Paragraph 1.13	Update link to the latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.
Paragraph 2.5	Amend paragraph to refer to the Communities Team as facilitators of the forums.
Paragraph 3.22	Amend bullet point three to read as follows: Consultation documents will be available to view on the Councils websites, and at our Council offices and can be translated on request, made available in braille, large copy print or audio.
Paragraph 3.29	Delete text and accompanying Figure 1, to read:  If you make comments on a planning policy document, we will also offer you the opportunity to opt-in to these updates, which will keep you informed about future stages of the plan making process. <del>Figure 1 and text below shows the layout of the webpage with a preview of the list of topics to receive mailings about.</del>
Paragraph 3.44	Amend bullet point three to read as follows: Consultation documents will be available to view on the Councils websites, and at our Council offices and can be translated on request, made available in braille, large copy print or audio.

Paragraph 3.45	Insert link to Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.
Paragraph 3.46	Amend bullet point six to read as follows: Consultation documents will be available to view on the Councils websites, and at our Council offices and can be translated on request, made available in braille, large copy print or audio.
Paragraph 3.47	Insert link to Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 in bullet point two.
Paragraph 3.47	Amend bullet point four to read as follows: Consultation documents will be available to view on the Councils websites, and at our Council offices and can be translated on request, made available in braille, large copy print or audio.
Paragraph 4.2	Text and accompanying Figure 2 deleted to read:  GCSP makes all applications and decisions available to view online through our planning applications page ( <del>see Figure 2</del> ).
Paragraph 4.11	Amend wording to read as follows:  This advice enables the applicant to discuss their proposals with a Conservation Officer and to receive either verbal or written advice as to the suitability of what they hope to do. <u>More information is available on our website.</u>
Paragraph 4.37	Amend wording to include reference to the Councils expectation for applicants to undertake meaningful engagement with local communities.

Paragraph 5.5	<p>Insert link to the GCSP Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document.</p> <p>Insert link to the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and the Environment Act 2021.</p> <p>Amend reference to the need to secure biodiversity credits to fund off site improvements across the South Cambridgeshire area. Remove reference to the Lower Farm BNG scheme in Fulbourn.</p>
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# **Statement of Community Involvement**

**March 2024**

**Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service**

**Date of adoption**

Cambridge City Council – March 2024

South Cambridgeshire District Council – March 2024

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## **Statement of our intention to engage with our communities**

Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils are committed to involving as many people and organisations as possible in the planning process. This includes groups and communities that are typically under-represented.

Planning affects the lives of everyone who lives, works, and visits Greater Cambridge. Therefore, it is essential that as many people as possible have a say in the decisions the councils make on new housing, workplaces, open spaces, and the measures we take to tackle climate and biodiversity issues.

The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the Councils will engage on a wide range of planning matters over the next five years. Widening community participation in planning will always achieve the best outcomes and therefore this Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the councils will achieve this.

Through extensive public engagement during the Covid-19 pandemic, including interactive webinars on our emerging new Local Plan, through to the award winning work we are doing with youth engagement in local schools, we are always pushing ourselves and developers to do more engagement and to reach out to the widest possible audience. Whilst the SCI sets out the minimum levels of engagement the councils will undertake, it also sets out ways we can, and frequently do, go beyond this and how we try to engage in innovative ways alongside documents and websites that are written with as little jargon as possible.

This document also sets out how the Councils will support local communities and parish councils to develop their own neighbourhood plans which can set out local aspirations for new developments within their area.

We will strive to provide opportunities and make it as simple as possible for all individuals to become involved in the planning process, regardless of their circumstances. By involving communities from the earliest stage, they can help to make a difference and, crucially, feel a sense of understanding and ownership of local planning decisions.

Finally, we would encourage you, as residents and stakeholders (including parish councils, neighbourhood forums, groups and associations representing residents and businesses in the area), to use this Statement of Community Involvement and the protocols set out within it, to hold the Local Planning Authorities to account and ensure that all local people have opportunities to have their say. We recognise that consultation and engagement activities are ever evolving, and typically engagement is moving further towards digital means. We understand that whilst digital engagement is convenient for some members of our community, this is not the case for everyone, and therefore we have been mindful about this as this SCI has been updated.



Whilst this is an SCI for the next five years, it will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure it is up to date and reflects local and national priorities, practices, and policies.

The process of managing land resources for development is dynamic, changing over time in response to policies and local needs. It is therefore important that our communities have the opportunity to engage with this process so they tell us their views and their needs. This enables us to take these into consideration in making decisions that affect how land is used and developed in our Greater Cambridge region.

This updated Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) setting out how that engagement will be done goes much further than before. It ensures that the diversity of our residents including our young people and their views and aspirations are reflected in our emerging joint Local Plan. It also clearly states how the development proposals are prepared, assessed and determined. The ultimate aim is to create great places that our communities can lead happy, healthy well balanced life.

I commend this statement and look forward to working with our residents, businesses, developers and other stakeholders in using it effectively to create great places across Greater Cambridge.

**Cllr. Dr. Tumi Hawkins, South Cambridgeshire District Councillor and Lead Cabinet Member for Planning Policy and Development Management**

It is vitally important that everyone knows how to influence development in our area and make their voice heard. I am very pleased that we now have such a clear statement of how the Councils will ensure that residents, businesses, local organisations and visitors are properly consulted as we decide what to build, what to change, and how to create the best possible spaces within which we can live, work, learn, and play.

Elected members endeavour to continue to work closely with Planning Officers to make sure that we work in a transparent, trustworthy, and effective way, and the practices outlined in this important document demonstrate our ongoing commitment to serving the people of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire.

I am very pleased to have this updated document setting out the Councils commitment and procedures for involving our communities - residents, businesses, local organisation and visitors - in the complicated process to build new buildings and create the best possible places.

It's through a concerted effort by everyone involved in planning that we can work towards improved transparency and arrive a place of mutual trust.

**Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Cambridge City Councillor and Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure**

## 1.0 Introduction

### What is the Statement of Community Involvement?

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the Local Planning Authorities, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, will consult with local people, groups, businesses, partners, and other organisations in the planning process. This is important to improve understanding about how we prepare planning documents such as the Local Plan and guidance documents, consider planning applications, neighbourhood plans or neighbourhood development orders.
- 1.2 Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council have a shared planning service, the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service (GCSP). Planning officers within GCSP will be responsible for delivering all planning consultations, but Councillors within Cambridge City Council will ultimately have responsibility for consultations which effect the city of Cambridge, and Councillors within South Cambridgeshire District Council will oversee consultations that effect South Cambridgeshire. For consultations which affect both areas, both Councils will retain oversight.
- 1.3 Local Planning Authorities are currently required under [Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#) to prepare and review a SCI. This establishes the approach and standards of engagement we will make with our communities about planning matters or proposals. We aspire through the aims of the SCI to:
  - Ensure that engagement is managed **efficiently** by consulting at the earliest possible stages of the planning process, providing clear information about the proposals and by conducting early engagement with Councillors, stakeholders, community groups, applicants and individuals in a meaningful way.
  - Set clear and concise objectives of consultations in order to be **transparent** by keeping people informed, being clear on what we are asking for responses on, publishing outcomes, and setting realistic timelines for consultations and being open and clear about our decision making.
  - Be **proportionate** and **cost effective** in resource and promote best practice by exploring new and evolving methods of consultation and

communications including digital to engage more easily with local communities.

- Ensure consultation is **inclusive**, fair, equitable and supports our local communities in feeling heard through consultation methods that are consistent to all, including those people without access or who find it difficult using digital communication.
- Be **accountable** in the decision-making process, by explaining how the responses to consultations will be considered, how people will be informed of outcomes or decisions, and ensure that the planning stages are robust, justified and consistent.

- 1.4 During the Covid-19 pandemic, both Councils had to reassess how they carried out public engagement whilst meeting social distancing requirements. In June 2020 and December 2020 GCSP published an addendum to its SCI which outlined the measures that the Councils were taking in response to the pandemic, including restricting face-to-face activities and holding events online. Whilst we are now able to meet face-to-face once again, the Councils learnt some key lessons on how to make good use of webinars and digital communication tools when carrying out public engagement exercises. This has the positive effect of making best-use of our resources whilst also making it more convenient for our communities to participate in engagement activities.
- 1.5 This document sets out the approach of the Councils to consulting and engaging with our communities through the different stages of the planning process. The sections of the document which follow explain the purpose of the SCI, how you can be involved in the process of preparing our planning policy documents, and how we will engage through different types planning applications. The document also provides guidance for how the local community can prepare neighbourhood plans or neighbourhood development orders, and how we will assist with this process.
- 1.6 The Appendices contain the glossary for words abbreviated throughout the document, the consultation bodies, the requirements for consulting on planning applications, and the Council's contact information.

## **Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service Statement of Community Involvement**

- 1.7 In 2018, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council agreed to work in partnership to deliver shared services. This led to the

formation of the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service (GCSP), to deliver the range of services consistent with their responsibilities as the Local Planning Authority for the two areas.

- 1.8 It is important to recognise that although the Councils have prepared this joint SCI, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council remain separate legal entities in relation to their designation as Local Planning Authorities.

## **Why has a new Statement of Community Involvement been prepared?**

- 1.9 The [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#) require Local Planning Authorities to review their SCI every five years. The previous SCI was adopted in 2019 and therefore needed to be updated. This provided the opportunity to review the SCI to ensure it still provides the most efficient and effective approach to consultation and engagement and learnt lessons from the wide range of engagement we have undertaken in recent years.
- 1.10 In 2020, the Government's consultation on the [White Paper Planning for the Future](#) proposed substantial reforms to streamline the planning system. This included proposed changes to the preparation of local plans and modernisation of planning, through improved engagement with people, by promoting the use of digital technology. At the time of writing this document, the Government have set out reforms to the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) and through the [Levelling Up and Regeneration Act](#), It is likely there will be further changes to the planning process and how we consult in the future, as well as where we capture information currently found in SCI's.
- 1.11 GCSP have already been working to explore digital opportunities to make information easily accessible and to make it easier to provide feedback. We have created [interactive maps](#) and [webinar videos](#) for our Local Plans. We are also seeking to continuously improve, for example we are part of the government's [PropTech programme](#) exploring improvements to digital engagement tools and transform community involvement in the planning process.

In preparing this SCI, particular consideration has been given to:

- Opportunities provided by digital technology including the lessons learned during the Covid-19 pandemic

- Learning from the Greater Cambridge Local Plan consultations, where we tried new methods of consultation for example interactive online digital engagement
- providing more information to guide pre-application engagement by developers, including a range of engagement methods which they can consider at the initial stages of them preparing a development proposal
- Highlighting the importance of reaching under represented groups, including black and ethnic minorities communities, people with disabilities and young people
- A new section on planning obligations/developer contributions and how the Councils may seek views on the use of contributions on priority projects for infrastructure, for example public art or children's play spaces
- Updates to our neighbourhood planning support offer reflecting experience gained, including refocusing our funding offer on Strategic Environmental Assessment screening (SEA)
- Setting out how local communities can respond to significant infrastructure projects which are considered and determined by other bodies outside of the Councils.

## What is the purpose of planning?

1.12 The purpose of planning is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. [Paragraph 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\) 2023](#) sets out the three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental that should be achieved and delivered through plan making and decision taking.

1.13 The Local Planning Authorities are responsible for making decisions to guide where sustainable development takes place, guided by paragraph 11 of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) and the local development plan. The key functions that GCSP has in the overall planning process are:

- **Planning policy or plan making** is the formulation of a statutory development plan which sets out the vision for the future of the area and provides a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social, and environmental priorities. The main policy documents for the area are the adopted Local Plans. Other documents include supplementary planning documents (SPDs) which may also be produced to provide more detail on the policies in the Local Plan. Neighbourhood plans, produced by local communities, also form part of the development plan. You can find more information on what documents form part of our current development plan on our [website](#).

- **Development Management** is about ensuring that the right type, mix and design of development is provided in sustainable locations through the granting or refusal of planning permission. Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire determine most applications in the area, but some, such as for minerals and waste, are dealt with by Cambridgeshire County Council. Some very large infrastructure proposals are determined at the national level, through Development Consent Orders (DCO).

1.14 This SCI sets out in later sections, further detail of the Local Planning Authorities functions in relation to preparing planning policy, determining planning applications, consideration of the design and conservation of the built and natural environment, planning obligations, the approach to compliance, and how local communities can be assisted in preparing neighbourhood plans or neighbourhood development orders. Each of the sections outline the approach to consultation and engagement and the time periods that will be applied to ensure an appropriate balance between effective participation and efficient plan and decision making.

## 2.0 How can I get involved in the planning process?

- 2.1 Since planning has a direct impact on the daily lives of residents and businesses, it is important that development proposals are transparent and that you have the opportunity to have a say in the planning decisions that are made on your behalf. The Local Planning Authorities want to ensure that you have the opportunity to engage in planning decisions at the earliest possible stages of the planning process.
- 2.2 Early involvement in the planning process gives you the best chance of influencing planning proposals including in plan making, planning application stages and neighbourhood plans. The SCI's intention is to inform you of the formal stages in the planning process, including when and how you can engage and participate. In addition to the formal stages of planning, you are also able to speak to your local ward or parish Councillors about a planning matter or proposal you might wish to comment on or influence.
- 2.3 We recognise that local knowledge is valuable in making better planning decisions. An understanding of our communities' concerns and aspirations is key to successful engagement. We also want to understand the aspirations of developers, as they are mainly responsible for delivering the new spaces that we plan for. Developers also have a significant role to play in engagement, and we will encourage them to engage effectively with local communities, parish councils and residents associations. Early engagement with our local communities often achieves the best planning outcomes.
- 2.4 The SCI has been written to guide you through the plan making, development management and neighbourhood planning process and set out how you can get involved in each of these areas. There are also a number of other ways you can engage in the planning process at a local level.
- 2.5 We have set up a series of forums for Planning Officers, Councillors and members of the public meet to discuss planning matters. These forums are administered and facilitated by the Communities Team and typically cover areas that are currently or due to see significant amount of development taking place. More information can be found on the Councils [website](#). We also sometimes invite developers to present information about their sites. There are the new settlements at [Northstowe](#), [Waterbeach](#), and [Bourn Airfield and Cambourne](#). Community Forums are also held focusing on development areas on the edge of Cambridge for [Cambridge East](#), [North West and West Cambridge](#), and [North East Cambridge](#). We also hold a [Residents Association Forum](#) for residents of the city of Cambridge.



- 2.6 We hold [Agent Forums](#) to update planning agents on changes to legislation and procedures within GCSP. We also regularly hold Parish Council Forums where we can discuss planning issues with parish councils.

### **3.0 Our methods for community engagement in planning policy**

#### **What is planning policy?**

- 3.1 Planning policy involves preparing plans or requirements to provide a vision that will guide decisions about new development in an area. In England, planning policy is delivered through the creation of a development plan which provides a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social, and environmental priorities. Planning applications have to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise.
- 3.2 The development plan for an area is typically made up of a number of documents, including a Local Plan, neighbourhood plans, minerals and waste plans and sometimes site specific policies within area action plans (AAP) for larger or more complex sites. There is also a policies map which sets out any spatial designations contained within a Local Plan or AAP, such as Green Belt or allocated sites. There are other planning policy documents which help to guide decisions about new development, but which are not part of the development plan, such as supplementary planning documents (SPDs).

#### **Why should communities help to create planning policies?**

- 3.3 The Councils believe it is vital that you can contribute to planning policies in order to help to create the vision which will shape your area. We are therefore committed to providing opportunities for comment, feedback and engagement when preparing different planning policy documents. Including different perspectives from our communities means that the quality and effectiveness of the planning documents will improve. Below, the different types of planning policy documents are explained and there is also guidance about how communities can influence each document.

## Local Plans

- 3.4 A Local Plan is a plan for the future development of the local authority area, drawn up by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the community. The Local Plan contains policies relating to the amount of development that should take place, the number of jobs and homes that need to be created, where development should take place, and how it should be designed. The Local Plan also identifies the infrastructure that needs to accompany development, setting policy requirements of developers, for example the provision of affordable housing policies can apply to the whole area, or they can be specific to individual sites.
- 3.5 In 2018, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council adopted their Local Plans. Both [Cambridge City Council](#) and [South Cambridgeshire District Council](#) also have a number of documents which contribute to their wider development plan. You can find more information on what documents form part of our current development plan on GCPs's [website](#).
- 3.6 The Councils are currently preparing a joint Local Plan to cover the areas of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire. When adopted this will replace the adopted Local Plans of the individual Councils.
- 3.7 The [First Proposals consultation](#) on our emerging Local Plan sets out the vision to make Greater Cambridge a place where a big decrease in our climate impacts comes with a big increase in the quality of everyday life for all our communities. The Plan aims to create thriving neighbourhoods with the variety of jobs and homes we need, increase nature, wildlife and green spaces, and safeguard our unique heritage and landscapes.
- 3.8 We are also preparing a North East Cambridge Area Action Plan, which would also have the status of a Local Plan but cover the specific area around Cambridge North Railway Station and Cambridge Science Park.
- 3.9 A timetable for preparing and reviewing our Local Plan documents is set out in the [Local Development Scheme](#) (LDS). This is regularly updated and explains the stage that the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan and North East Cambridge Area Action Plan has reached and how people can comment on the Plan's policies.

## Supplementary planning documents

- 3.10 Local Plans can be supported by supplementary planning documents (SPDs). These documents provide guidance to support the implementation of planning policies and can include documents such as design codes for specific sites. The key difference for SPDs compared to Local Plans is that they do not undergo public examination by a Planning Inspector and are not automatically subject to a sustainability appraisal. SPDs are capable of being a material consideration which means they should be taken into account in decisions but are not part of the development plan.
- 3.11 It should be noted that where documents are being produced by an individual Council rather than jointly, the measures in this SCI will be applied by the individual Council. An example might be if a design code is produced to supplement one of the current adopted individual Council Local Plans.

## Neighbourhood plans

- 3.12 Neighbourhood plans are a tool that local communities use to shape development in the places they live and work. Once adopted or 'made', neighbourhood plans become part of the development plan which means they become a material consideration when planning applications are decided. With neighbourhood plans, the community carries out the work, such as researching maps, conducting surveys, and drafting policies. This is often conducted by a parish council, or if it is an unparished area, a neighbourhood forum needs to be established which then acts as the qualifying body to prepare the neighbourhood plan.
- 3.13 Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council both have a duty to support communities who are preparing neighbourhood plans. This support could include advising on potential plan policies, supplying maps, or helping to set up a forum. We have also prepared a [Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit](#).
- 3.14 By February 2024, there were eight 'made' neighbourhood plans in Greater Cambridge with 17 further areas formally designated indicating their intention to prepare a neighbourhood plan. You can find details of neighbourhood plans being prepared by parish councils and neighbourhood forums and their current status on our [website](#).

- 3.15 Both Councils can also assist communities with the preparation and delivery of neighbourhood development orders (NDOs) which grant planning permission for buildings specific sites or for alterations across areas. There have not yet been any neighbourhood development orders in Greater Cambridge.
- 3.16 Once a neighbourhood plan is prepared and has undergone an independent examination and a successful referendum it falls to the Local Planning Authority to 'adopt' as a made plan. The Council that covers the area(s) of the neighbourhood plan can consider whether it should be adopted, for example a plan within South Cambridgeshire would be the responsibility of South Cambridgeshire District Council, and a plan in Cambridge City would be for Cambridge City Council.

### **How will the Local Planning Authorities consult on Local Plan documents?**

- 3.17 Each Local Planning Authority must fulfil a number of public consultations, in line with national government regulations shown in Table 1. However, we want to reflect the aims of this SCI and aspire to go beyond the Government's expectations for public engagement. For example, as part of the First Consultations for the emerging Local Plan, Planning Officers engaged with members of the public at pop-up events, met with groups who are traditionally under represented in planning consultations, and held webinars online to increase outreach. GCSP also tried to make our online consultations accessible by avoiding the use of planning jargon. GCSP will continue to consider innovative ways of carrying out public engagement for the next stages of the Local Plan.
- 3.18 Local Planning Authorities provide you with the opportunity to have your say on planning policy and aim to provide an efficient, transparent, proportionate, inclusive, accessible, accountable, and coherent approach to consultation.
- 3.19 In preparing a Local Plan document, Local Planning Authorities will engage with relevant stakeholders and gather evidence. For each consultation, Planning Officers will review each submitted comment, evaluate it against evidence, and consider whether the policy needs to be altered. Planning Officers will then prepare a consultation statement setting out how engagement has been undertaken, explaining how GCSP has considered the issues and how the feedback has been incorporated.
- 3.20 As part of the Examination process there could be further consultations, for example the main modifications to the Plan. Any additional consultations will be for six weeks unless it falls over a public holiday period where it may be extended.

3.21 The statutory process for preparing these documents is set out in the [Town and Country Planning Local Planning England Regulations \(2012\)](#) (as amended). There are two key stages of consultation during Local Plan preparation, Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 set out in Table 1.

**Table 1: Local Plan preparation**

Local Plan stage	Consultation duration
Public participation (Regulation 18)	One or more public consultations, on issues and options or draft policies. Consultations will be undertaken for a minimum of a six week period. All representations must be received within the consultation period.
Pre-submission publication (Regulation 19)	Consultation will be undertaken for a minimum of a six week period. All representations must be received within the consultation period.

3.22 There are four main methods for consulting at Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 stages that the Councils will apply. These are:

- Inviting representations through a notice on the Councils websites, and advertising through other methods such as social media, news releases, Council publications or press adverts
- Consultations with specific consultation bodies and appropriate general consultation bodies and other relevant stakeholders (see Appendix 2)
- Consultation documents will be available to view on the Councils websites, and at our Council offices and can be translated on request, made available in braille, large copy print or audio (see Appendix 3 for details)
- Public consultation events if appropriate to the nature of the consultation (this may include in person and/or online events).

3.23 Following the consultation stages, the Council submits the Local Plan to the Secretary of State together with the representations received at the Regulation 19 stage. The submitted document and the representations received, will be considered by a Planning Inspector at an independent examination. The Council will notify the specific and general consultation bodies who were invited to make representations at earlier stages, and all those who have requested to be notified, of this stage.

3.24 Individuals and organisations that have made representations may be invited by the Planning Inspector to submit a written statement during the examination. Individuals and organisations that made an objection to the document and have

requested to speak at the examination will be contacted by the Planning Inspector to be informed of the procedure for being heard.

- 3.25 Following the receipt of the Planning Inspector's Report the Councils will notify all those who have requested to be notified, as soon as it is reasonably practicable. The report will also be made available on the Councils website and at Council offices defined in Appendix 3.
- 3.26 If the Planning Inspector has concluded that the Plan is sound the Council will adopt the plan and will publish an adoption statement on their website and make it available to view at Council offices as defined in Appendix 3. The Council will then again contact all those who have requested to be notified as soon as it is reasonably practical.

### **Who does Local Planning Authorities involve in Plan-making?**

- 3.27 Regulations specify a number of organisations that Local Planning Authorities must consult when preparing planning policy documents. These bodies are set out in Appendix 2. They include specific consultation bodies and various types of general consultation bodies. Specific consultation bodies include utility companies, government agencies, Local Planning Authorities and parish councils. General consultation bodies are voluntary bodies active in the area and those bodies which represent different interests and include neighbourhood forums.
- 3.28 The Council is required to co-operate with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities and other prescribed bodies on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries under the statutory 'duty to co-operate'. The Councils are also committed to cooperating with local interest groups, forums and Trusts and have regard to their activities which are relevant to Local Plan making. For example the [Local Nature Partnership](#) (LNP) (Natural Cambridgeshire), acts as an independent voice for the natural environment in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and part of its role is to coordinate partners to deliver projects and activity that will meet the Partnership's vision and aims. The bodies identified under the statutory duty to co-operate are defined in Appendix 2.
- 3.29 Individuals and organisations can opt-in to receive notifications in relation to future public consultations. To opt-in, users must register onto the GCSP consultation database. Once logged into the [consultation database](#), the 'My Information' tab allows the user to choose the 'Topics' to receive future mailings

about. These can be updated by the registered user as preferred. If you make comments on a planning policy document, we will also offer you the opportunity to opt-in to these updates, which will keep you informed about future stages of the plan making process.

- 3.30 If you do not have an email address or do not have access to the internet but would like to opt-in to receiving future mailings in relation to public consultations or notifications on one or more of our planning policy documents, please contact us by telephone or write to us using the details in Appendix 3.

### **How can representations be submitted?**

- 3.31 During the consultation periods our preferred method is to receive comments through our consultation system. This is the easiest way to submit comments, and it helps us process your comments efficiently. Representations can also be sent to us by email, or post using the address in Appendix 3. If you are having difficulty commenting, or need information in a different format, please email us at [localplan@greatercambridgeplanning.org](mailto:localplan@greatercambridgeplanning.org), call us on 01954 713694.
- 3.32 Representations received, including names of who they were submitted by, will be published on the Councils websites. You can view the latest versions of our privacy notice on our website.
- 3.33 The online consultation system allows any individual, business, organisation, or group to register their details and submit comments during consultation periods.
- 3.34 The privacy notice for planning policy consultations and notifications sets out how your personal data will be used and by whom, if you opt-in to any of our 'topics' or submit representations. The consultation database will be maintained by the Local Planning Authorities and will follow the latest legal requirements on data protection, currently the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018.
- 3.35 The councils will not accept or publish comments that contravene its compliance with the Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

## How will GCSP include a wider range of perspectives?

- 3.36 GCSP will meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, which aims to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and encourage good relations between different groups associated with age, disability, gender and gender reassignment, race, religion and other protected characteristics. It is recognised that some parts of the community in the area are under represented such as Gypsy and Traveller communities, the young and elderly, and it is important to include them in planning consultations. The Councils will work closely with relevant organisations that have experience in finding the best way to engage with these groups.
- 3.37 It is GCSP's aim to explore how innovative forms of public engagement can be further developed and refined in future consultations. In 2022 South Cambridgeshire District Council established the 'Young People Task & Finish Group' to explore how to improve youth engagement in South Cambridgeshire. A [report](#) set out the opportunities to create or develop effective youth engagement along with recommendations relating to the SCI that GCSP will use to improve planning consultation with young people.
- 3.38 The Councils want to ensure local communities are well informed about planning matters within the Greater Cambridge area. To achieve this, the Councils will continue to promote the use of electronic methods of consultation including our website and social media to make involvement easier, quicker and more cost effective. The Councils are keen to explore new methods of communication and engagement with local communities, recognising that e-communications can be a highly effective way of publicising information about the planning service to the widest possible number of people and organisations.
- 3.39 GCSP aims to include a wide range of perspectives within the plan-making process and will continue to explore different measures to improve levels of participation. Examples of where GCSP has tried to widen participation include:
- Creating accessible documents that meet the requirements set out in our [GCSP accessibility statement](#)
  - Used social media and videos to publicise consultations
  - Created bespoke consultation websites to support engagement
  - Held events at a wide range of venues and locations, for example providing drop in events, attending established events like coffee mornings, or providing information at railways stations



- Held interactive webinars to discuss consultation issues and responded to questions, and used interactive tools to allow attendees to participate
- Engaged directly with groups who are under-represented in planning consultations, such as sixth-form students, and Gypsy and Traveller communities.

## **Preparation of supplementary planning documents**

- 3.40 SPDs can be prepared to add greater detail and guidance to planning policies or allocations. A SPD cannot create new or amend planning policy. SPDs could relate to an area or they may be topic-based, such as affordable housing or design guidance.
- 3.41 Prior to the formal stage of consultation, Local Planning Authorities will engage with relevant stakeholders and gather evidence. They will prepare a consultation statement setting out how this has been done, and how issues that have been raised have been considered in finalising the SPD.
- 3.42 The Local Planning Authorities will consider all comments that are made at formal consultation stage and make any appropriate changes to the SPD before it is adopted. Upon adoption the SPD will be published together with an adoption statement, made available to view on the Councils website, and at the Council's main offices (see Appendix 3). Local Planning Authorities will also send a copy of the adoption statement to all those who requested to be notified.
- 3.43 The statutory process for preparing these documents is set out in the [Town and Country Planning Local Planning England Regulations \(2012\) \(as amended\)](#). There is one public consultation stage during SPD preparation, Regulation 12 and Regulation 13 that should be consulted on for a minimum of four weeks.
- 3.44 There are four methods for consulting at Regulation 12 and Regulation 13 stages that will be followed. These are:
- Inviting representations through a notice on the Councils websites, and advertising through other methods such as social media, news releases, Council publications or press adverts
  - Consultations with specific consultation bodies and appropriate general consultation bodies and other relevant stakeholders (see Appendix 2)
  - Consultation documents will be available to view on the Councils websites, and at our Council offices and can be translated on request, made available in braille, large copy print or audio (see Appendix 3)
  - Public consultation events if appropriate to the nature of the consultation (this may include in person and / or online events).

## Preparation of neighbourhood plans

3.45 The statutory process for preparing these documents is set out in the [Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012](#) and subsequent amendments. Table 2 below sets out the key stages of consultation during neighbourhood plan preparations that are undertaken by the Local Planning Authorities. More information regarding the neighbourhood planning process can be found on our website and Section 5 of this document sets out how Local Planning Authorities will assist parish councils and neighbourhood forums during the neighbourhood plan process.

**Table 2: Neighbourhood Plan Preparation**

Neighbourhood plan stage	Consultation duration
Regulation 5, 6 and 7 Neighbourhood Area Designation: The qualifying body applies to the Local Planning Authority for a neighbourhood area to be designated.	No consultation is required where the whole of a parish is proposed. A minimum period of 6 weeks consultation for all other proposed neighbourhood plan areas
Regulation 9, 10 and 11: Designation of a neighbourhood forum	Not less than 6 weeks from the date on which the application is first publicised
Regulation 15 and 16 Submission: Where a draft neighbourhood plan is submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the plan meets the requirements in the legislation, the Local Planning Authority must publicise the neighbourhood plan.	Minimum of 6 weeks
Regulation 18 Independent Examination: Post receipt of the Examiners Report the Local Planning Authority may decide to make a decision which differs from that recommended by the examiner. If this is the case the Local Planning Authority must carry out a targeted consultation inviting representations.	Within 6 weeks of the Local Planning Authority first inviting representations

3.46 The main methods for consulting on neighbourhood plans at the Regulation 5, 6 and 7, 9, 10 and 11 stages that must be followed are:

- Inviting representations through a notice on the Councils websites, and advertising through other methods such as social media, news releases, Council publications or press adverts
- Consultations with specific consultation bodies and appropriate general consultation bodies and other relevant stakeholders (see Appendix 2)

- The relevant qualifying body will be asked to assist the Local Planning Authority in publicising the consultation by placing information about it in any local newsletters or on their website
- If requested by the relevant qualifying body the Local Planning Authority will also notify local contacts in the proposed neighbourhood area. The contact details of these local groups to be provided by the qualifying body
- Posters prepared by the Council to be shown at key locations in the neighbourhood plan area during the particular stages: creation of a forum, designation of area, and consultation on submission
- Consultation documents will be available to view on the Council's websites, and at the relevant Council offices and can be translated on request, made available in braille, large copy print or audio (see Appendix 3), additionally at the qualifying body's office or publicly accessible venue within the neighbourhood area during normal office hours.

3.47 The main methods for consulting on neighbourhood plans at the Regulation 15 and 16 stages that must be followed are:

- Inviting representations through a notice on the Councils websites, and advertising through other methods such as social media, news releases, Council publications or press adverts
- Notify any consultation body referred to in the consultation statement submitted alongside the draft neighbourhood plan. These bodies are referred to in [Paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 in the Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#). The qualifying body will have considered which of these to notify depending on whose interests the qualifying body considers may be affected by proposals in the draft neighbourhood plan
- Emails to anyone that has 'opted-in' to be notified of consultations on the specific document being prepared
- Consultation documents will be available to view on the Councils websites, and at the relevant Council offices and can be translated on request, made available in braille, large copy print or audio (see Appendix 3), additionally at the qualifying body's office or publicly accessible venue within the neighbourhood area during normal office hours.

3.48 The main methods for consulting on neighbourhood plans at the Regulation 18 stage that must be followed are:

- Emails sent by the Local Planning Authority inviting representations from:
  - the qualifying body
  - anyone whose representation was submitted to the examiner and
  - any consultation body that was previously consulted.

## 4.0 Methods for community engagement at the planning application stage

- 4.1 A planning application is a means by which someone applies for permission from the Local Planning Authority to develop land. Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are responsible for most planning decisions that are made in their respective areas, with some exceptions such as minerals and waste which is dealt with by the Council. We receive a wide range of planning applications for formal determination. The Local Planning Authorities assess and determine planning applications against national planning policies and local policies, including the Local Plan. Applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 GCSP makes all applications and decisions available to view online through our [planning applications page](#) . On the same website, a [weekly list](#) of validated and determined planning applications is made available for parish councils, neighbourhood forums and any other interested parties to be kept informed of planning decisions in their areas. There are four key stages to the planning application process set out in Table 3.

**Table 3: Planning application process**

Stage of process	Explanation
Pre-application	An applicant or developer prepares the development proposal. Early engagement with the Local Planning Authority, relevant stakeholders and the community is strongly encouraged, especially for larger and more complex proposals.
Planning application	An application is submitted to the Local Planning Authority who will consult on the planning application
Decision making	A decision is made by either a planning committee of elected Councillors or delegated to a Planning Officer
Appeals	The applicant has a right to appeal where they disagree with the decision of the Local Planning Authority to refuse permission

- 4.3 The statutory requirements for consulting on planning applications are set out in Appendix 4.

## Pre-application advice and consultation

- 4.4 Both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Council encourage applicants or developers to carry out early engagement with the Local Planning Authority and the local community before submitting a planning application. These discussions enable Planning Officers to provide advice to the applicant and in no way predetermine the outcome of the application. Early discussion of a proposal in the form of a pre-application with the council verifies the information required to be submitted with the application and reduces the likelihood of submitting invalid applications. It provides an opportunity for Planning Officers to provide an initial view on a proposal, identifying issues and opportunities an early stage. This enables more efficient use of resources, as problems can be addressed earlier on in the process.
- 4.5 There are also significant benefits to involving communities and stakeholders at the pre-application stage, including:
- Helping the applicant to understand how planning policies and other requirements may affect their proposal
  - Addressing issues early on is likely to result in higher quality proposals that reflect the aspirations of communities. This could lead to less objections, meaning the applications are likely to move through the application process more quickly.
- 4.6 Whilst some pre-application discussions can be confidential for commercial reasons, developers are strongly encouraged to undertake community engagement at this stage of the planning process, particularly where development is likely to have significant impacts on local communities or where the site is particularly sensitive.
- 4.7 An example of good engagement between developer and community at the pre-application stage occurred during a recent application for a mix of residential properties and commercial spaces in Devonshire Gardens, Cambridge. Socius and Railpen were the developers for the scheme and held substantial consultation with the local community, with over 3,000 local residents responding to the proposals. The final site will incorporate new public space and a community pavilion which will be shaped by a local design competition following planning permission. Similarly, the Hartree developers at North East Cambridge held a People City Planet Festival where over 400 people attended the two day event at Shirley Community Primary School to find out more about the proposals for the site, listen to talks and participate in interactive workshops, and provide feedback on the proposals.

- 4.8 The [Localism Act 2011](#) introduced a duty for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning applications for certain developments. For development proposals that fall outside of the requirements of the Localism Act, the Local Planning Authority encourage pre-application consultation with local communities and key stakeholders. This allows those likely to be affected by the development to raise potential issues and to make suggestions.
- 4.9 Further information about the pre-application process or how to request a Duty Planning Officer service where members of the public can obtain advice and guidance on householder applications, can be found on GCSP's [website](#).

## **Planning performance agreements**

- 4.10 GCSP offers the opportunity for applicants or developers to enter into a planning performance agreement (PPA), which sits alongside the pre-application advice service. A PPA is a project management tool that allows all parties to agree timescales, actions and resources for handling planning applications. PPAs are usually agreed at the pre-application stage and relate to the whole development process, from pre-application planning advice and community engagement to application progress meetings right through to the post decision stage, including the discharge of conditions and site monitoring. PPAs can be used for any type of application but are most effective for major and complex planning applications. You can find more information on PPAs on our [website](#).

## **Pre-application advice for Listed Buildings**

- 4.11 GCSP offers separate pre-application advice to the owners of Listed Buildings and their agents. This advice enables the applicant to discuss their proposals with a Conservation Officer and to receive either verbal or written advice as to the suitability of what they hope to do. More information is available on our [website](#). For bigger schemes, owners of higher graded listed buildings, Grade II\* and Grade I, are also recommended to contact Historic England who also offer a pre-application service.

## **Design panels**

- 4.12 Design review panels are a well-established and effective way of offering multi-disciplinary, independent advice from a panel of experts who help to inform the planning process and give greater confidence in the decision making of

innovative and quality design of the built environment. Panels involve a group of experts such as architects, heritage professionals, and urban designers, who meet to analyse prospective applications to improve the quality of Greater Cambridge's built environment. It is possible for applicants to book an appointment with design panels and a fee needs to be paid to obtain the expert's advice.

- 4.13 There are currently three design panels which are used at the pre-application stage to improve the quality and accessibility of proposals. The panels consist of members from different disciplines and offer critical design advice to applications. The [Cambridgeshire Quality Panel](#) is led by Cambridgeshire County Council for schemes that are going to the Joint Development Control Committee. The panel helps to raise the quality of development by identifying where designs can be improved to achieve the best possible outcomes, in accordance with the adopted Local Plans. The Disability Panel is led by GCSP and considers applications that go to the South Cambridgeshire District Council's Planning Committee and Cambridge City Council's Planning Committee. There is also the [Greater Cambridge Design Review Panel](#) which is led by GCSP and offers independent advice and considers applications that go to the same two committees. The panel reviews major or significant planning applications and pre-applications for sites within the Greater Cambridge area, that fall outside of the remit of the Cambridgeshire Quality Panel. The Greater Cambridge Design Review Plan may also review any policies, guidance and documents that relate to these sites. The panel reviews major or significant planning and pre-applications for sites within the Greater Cambridge area, that fall outside of the remit of the Cambridgeshire Quality Panel. The Greater Cambridge Design Review Plan may also review any policies, guidance and documents that relate to these sites.

## **Youth engagement service**

- 4.14 There are many under represented groups across Greater Cambridge that we aspire to engage with, including young people. Engagement with young people can ensure that the final design of developments considers the specific interests of children and young people who are often under represented in public consultations, particularly in relation to delivering play areas and public spaces that are child friendly and fit for purpose.
- 4.15 GCSP provides an award-winning [youth engagement service](#). It aims to address the long standing issue of young people being under represented in decision making about the built environment. The service aims to enhance planning outcomes by giving young people opportunities to be involved in major planning applications our work whilst increasing diversity and inclusion.



4.16 The service does this by holding workshops in schools that involve Planning Officers and developers who together deliver activities to help young people learn more about their local built environment. Often, the workshops are shaped around a specific planning proposal, which is then used as a gateway to discuss broader issues, such as the history of development in their areas. The students often participate in activities such as designing play areas, public open spaces, and street furniture. In some instances, benches and art installations designed by the participants have been incorporated into the design of a planning proposal and been implemented in the development.

### **Other forms of pre-application engagement**

4.17 The most effective way to achieve good planning outcomes is for early community engagement in the planning application process. The Local Planning Authorities therefore expect developers to engage with local people in a meaningful way, so that proposals are refined as they progress through the planning process. There are a number of ways to do this, including innovative methods:

- **Urban Rooms:** This is a [space](#) where members of the public are able to come together to discuss and engage with planning issues and are encouraged to express their views about proposed developments. They are sometimes transportable spaces, facilitating meaningful discussions with groups representing the local community. Urban Rooms and other such spaces should be well publicised and easily accessible to the community in order to enable effective community participation. The responses and dialogue at these events could be used to explore refinements to proposals to achieve wider community support. Developers are encouraged to use feedback loops to explain how they have incorporated community feedback. Currently there is a proposal to develop a Cambridge Room.
- **Co-design:** This process involves developers identifying residents of the scheme and working with them to design their new homes. [Marmalade Lane](#) in Orchard Park, Cambridge was produced by residents, Cambridge City Council, and the developer TOWN, and is an example of community collaboration at the pre-application stage.
- **Online tools:** Developers could use innovative online [engagement tools](#) that enable local people to easily identify areas which are of social value, and spaces that need improvement. The information gathered could be used to inform the content of development proposals.



## The Planning Application Process

- 4.18 The [Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) Order 2015](#) (as amended) requires that at any time before a decision is made on a planning application, stakeholders and the local community should have the opportunity to comment on any aspect of the proposal. The level and extent of consultation will vary depending on the size, scale, location, and nature of the proposed development. Planning applications, supporting information and key dates are available for public inspection on the [GCSP website](#).
- 4.19 Comments, known as representations, that are received during the consultation period will be considered in decisions made by and on behalf of the Councils. Representations must be submitted in writing, electronically via email or through the [consultation system](#). Late representations may be considered up to the point of determination of the application, however it is highly recommended that they are received during the consultation period indicated. They can only be taken into account if they relate to material planning considerations. You can find more information on this on the [government's website](#) on the planning system. Representations will be added to the application file and made publicly available online alongside the planning application documents. These will be published in accordance with the Council's Privacy Notice.
- 4.20 When a planning application is registered by the Local Planning Authority, there is a statutory period during which anyone can comment on the proposal, as set out in Table 4. It is the Local Planning Authorities responsibility to publicise planning applications. The approach to notification of planning applications will be to:
- Publish details of planning applications online on [Public Access](#), including which applications have been registered, digital copies of Plans and supporting information. Our websites include a search function to help find specific planning applications.
  - Undertake appropriate notification as shown in Table 4. In some instances, the Local Planning Authority can go beyond the minimum statutory requirements where the development would potentially have a wider impact and may make use of additional methods of communication, for example through articles in the Councils' magazines. Such wider consultation is carried out at the discretion of the Planning Officer.
  - Parish councils in South Cambridgeshire as well as neighbourhood forums in the city of Cambridge are consulted on all appropriate planning applications as statutory consultees.

- Consult with both statutory and non-statutory consultees. All consultees have 21 days (30 days for applications accompanied by an Environmental Statement) from the issue of the consultation notice to make representations (extended as appropriate where the period extends over public or bank holidays). It is highly recommended that representations are submitted prior to the published consultation deadline. The list of statutory and non-statutory consultees related to planning application consultations is set out in Appendix 5.
- 4.21 Where neighbour notification letters/emails are sent out, Neighbour notification letters/emails are sent to directly adjoining properties of the application site. The Planning Officer may sometimes determine that neighbour notification letters and emails should be sent beyond this where a development could potentially have an impact on a wider area.
- 4.22 In addition, Cambridge City Council operates a [Development Control Forum](#) where petitioners to an application can present their views to Councillors, Planning Officers and the applicant before a planning application is determined. The aim of the Forum is to allow early discussion of the planning issues raised by petitioners and to seek to resolve concerns. The Forum does not determine the outcome of the planning application.
- 4.23 It is at the discretion of the Local Planning Authority whether further publicity and public consultation is necessary when an application has been amended. In deciding if it is necessary, the Local Planning Authority will consider the criteria set out in [Planning Practice Guidance \(PPG\)](#) published by the Government. In most cases a period of 14 days is considered an appropriate period to allow for further comment.
- 4.24 Table 4 sets out how the Councils will publicise planning applications made under planning legislation. Each type of planning application will be the subject of a different method of publicity which will broadly reflect the scale and impact of the proposal on its surroundings.
- 4.25 Where an application falls within a Conservation Area a site notice may be required and the Local Planning Authority will advise. [The Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) \(England\) Order 2015](#), sets out when a site notice is required. Certain classes of permitted development will require a Prior Notification application and these are set out in the General Permitted Development Order (GDPO) In these cases, an application must be made to the Local Planning Authority who has to make its determination within the statutory period set out in the General Permitted Development Order (GDPO) from the date of receiving the application. The time period can vary depending on the type and complexity of the proposal and in some cases in

agreement with the applicant and Local Planning Authority. Prior notification applications will be publicised online and may in some instances include a site notice and neighbour consultation letter, depending on the type and nature of the development proposal. Further details about prior notification can be found on the [Prior approval Planning Portal](#).

4.26 There is no statutory requirement to consult on the following types of applications:

- Certificates of Lawfulness of proposed use or development
- Certificates of Lawfulness of existing use or development
- Approval of details/Discharge of Conditions
- Non material amendments.

**Table 4: Minimum publicity for planning applications**

<b>Type of application required for</b>	<b>Minimum methods of publicity</b>
Major Development	Site notice or neighbour notification letter/email, press notice in local newspaper, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Minor Development	Site notice or neighbour notification letter/email, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Householder Applications	Site notice or neighbour notification letter/email, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Applications subject to EIA which are accompanied by an Environmental Statement	Site notice or neighbour notification letter/email, press notice in local newspaper for a minimum of 30 days, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Applications which do not accord with the development plan for the area	Site notice, press notice in local newspaper for a minimum of 30 days, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Applications affecting a Public Right of Way	Site notice, press notice in local newspaper for a minimum of 30 days, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Listed Building applications and applications affecting the setting of a Listed Building	Site notice or neighbour notification letter/email, press notice in local newspaper, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Brownfield Land Register (Part 2)	Site notice, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Works to protected trees	Site notice responsible for by applicant, site notice or neighbour notification letter/email is discretionary (to be determined on a case by case basis by the Local Planning Authority) but the landowner must be notified, website, parish council notification letter/email is discretionary (to be determined on a case by case basis by the Local Planning Authority) and neighbourhood forum letter/email notification is also discretionary (to be determined on a case by case basis by the Local Planning Authority).
Applications relating to an advertisement	Site notice and/or neighbour notification letter/email, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Hazardous Substances Consent	Site notice and/or neighbour notification letter/email, press notice in local newspaper, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.

## Decision Making process

- 4.27 Decisions on planning applications are made by Planning Committee and Planning Officers under delegated powers. Delegated powers enable Planning Officers to determine applications without needing a decision from the Planning Committee. This is set out in the [Schemes of Delegation](#). Applications that are likely to be considered by the Planning Committee include applications for Major developments and applications relating to the demolition of a listed building or a Building of Local Interest.
- 4.28 The Councils are involved in three planning committees. There are two separate Planning Committees for the respective Local Planning Authorities. There is also the Joint Development Control Committee which addresses specific areas on the edge of the city, which comprises members appointed by the city and district council. This Committee considers planning applications for major and ancillary developments on the fringes of Cambridge.
- 4.29 Agendas and reports for Planning Committee are publicly available at least five working days before the meeting and are also published online. The committee meetings are minuted and published online. Members of the public may speak at a Planning Committee provided they have previously made written representations on the proposed development. Both Councils have further guidance and information regarding speaking at Committee Meetings and can be viewed on the City [website](#) and South Cambridgeshire [website](#), and on the joint committee [website](#).
- 4.30 Once an application has been determined, a copy of the planning decision notice will be sent to the applicant. As part of [The Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) \(England\) Order 2015](#), Local Planning Authorities are required to send notification of the decision to all third parties who have made representations, in accordance with the Local Planning Authorities statutory requirements. The Local Planning Authority will also make the decision available to view online through [Public Access](#) along with the reports that have been considered in the reaching of the decision. On the same website, a [weekly list](#) of validated and determined planning applications is made available for parish councils, neighbourhood forums and any other interested parties to be kept informed of planning decisions in their areas.

## Planning Appeals

- 4.31 An applicant may appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against a refusal or contest any of the conditions imposed to the granting of permissions or the non-

determination of an application. Only the applicant has the right to appeal. The Local Planning Authority will support the appeals process by adding appeal documentation to the online planning file online on [Public Access](#). The Councils will inform all parties that were originally consulted on the application or made representations on the proposal of the appeal. A planning appeal will then be considered by the Planning Inspectorate, who will make the final decision on the proposal. The Local Planning Authority has no statutory requirement to notify neighbours or interested parties of the appeal decision. This will be made available on the Planning Inspectorate [website](#).

- 4.32 There are three procedures that an appeal can follow, written representations which usually relate to householder applications, advertisement consent and minor commercial (shop front) applications as well as a public hearing or a public inquiry. The Planning Inspectorate publish a [Planning appeals: procedural guide](#) where you can find more information about how appeals work and opportunities to participate.

## Compliance

- 4.33 Planning compliance (formerly referred to as enforcement) describes the processes involved in ensuring that people comply with planning law and requirements of a planning permission. The majority of cases arise through referrals from the public, Councillors and Planning Officers. Many investigations are confidential, so the process involves little public consultation. Where a breach of planning control is reported, an Officer will investigate and assess the complaint, gather evidence, and establish what, if any, the most appropriate course of action should be.
- 4.34 Many investigations result in the submission of a planning application in an attempt to regularise a breach. When this is the case, the community can become more involved in the same way as with any other planning application. If the breach cannot be regularised, the Local Planning Authority will consider formal enforcement action. The Local Planning Authority will ensure that the complainant is informed of the outcome of the Council's investigation. Further information about the compliance process can be found on the [Councils websites](#), including the [GCSP's Compliance Policy](#).

## National Infrastructure Planning

- 4.35 Introduced by the Planning Act 2008 to streamline the decision making for major infrastructure projects, National Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), are large scale infrastructure projects, which fall into one of the following categories:

- Energy Generation
- Transport Projects
- Water and Waste
- Pipelines

4.36 These projects can include new roads, railway lines, power stations, reservoirs and waste water treatment plants. National Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) require a Development Consent Order (DCO) and this process for granting planning permission is determined by the Planning Inspectorate. It is different from the usual planning application process. There are 6 stages to the process:

- Pre-application
- Acceptance
- Pre-examination
- Examination
- Recommendation and Decision
- Post Decision

4.37 Before submitting a major infrastructure project an applicant, for example, a developer or Government Department has a duty to carry out consultation on their proposals. The applicant must prepare a Statement of Community Consultation (SOCC) which sets out how the applicant proposes to consult the local community. It is a key opportunity for the Local Authority, using local knowledge, to inform how the consultation should be conducted. Our expectation is that the applicant should undertake meaningful engagement with local communities which provides a clear understanding of proposals at an early stage and enables people to effectively share their views and ideas. It is also through these stages of engagement and consultation that the applicant will formally consult the statutory consultees, local authorities, affected parties and the local community of the proposal.

4.38 If you wish to participate in the examination of an application for development consent, you first need to register with the Planning Inspectorate by making a Relevant Representation about an application. More information can be found on the [Planning Inspectorate](#) website.

## 5.0 How can the community be involved in the allocation of planning obligation funds?

- 5.1 In certain circumstances a planning application will need to be supported by the provision of on site and/or off site infrastructure or financial contributions to make it acceptable in planning terms. An applicant will be required to enter into a planning obligation also known as S106 Agreement. Guidance on S106 Agreements is available on the Councils [Youtube](#). This is a legal agreement between the applicant or the landowner of the application site and the Councils. They normally deal with how a development will be carried out or the provision of new or improved infrastructure, community services or facilities.
- 5.2 Major or strategic developments generally have more complex obligations attached, but obligations may also be applied to small scale developments to achieve, for example, provision of affordable housing or sustainable travel measures.
- 5.3 Through consultations at pre-application stage and as part of the consideration of planning applications, the local community, key partners and stakeholders may give their views on the content of any likely planning obligations. This may be considered in line with previously identified projects and the priorities of both Councils. These will also be taken into consideration when the Council determines the planning application and any required obligations, in accordance with [Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy \(CIL\) Regulations](#) and in compliance with the three 'CIL' tests.
- 5.4 In some instances, the Councils will seek the views of local communities where developer contributions need to be spent on specific off site infrastructure projects (for example public art or the refurbishment of a children's play space). These types of projects are usually overseen by other Council service areas where information on the scope of the project, funds available and geographically where the funds can be spent is set out on the relevant council website.

### Biodiversity

- 5.5 The GCSP [Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document](#) was adopted in February 2022. It provides clear guidance on how developments should consider biodiversity at the start of the planning process to make sure Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is integrated, increased and enhances development proposals. It seeks to require developers to go beyond achieving a Net Gain of 10%, in line with the [Government's 25 Year Environment Plan](#)



[and the Environment Act 2021](#), and sets the aspiration to deliver 20% BNG. Under the scheme developers who are unable to meet BNG on site in the South Cambridgeshire area will need to secure biodiversity credits which will fund off site improvements. Habitats will be secured for at least 30 years via obligations and/or conservation covenant and can be delivered on site, off site or via statutory biodiversity credits.

## 6.0 How the local community can prepare a neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order

- 6.1 The [Localism Act 2011](#) introduced the opportunity for local communities to prepare neighbourhood plans and neighbourhood development orders (NDOs). These may be prepared by parish councils or designated neighbourhood forums and form part of the statutory plan for the area which can be used in deciding local planning applications.
- 6.2 Neighbourhood plans set out policies for the development and use of land in a local area or neighbourhood. A neighbourhood plan helps set out a community's vision and can allocate sites for development of housing, employment and community uses. The neighbourhood plan cannot propose less growth than the Local Plan, prevent development from ever taking place in an area and is required to be in general conformity with strategic policies in the Local Plan. Once adopted a neighbourhood plan forms part of the development plan for the area and has the same status as a Local Plan.
- 6.3 Neighbourhood development orders (NDOs) grant planning permission for specific developments within a designated neighbourhood area and remove the requirement to submit a planning application for this type of development. Neighbourhood development orders (NDOs) allow local communities to determine the forms of development that permission would be granted for and could include specified changes to the use of a building, the reinstatement of historical features, or can be used for allocated sites such as housing.
- 6.4 Whilst the neighbourhood plan making process itself is community led, Local Planning Authorities have a statutory duty to help local communities as set out in the [Neighbourhood Planning \(General Regulations\) 2015 regulations](#). Local Planning Authorities offer assistance through the Support Offer and [Toolkit](#) that provide guidance on the support available to parish councils and neighbourhood forums that are preparing a neighbourhood plan. Funding support is provided through the organisation [Locality](#), which enables neighbourhood plan groups to apply for grants to complete work. GCSP will provide targeted support to groups which are preparing neighbourhood plans, subject to the capacity of Planning Officers. Neighbourhood plans are required to undergo independent examination and are subject to a referendum of the local community before they can be 'made'.
- 6.5 The SCI broadly sets out how the Local Planning Authorities carry out this duty to advise and assist parish councils and neighbourhood forums at each of the key stages. The amount of support provided will be subject to both the Local Planning Authorities resource availability and the needs of the parish council or

neighbourhood forum. Further detailed guidance has been prepared by the Local Planning Authorities and is available on the GCSP [website](#).

## **Broad overview of how the Local Planning Authorities will provide advice and support for neighbourhood planning**

### **Step One: Getting started**

- 6.6 Planning Officers will provide advice online through the GCSP [website](#) and will respond to email or telephone enquiries about neighbourhood planning. Officers will meet with parish councils in South Cambridgeshire or neighbourhood forums in Cambridge City who may be interested in preparing a neighbourhood plan to:
- identify the area within which their plan would apply
  - the requirements of preparing a plan
  - any other alternative methods for groups to meet their local objectives
  - whether the parish council or neighbourhood forum has the necessary information to decide which approach works best.

### **Step Two: Designating a neighbourhood area or forum**

- 6.7 For parish councils in South Cambridgeshire, an application form for a new neighbourhood area is to be completed and submitted by the parish council. For groups seeking to create a neighbourhood forum within Cambridge City, an application form for creating a neighbourhood forum is to be completed and submitted as well as the application for a new neighbourhood area.
- 6.8 Where consultation is required for a neighbourhood area this will be for a minimum of six weeks undertaken by the Local Planning Authority. The publicity for public consultation will correspond with the timescales and methods set out in Table 2. The Local Planning Authority can assist by preparing a map to show the proposed neighbourhood area.

### **Step Three: Preparing the plan and evidence base**

- 6.9 Once the neighbourhood area is designated, the Local Planning Authority will meet with the parish council or neighbourhood forum to advise on:
- The adopted Local Plan, emerging policy and guidance documents;
  - What support the Local Planning Authority can give during plan-making process

- Regulatory and legal requirements, including the requirement to meet the [Basic Conditions](#)
- Sources of grants and technical support packages
- Effective methods of public engagement
- Mapping support
- Sources of information including providing links to a library of resources
- The use of a planning consultant who specialises in neighbourhood planning.

6.10 During the preparation of the neighbourhood plan, the Local Planning Authority will:

- Provide information about where to find data for the evidence base
- Share information on contacts for key consultees
- Highlight the key allocations and designations on the Local Plan policies map that will impact the neighbourhood plan area
- Provide constructive comments on emerging draft policies in the neighbourhood plan against the [Basic Conditions](#)
- Provide guidance in the [neighbourhood planning toolkit](#) which includes how to prepare a neighbourhood plan and the evidence base and specialist advice on planning issues that may need to be included in the neighbourhood plan, such as local housing needs.

#### **Step Four: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)**

6.11 There is a statutory requirement for neighbourhood plans to carry out an [Strategic Environmental Assessment](#) (SEA) and [Habitat Regulations Assessment](#) (HRA) to ensure:

- The emerging neighbourhood plan provides a high level of protection of the environment (SEA)
- The emerging neighbourhood plan protects and improves Europe's most important habitats and species (HRA).

6.12 A neighbourhood development order may also require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to ensure that the full knowledge of any significant effects on the environment are known. Other European directives or future regulations may apply in particular circumstances of a draft neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order and the Local Planning Authority will be able to advise at this stage.

6.13 For neighbourhood plans in both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, the Local Planning Authority will organise and pay for the SEA and HRA screening of the neighbourhood plan up to a maximum cost of £2,000 including

VAT. If the cost is higher than this or a repeat screening is required, the excess will need to be funded by the parish council or neighbourhood forum. The Local Planning Authority will also advise on third party technical support packages for any Neighbourhood Plan that requires a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA), particularly those offered by [Locality](#) as part of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities funding.

### **Step Five: Pre-submission consultation and preparing the plan for submission**

6.14 The Local Planning Authority will advise the parish council or neighbourhood forum of how to apply for [technical support packages](#) that include a health check of the draft neighbourhood plan. This health check is carried out before they submit the neighbourhood plan and supporting documents to the Local Planning Authority.

6.15 The health check review considers whether the draft neighbourhood plan meets the [Basic Conditions](#) and the independent examiner will provide guidance on any amendments required to ensure the conditions are met prior to submission of the neighbourhood plan.

### **Step Six: Submission of the neighbourhood plan for public examination**

6.16 The final stages of preparing the neighbourhood plan are undertaken with the Local Planning Authority as the lead rather than the parish council or neighbourhood forum. The Local Planning Authority will keep the parish council or neighbourhood forum informed of progress and liaise with them to resolve any issues as the plan goes through the examination and referendum stages of the process. This will include liaising with the parish council or neighbourhood forum regarding:

- The appointment of an examiner
- Arrangements for any public hearing that might be necessary
- Changes proposed in the Examiner's Report to ensure the neighbourhood plan meets the [Basic Condition](#) tests
- Any changes required to the neighbourhood plan.

### **Step Seven: Public referendum and adoption**

6.17 Subject to a successful outcome of the Public Examination, the Local Planning Authority will then inform the parish council or neighbourhood forum of the Council's decision to proceed to referendum and subsequent timescales. The organising of the public referendum and publicity regarding its outcome will be

undertaken by the elections team at the Council, rather than by the Local Planning Authority.

6.18 Subject to a successful referendum, the neighbourhood plan will then be made by the Council as part of the statutory Development Plan for the area.

## 7.0 Monitoring and review

- 7.1 The SCI is based on current national planning policy and legislation. As per the [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) (as amended), the Local Planning Authorities are committed to reviewing the SCI at least every five years from the time of adoption to ensure that it is up to date and reflects current legislation and best practice.
- 7.2 Should significant changes be made to national legislation which no longer apply to elements of the SCI, the Local Planning Authorities will endeavour to update the SCI as soon as possible.
- 7.3 Each year the GCSP produces a joint Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) which is a statutory requirement for all Local Planning Authorities. The AMR monitors and reviews the performance of planning policies set out in the adopted Local Plans and Area Action Plans and provides a general overview of the social, economic, and environmental trends taking place across Greater Cambridge. The AMR also assesses the Councils progress in producing the Local Plan and Area Action Plans against the timetable set out in the [Local Development Scheme](#) (LDS). You can find more information on the AMR on our [website](#).
- 7.4 GCSP continues to review the outcomes of our consultations and reflect on the lessons learnt during the process. As part of the First Proposals for the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan, we published a [report](#) alongside the full record of comments and feedback from the [First Conversations](#) and [Call for Sites](#) consultation. The report sets out the methodology followed in collecting and presenting the datasets and a quantitative analysis of the data. It also provides an overview of the outreach of the First Conversations consultation and the ways we engaged with our communities and statutory consultees.

## Appendix 1: Glossary

Abbreviation	Term	Definition
AMR	Authority Monitoring Report	The AMR describes progress against the Local Development Scheme and monitors the impact of planning policies included in the Development Plan documents. Authority Monitoring Reports were formerly known as Annual Monitoring Reports.
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain	Biodiversity net gain is a way of creating and improving natural habitats. BNG makes sure development has a measurably positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity, compared to what was there before development.
DCO	Development Consent Order	Is the means of obtaining permission for developments categorised as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP). This includes energy, transport, water and waste projects.
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	Process of evaluating the likely environmental impacts of a proposed scheme or development, taking into account positive and negative impacts related social, economic, cultural and human health.
GSCP	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning	The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, formed in 2018, is a partnership between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils, which provides planning service to both councils.
LNP	Local Nature Partnerships	Are coalitions of organisations, businesses and people from a range of sectors, who aim to improve local natural environments.
GPDO	General Permitted Development Order	Gives permission to carry out certain tasks such as extensions, rear dormers, erecting fences.
LPA	Local Planning Authority	They are responsible for planning functions of an area. Usually through the planning service of a Borough, District or Unitary Council.



NDO	Neighbourhood Development Order	A Neighbourhood Development Order can grant planning permission for specific types of development in a specific neighbourhood area.
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	Sets out the Government's planning policies in England and provides a framework in which Local Plans can be produced.
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement	Sets out how and when stakeholders, partners, the community and others will be consulted and the requirements to be met in producing for example any new local development plan documents or supplementary planning documents.
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document	Provides additional details to help implementation of policies set out in development plan documents.
S106	Section 106 Planning Agreement	This is a legal agreement between the applicant or land owner of the application site and the Councils. The agreement deals with how a development will be carried out or the provision of funds for new or improved infrastructure, community services or facilities to support growth and development.

## Appendix 2: Consultation Bodies for plan-making

The [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) (as amended) specify a number of organisations that local planning authorities should consider consulting when preparing planning policy documents. These are known as Specific Consultation Bodies and General Consultation Bodies.

The Regulations allow the councils to select 'such of' the Specific and General Consultation Bodies that may have an interest and/or the Local Planning Authority consider appropriate to the consultation document being prepared.

The organisations the Councils will consult will be drawn from the list in this Appendix and will depend upon the nature of the consultation being undertaken, bearing in mind:

1. The area covered by the document - certain organisations may only operate in parts of Cambridge and/or South Cambridgeshire
2. The subject matter of the document - an SPD may address a specific topic which may only be of interest to some organisations.

The consultation bodies outlined in this Appendix are common to both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. Where there are differences between the councils, these have been identified below.

### Specific Consultation Bodies

The Specific Consultation Bodies are defined in the [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#), Part 1 as the following:

- The Coal Authority(b) (The Coal Authority has advised South Cambridgeshire District Council it does not wish to be consulted)
- The Environment Agency
- The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (now known as Historic England)
- The Marine Management Organisation(e)
- Natural England
- Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (company number 2904587) (Network Rail Office of Rail Regulation)
- The Highways Agency (now known as Highways England)
- Relevant authority any part of whose area is in or adjoins the local planning authority's area:
  - a) A local planning authority

**Table 5: Local Planning Authorities who will be consulted**

<b>Local Planning Authority</b>	<b>Council who will be consulting</b>
Bedford Borough Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Braintree District Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cambridge City Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Central Bedfordshire Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
East Cambridgeshire District Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Fenland District Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Huntingdonshire District Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
North Hertfordshire District Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Peterborough City Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council	Cambridge City Council
Uttlesford District Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
West Suffolk Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council

b) A county council referred to in section 16(1) of the Act

**Table 6: County Councils who will be consulted**

<b>County Council</b>	<b>Council who will be consulting</b>
Cambridgeshire County Council	Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council
Essex County Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Hertfordshire County Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Suffolk County Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council

c) A parish council

South Cambridgeshire District Council will consult with parish councils within South Cambridgeshire; and parish councils which adjoin South Cambridgeshire.

Cambridge City Council will consult parish councils within South Cambridgeshire which adjoin the City.

d) A local policing body (Cambridgeshire Constabulary)

- any person—
  - (i) to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under section 106(3)(a) of the Communications Act 2003, and
  - (ii) who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the local planning authority's area,
- If it exercises functions in any part of the local planning authority's area—
  - (i) a Primary Care Trust established under section 18 of the National Health Service Act 2006(g) or continued in existence by virtue of that

section; (formerly known as Clinical Commissioning Groups, now known as Integrated Care Boards (ICBS))

(ii) a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 6(1)(b) or (c) of the Electricity Act 1989(h)

(iii) a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986(a)

(iv) a sewerage undertaker

(v) a water undertaker

- The Homes and Communities Agency (now known as Homes England); and
- where the Local Planning Authority are a London borough council, the Mayor of London (not applicable to Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire).

## General Consultation Bodies

The General Consultation Bodies are defined in the [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#), Part 1 as the following:

- a) voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the local planning authority's area
- b) bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the local planning authority's area
- c) bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the local planning authority's area
- d) bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the local planning authority's area
- e) bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the local planning authority's area

The Local Planning Authorities must also ensure they meet the requirements of the [Equality Act 2010](#). To ensure the views of harder to reach groups are represented, the Local Planning Authorities will work closely with relevant organisations that have experience in a particular matter to find the best way of consulting and liaising with these groups.

The Local Planning Authorities will also consult with other consultation bodies which they consider to be appropriate to planning and who do not fall into the above categories. These may include:

- Residents' Associations
- Developers and agents
- Landowners
- Special interest groups.

## Duty to Co-operate Bodies

The Duty to Cooperate Bodies are defined in [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012, Part 2, Regulation 4](#) as follows:

- The Environment Agency
- The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (known as Historic England)
- Natural England
- the Mayor of London (not applicable to Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire)
- The Civil Aviation Authority
- The Homes and Communities Agency (now known as Homes England)
- Each Integrated Care Board established under section 14D of the National Health Service Act 2006 (formerly known as Clinical Commissioning Groups)
- The National Health Service Commissioning Board
- The Office of Rail Regulation (known as the Office of Rail and Road)
- Transport for London (not applicable to Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire)
- Each Integrated Transport Authority (including Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority)
- Each highway authority within the meaning of section 1 of the Highways Act 1980 (including the Secretary of State, where the Secretary of State is the highways authority)
- The Marine Management Organisation.

In addition, [Planning Practice Guidance](#), Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 9-006-20160519 states:

“Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships are not subject to the requirements of the duty. But local planning authorities and the public bodies that are subject to the duty must cooperate with Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships and have regard to their activities when they are preparing their Local Plans, so long as those activities are relevant to Local Plan-making.”

The [Local Nature Partnership](#) for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is Natural Cambridgeshire. The role of Natural Cambridgeshire is to act as an independent, objective voice for the Natural Environment in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, acting as a conduit to local and central government and other stakeholders. The main focus for the Natural Cambridgeshire Board will be to provide strategic leadership, coordinating partners to deliver projects and activity that will meet the Partnership’s vision and aims. More information regarding Natural Cambridgeshire is available on their [website](#).

## Appendix 3: Council offices where planning consultation documents will be made available for public inspection

It should be noted that where documents are being produced by an individual Council rather than jointly, documents will only be made available for public inspection at the relevant Council office. Documents can be translated on request, made available in braille, large copy print or audio.

**Table 7: Addresses for Councils**

Council	Address
Cambridge City Council	Customer Service Centre Mandela House 4 Regent Street Cambridge CB2 1BY
South Cambridgeshire District Council	South Cambridgeshire Hall Cambourne Business Park Cambourne Cambridge CB23 6EA

The opening times for both offices can be found on the Councils websites and by calling the telephone numbers below. Both Councils operate an appointments system.

**Table 8: Contact details for Councils**

Council	Contact telephone number	Webpage
Cambridge City Council	01223 457000	<a href="#">Council offices - Cambridge City Council</a>
South Cambridgeshire District Council	01954 713000	<a href="#">Council Offices - South Cambridgeshire District Council</a>

## **Appendix 4: Statutory requirements for consulting on planning applications**

The Local Planning Authorities are required to undertake a formal period of public consultation, prior to deciding a planning application. This is prescribed in:

- [The Town and Country Planning](#) (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
- [The Town and Country Planning](#) (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017
- [The Planning](#) (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990
- [The Planning](#) (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2004
- [The Town and Country Planning](#) (General Permitted Development) (England) Order (as amended) 2015

## Appendix 5: Consultation Bodies for a planning application

Statutory Consultees that Cambridge City Council or South Cambridgeshire District Council may consult (those consulted will vary depending on the type of application)

- Ancient Monument Society
- Anglian Water Services Ltd
- British Gas
- British Telecommunications plc
- Cambridge Water Company
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care Board
- Canal and River Trust
- Coal Authority
- Control of Major-Accident Hazards Competent Authority
- Crown Estates Commissioners
- Council for British Archaeology
- Department of Energy Security and Net Zero
- Designated Neighbourhood Forums
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
- Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- Environment Agency (EA)
- Forestry Commission
- Health and Safety Executive
- Highways England
- Historic England
- Marine Management Organisation
- Mobile Operators Associations
- National Grid Transco
- Natural England
- Network Rail
- Parish Councils
- Rail Infrastructure Managers
- Rail Network Operators
- Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings
- Sport England
- Theatres Trust
- The Gardens Trust
- The Georgian Group
- Twentieth Century Society



- Victorian Society

Examples of Non-Statutory Consultees that the Councils may consult (those consulted will vary depending on the type of application)

- Cambridge Business Improvement District
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System (Estates)
- Public Health (Cambridgeshire County Council)
- Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust
- Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust
- North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust
- Royal Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust
- Internal council service areas (such as Housing and Environmental Health) (as relevant)
- Adjoining parish councils and local authorities (as relevant)
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Emergency Services and Multi-Agency Emergency Planning
- Ministry of Defence
- Office of Nuclear Regulation
- Residents' Associations
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- Police and Crime Commissioner
- Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire

If you wish to join our consultation database, please send your contact details to the email addresses shown below or if you would like to write to us, send your details to our offices shown below:

**Table 9: Email Address for Greater Cambridge Shared Planning**

Email address
planning@greatercambridgeplanning.org

**Table 10 Postal Addresses for Councils**

Council	Postal address
Cambridge City Council	Application Support, Cambridge City Council, PO Box 700, Cambridge, CB1 0JH
South Cambridgeshire District Council	Planning Department, South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne, CB23 6EA

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# Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA): Statement of Community Involvement

## Introduction – Please read


The Public Sector Equality Duty, introduced under the Equality Act 2010, requires all public bodies, including local authorities, 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
- Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) allow the Council to:

- Show that we are meeting this legal duty by demonstrating due regard for the provisions of the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Identify possible negative impacts on individuals and groups with protected characteristics, plan mitigating action and seek to maximise opportunities to advance equality within our activities.

EqIAs provide a methodical approach to the assessment of impacts across the [nine protected characteristics](#) and should be completed during the development and review of all Council policies, strategies, procedures, projects or functions. Where there is any doubt, the completion of an EqIA is always recommended.

Throughout the course of this form, please hover over the  symbol for guidance in relation to specific questions. When the form is completed, please send an



electronic copy to [equality.schemes@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:equality.schemes@scambs.gov.uk). If you require any additional support completing the form, please email the above address.

## Equality Impact Assessment Complete Form

### Section 1: Identifying Details

- 1.1** Officer completing EqIA:  
Lizzie Wood, Senior Planning Policy Officer
  
- 1.2** Team and Service:  
Planning Policy, Strategy and Economy - Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service
  
- 1.3** Title of proposal:  
Statement of Community Involvement
  
- 1.4** EqIA completion date:  
13.09.2023 (updated 14.09.2024 to reflect final March 2024 version)
  
- 1.5** Proposal implementation date:  
Consultation carried out October – November 2023, formal adoption of the SCI anticipated for March 2024.
  
- 1.6** Who will be responsible for implementing this proposal:  
Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils through the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service

## Section 2: Proposal to be Assessed

**2.1** Type of proposal:  
Policy

**2.2** Is the proposal:  
An update

**2.3** State the date of any previous equality impact assessment completed in relation to this proposal (if applicable):  
June/July 2019 and Addendum May 2020 (and for consultation draft version in September 2023)

**2.4** What are the headline aims of the proposal and the objectives that will help to accomplish these aims? (Approximately 250 words)

The review of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council will engage the public in the planning process. The SCI describes how the public, businesses, stakeholders and interest groups within the local authority areas can engage in the creation/influence local planning policy and the planning application process which shapes where we live and work. This is essential to help improve understanding and openness of the planning process.

There is a legal requirement on Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to undertake public consultation on local plans, neighbourhood plans and planning applications. It is important that this is undertaken in a cost-effective, efficient and proportionate manner. This SCI is an important document as it will establish a minimum standard of consultation and publicity on planning matters for both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils.

The SCI has been split into three main sections which cover the following roles and responsibilities of the planning service:

- Planning Policy including the production of planning policy documents including the Local Plan
- Development Management including how the councils consider and publicise planning applications, and
- Neighbourhood planning setting out how the councils will assist groups who are preparing neighbourhood plans

The Councils are committed to treating everyone fairly and justly, and wants to ensure that everyone gets an opportunity to be involved in the planning process. We recognise that consultation and engagement activities are constantly evolving and this SCI will be revisited at regular intervals to ensure it is fully up-to date and reflects local and national priorities, practices and policies.

**2.5** Which of South Cambridgeshire District Council's business plan priorities does this proposal link to?

- Helping Businesses to grow - ✓
- Building homes that are truly affordable to live in -
- Being green to our core - ✓
- A modern and caring council - ✓

**2.6** Which of South Cambridgeshire District Council's equality objectives (as detailed in SCDC's Equality Scheme) does this proposal link to or help to achieve?

- Identify, prioritise and deliver actions that will narrow the gap in outcomes between disadvantaged groups and the wider community- ✓

- SCDC is an employer that values difference and recognises the strength that a diverse workforce brings -
- Protected characteristic groups have a voice and are represented in forming the future shape of the district - ✓

**2.7** Which of Cambridge City Council's equality objectives (as detailed in CCC's Equality Scheme) does this proposal link to or help to achieve?

- To further increase our understanding of the needs of Cambridge's growing and increasingly diverse communities so that we can target our services effectively - ✓
- To continue to work to improve access to and take-up of Council services from all residents and communities - ✓
- To work towards a situation where all residents have equal access to public activities and spaces in Cambridge and are able to participate fully in the community - ✓

**2.8** Which groups or individuals will the proposal affect:

- Service Users ✓
- External Stakeholders ✓
- Employees ✓
- Councillors ✓
- Other ✓

If other, please specify – all residents and visitors to the Greater Cambridge area.

**2.9** How will these groups or individuals be affected? (you will be asked to provide more detail on the specific impacts on different protected characteristic groups later on in the form) (approximately 250 words)

The SCI sets out how the public will have an opportunity to engage in the planning process in Greater Cambridge. The SCI describes how the public, businesses, interest groups and individuals within the local authority areas can get involved in the creation of local planning policy and the planning



application process aiming at shaping where we live and work. The SCI has the potential to affect a large and wide cross section of the community, including:

- Residents across Greater Cambridge
- Local Parish Councils and designated Neighbourhood Forums
- District and City Council Members
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Adjacent Local Authorities
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
- Delivery partners, including land owners, developers, infrastructure providers, transport providers
- Community organisations
- Statutory, general and wider consultation bodies
- Local businesses

**2.10** How many people will this proposal affect? (Approximately)

Land use planning and associated development have a fundamental effect on peoples live who live within Greater Cambridge, but these effects can impact different groups in contrasting ways. For example, if permission is given for a new housing estate then this provides homes to new residents, an economic boost local shops and businesses, but it could also lead to perceptions of increase in traffic.


**2.11** If any part of the proposal is being undertaken by external partners, please specify how SCDC will ensure that they will meet equality standards?  
(Approximately 250 words)

The SCI reflects the national governments guidance that Local Planning Authorities (in this case South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge




City Council) should implement this policy document. No external partners will deliver this policy but there is guidance on how developers should engage with local communities through the planning process.

### Section 3: Evidence and Data

- 3.1** Describe any research (this could include consultation) and analysis you have undertaken to understand how [protected characteristic groups](#) are likely to be affected? Please list any key sources that you used to obtain this Information. 

(Approximately 250 words)

Prior to carrying out the consultation, officers who are responsible for producing the SCI have examined census data, case studies of best practise at other councils, reports from professional bodies such as the Royal Institute of Town Planning, and researched Civil Service information about correct terminology. The data sources are embedded within the SCI document as hyperlinks.

- 3.2** Describe any research (this could include consultation) and analysis you have undertaken to understand any effects on any other groups of people not mentioned in the nine [protected characteristic groups](#) (for example people who live in rural areas, who live in areas of high growth, or from low income backgrounds). 

(Approximately 250 words)

From October – November 2023, GCSP carried out a consultation of the SCI document to understand the effects of this SCI on these groups. Officers carried out two in-person consultation events and one webinar in order to be digitally inclusive. Not being able to use the internet is an important non-protected characteristic which GCSP perceived was important to engage with

to understand how they can better engage with the Planning Service. GCSP used representations from these consultations to amend the SCI document. GCSP used representations from these consultations to amend the SCI document. Some representations were relevant to this issue, particularly around the need for GCSP to carry out in-person events so that people are not excluded.

- 3.3** If you have not undertaken any consultation, please detail why not, or when consultation is planned to take place. [📖](#)  
(Approximately 250 words)

Consultation on the Statement of Community Involvement took place from 9am on Wednesday 18 October 2023 to 5pm on Wednesday 29 November 2023.

## Section 4: Impact of proposal on those with protected characteristics

### 4.1 [Age:](#)

- 4.1.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.2 Disability  
If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.1.2)**

- 4.1.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including
- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
  - whether it is a high, medium or low impact. [📖](#)

- approximately 250 words per impact

Positive, medium impact.

Previous experience in consultations undertaken by the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service has shown that children, teenagers and young adults engage with the planning system less frequently than older adults. Where possible and appropriate, relevant organisations and individuals will be identified to reach as wide an age range as possible during specific consultation and engagement activities. This could include other service areas such the Cambridge City Council’s Community Development Team, South Cambridgeshire District Council’s Young People Task and Finish Group, as well as the GCSP Youth Engagement Service. Evidence from [Age UK](#) and data from [ONS](#) suggests that some older people and those from lower income households are also less likely to have access to the internet. Both Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council carry out work to support people who are excluded from using the internet. Where documents or information is required they can be accessed or be viewed at accessible council offices. Planning applications are publicised by site notices and letters to neighbouring/adjacent properties or land. These notices and letters explain how people can submit comments in writing via letter.

**4.1.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
The SCI outlines the different actions GCSP will take to be	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Ongoing	The national government explains how there is no requirements for

<p>inclusive of different ages.</p> <p>In paragraph 3.36 it outlines how GCSP is committed to including a wide range of perspectives in planning, including older and young people. In 3.37, it explains how GCSP will use the SCDC's Young People Task &amp; Finish Group to explore how to improve youth engagement.</p> <p>In paragraph 4.14 it outlines the youth engagement service's work and how it seeks to engage younger people on applications.</p>			<p>Councils to monitor their SCI. Nevertheless, for each consultation GCSP measures the number of participants and the quality of engagement to assess its effectiveness.</p> <p>Development Management also regularly send out surveys to customers to understand if they were satisfied with the service.</p> <p>The Consultation Statements which are attached to the SCI and each consultation will explain how effective these consultations have been.</p> <p>Furthermore, the SCI will be reviewed in 5 years time (in accordance with national government guidance) and this will enable GCSP to reflect upon whether</p>
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			engagement has been effective or not.
Delivering the updated EqiA	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Spring 2024	Now that the consultation on the SCI has been completed, Planning Officers and the Equalities Officers at both Councils will ensure that the SCI actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty. In practice this will mean that the positive impacts that we have identified in the EqiA will be delivered.

## 4.2 [Disability:](#)

**4.2.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

**Yes**

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.3 Gender Reassignment**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.2.2)**

**4.2.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 📖
- approximately 250 words per impact


#### Positive, medium impact

The SCI identifies a range of external groups and organisations that may be consulted on planning matters, whilst the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service has a Disability Panel operating within Cambridge City helping to feedback on impacts new developments have on people with a range of disabilities. Forums or meeting are held at fully accessible public buildings e.g. council offices.

Evidence from the [NHS](#) suggests that disabled people are more likely than non disabled people to be digitally excluded as IT equipment sometimes is not adapted to their individual needs. The consultation document can be made available on request in large copy print, audio cassette or Braille and officers are available to meet individuals and talk issues through. This approach would also apply, as necessary, to subsequent consultation documents that are prepared in the plan making process. In respect of planning applications, information can be made available in a range of formats if required.

**4.2.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
The SCI outlines the different actions GCSP will take to be inclusive for	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Ongoing	The national government explains how there is no requirements for

<p>people who have disabilities.</p> <p>Paragraphs 3.17 and 3.33 explains how GCSP will run online consultation events for Local Plan documents to increase outreach, and how GCSP has an online consultation system to allow anyone to submit comments. This will potentially help disabled people to become more involved with planning matters because if they had mobility issues then an in-person only event might be difficult for disabled people to participate in. </p> <p>Paragraph 3.36 commits GCSP to delivering the requirements of the Equality Act 2010,</p>			<p>Councils to monitor their SCI.</p> <p>Nevertheless, for each consultation GCSP measures the number of participants and the quality of engagement to assess its effectiveness.</p> <p>Development Management also regularly send out surveys to customers to understand if they were satisfied with the service.</p> <p>The Consultation Statements which are attached to the SCI and each consultation will explain how effective these consultations have been.</p> <p>Furthermore, the SCI will be reviewed in 5 years time (in accordance with national government guidance) and this will enable GCSP to</p>
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<p>which aims to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and encourage good relations between different groups including those with disabilities.</p> <p>Paragraph 4.13 also explains how GCSP uses a Disability Panel to ensure that planning applications consider accessibility issues.</p>			<p>reflect upon whether engagement has been effective or not.</p>
<p>Delivering the updated EqIA</p>	<p>Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service</p>	<p>Spring 2024</p>	<p>Now that the consultation on the SCI has been completed, Planning Officers and the Equalities Officers at both Councils will ensure that the SCI actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.</p>



### 4.3 Gender Reassignment:


4.3.1 Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

**No**

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.4 Marriage and Civil Partnership**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.3.2)**

4.3.2 Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

4.3.3 Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

### 4.4 Marriage and Civil Partnership:

4.4.1 Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?


**No**

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.5**

**Pregnancy and Maternity**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.4.2)**

**4.4.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

**4.4.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**4.5 Pregnancy and Maternity:**


**4.5.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.6 Race**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.5.2)**

**4.5.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 

- approximately 250 words per impact

Positive, low

Where people are required to care for children, it may be difficult for them to engage in consultation events and meetings. A number of the planning policy consultation events take place within and outside of usual working hours to try and ensure people are able to engage in the process and several take place online which can be more convenient for people to attend or watch back at an alternative time. Planning applications are available for public inspection online and can be accessed at any time of the day.

**4.5.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
<p>The SCI outlines the different actions GCSP will take to be inclusive for all people.</p> <p>Paragraphs 3.17 and 3.33 explains how GCSP will run online consultation events for Local Plan documents</p>	<p>Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service</p>	<p>Authority Annual Monitoring Report to be endorsed by Members, usually in December each year.</p>	<p>The national government explains how there is no requirement for Councils to monitor their SCI. Nevertheless, for each consultation GCSP measures the number of participants and the quality of engagement to assess its effectiveness. Development Management also</p>

<p>to increase outreach, and how GCSP has an online consultation system to allow anyone to submit comments. This will help people who are pregnant or are caring for children who cannot attend in-person events.</p>			<p>regularly send out surveys to customers to understand if they were satisfied with the service.</p> <p>The Consultation Statements which are attached to the SCI and each consultation will explain how effective these consultations have been.</p> <p>Furthermore, the SCI will be redrafted in 5 years time (in accordance with national government guidance) and this will enable GCSP to reflect upon whether engagement has been effective or not.</p>
<p>Delivering the updated EqIA</p>	<p>Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service</p>	<p>Spring 2024</p>	<p>Now that the consultation on the SCI has been completed, Planning Officers and the Equalities Officers at both Councils will ensure that the SCI actions are</p>

			implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.
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#### 4.6 Race:

**4.6.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.7 Religion or Belief**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.6.2)**

**4.6.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 📖
- approximately 250 words per impact

Positive, low

Under represented groups such as Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities are noted in the SCI as a known seldom heard, and the SCI notes that in certain circumstances, the councils will consider targeted engagement with specific hard to reach groups/communities as we have done previously as part of the Local Plan process.

**4.6.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
<p>The SCI outlines the different actions GCSP will take to be inclusive for people for all people.</p> <p>Paragraph 3.36 commits GCSP to delivering the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, which aims to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and encourage good relations between different groups including those with disabilities.</p> <p>Paragraph 3.39 explains how in</p>	<p>Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The national government explains how there is no requirement for Councils to monitor their SCI. Nevertheless, for each consultation GCSP measures the number of participants and the quality of engagement to assess its effectiveness. Development Management also regularly send out surveys to customers to understand if they were satisfied with the service.</p> <p>The Consultation Statements which are attached to the SCI and each consultation will explain how effective</p>

<p>the past GCSP has carried out consultation events with groups such as Gypsies, Travellers and Roma groups and how it will continue to do so.</p>			<p>these consultations have been.</p> <p>Furthermore, the SCI will be redrafted in 5 years time (in accordance with national government guidance) and this will enable GCSP to reflect upon whether engagement has been effective or not.</p>
<p>Delivering the updated EqIA</p>	<p>Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service</p>	<p>Spring 2024</p>	<p>Now that the consultation on the SCI has been completed, Planning Officers and the Equalities Officers at both Councils will ensure that the SCI actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.</p>

#### 4.7 [Religion or Belief:](#)


**4.7.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

No

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.8 Sex**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.7.2)**

**4.7.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

**4.7.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

## 4.8 [Sex:](#)


**4.8.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

**Yes**

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.9 (Sexual Orientation)**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.8.2)**

**4.8.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 



- approximately 250 words per impact

Low, positive

Research from the [ONS](#) suggests that women may be more likely to feel unsafe in public spaces so not having voices heard by Planning could have greater detriment here.

**4.8.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
<p>The SCI outlines the different actions GCSP will take to be inclusive for people for all people.</p> <p>Paragraph 3.36 commits GCSP to delivering the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, which aims to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and encourage good relations</p>	<p>Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The national government explains how there is no requirement for Councils to monitor their SCI. Nevertheless, for each consultation GCSP measures the number of participants and the quality of engagement to assess its effectiveness.</p> <p>Development Management also regularly send out surveys to customers to understand if they were satisfied with the service.</p>

4.9	between all people, including different genders.		<p>The Consultation Statements which are attached to the SCI and each consultation will explain how effective these consultations have been.</p> <p>Furthermore, the SCI will be redrafted in 5 years time (in accordance with national government guidance) and this will enable GCSP to reflect upon whether engagement has been effective or not.</p>
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Sexual Orientation:


**4.9.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.10 (Other)**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.9.2)**

**4.9.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 

- approximately 250 words per impact

Positive, low

LGBTQ+ people are at risk of hate crime and design of spaces can reduce this risk so it is important to hear from them during consultations from the Planning service.

**4.9.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
<p>The SCI outlines the different actions GCSP will take to be inclusive for people for all people.</p> <p>Paragraph 3.36 commits GCSP to delivering the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, which aims to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and encourage good relations between all</p>	<p>Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The national government explains how there is no requirement for Councils to monitor their SCI. Nevertheless, for each consultation GCSP measures the number of participants and the quality of engagement to assess its effectiveness.</p> <p>Development Management also regularly send out surveys to customers to understand if they were satisfied with the service.</p>

<p>people, including LGBTQ+ .</p>			<p>The Consultation Statements which are attached to the SCI and each consultation will explain how effective these consultations have been.</p> <p>Furthermore, the SCI will be redrafted in 5 years time (in accordance with national government guidance) and this will enable GCSP to reflect upon whether engagement has been effective or not.</p>
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#### 4.10 Other: (e.g. rurality, growth, socio-economic status etc.).


**4.10.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

**If you have selected no – please move forward to question 5.1**

**If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.10.2)**

**4.10.2** Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 

- approximately 250 words per impact

Positive, medium

It can be difficult to contact some low income groups if they have limited access to the internet and transport, and the SCI sets out that where additional mechanisms are required to improve levels of engagement on planning matters that bespoke methods may be used. This will be considered in detail taking into account the subject matters and geographic scope of each new stage of plan making, and in respect of planning applications.

Evidence suggests that some older people are also less likely to have access to the internet. The Councils have a Digital Inclusion Strategy and Digital Access Strategy in order to support people who are excluded from using the internet gain access and skills they need to use it. Planning policy documents and planning applications are made available to be viewed at Council Offices.

Rural access to high speed internet is also an issue within the district and part of the council's Business Plan is to work with partners to improve broadband and mobile phone coverage across the district. To assist with viewing planning documents online, the councils' will generally split large documents, such as a Design and Access Statement, when they exceed 50 pages or 10MB in file size to assist users with downloading and viewing large files. By placing these documents online, people who cannot attend in-person events are more able to influence planning matters.

**4.10.3** Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?

<p>Paragraph 1.3 of the SCI outlines GCSP's aim to use digital means to engage more people. This paragraph also commits to including people who do not have access to digital means of communication. Paragraph 1.11 states that GCSP is committed to exploring interactive maps and webinar videos, and other forms of innovative digital forms of communication to engage a wider group of people.</p> <p>Paragraph 3.39 also explains how GCSP will hold in-person events to include more people.</p>	<p>Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The national government explains how there is no requirement for Councils to monitor their SCI. Nevertheless, for each consultation GCSP measures the number of participants and the quality of engagement to assess its effectiveness. Development Management also regularly send out surveys to customers to understand if they were satisfied with the service.</p> <p>The Consultation Statements which are attached to the SCI and each consultation will explain how effective these consultations have been.</p> <p>Furthermore, the SCI will be redrafted in 5 years time (in accordance with national government</p>
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<p>Paragraph 4.20 explains how planning applications are published online for people to read and comment on.</p>			<p>guidance) and this will enable GCSP to reflect upon whether engagement has been effective or not.</p>
<p>Delivering the updated EqIA</p>	<p>Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service</p>	<p>Spring 2024</p>	<p>Now that the consultation on the SCI has been completed, team Leaders and the Equalities Officers at both Councils will ensure that the SCI actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.</p>

## Section 5: Summary

- 5.1** Briefly summarise the key findings of the EqIA and any significant equality considerations that should be taken into account when deciding whether or not to proceed with the proposal (this section can be included within the ‘equality implications’ section of any committee reports). (Approximately 250 words)

The EqIA demonstrates that the Statement of Community Involvement will potentially have positive impacts for a number of groups. GCSP is keen to carry out consultation on this document to incorporate the views of the public to see how we

can enhance these positive impacts and reduce any potentially negative impacts. GCSP is also committed to monitoring the efficacy of this document to ensure that it actually delivers the positive benefits set out in this EqIA , and we are willing to work with Equality Officers at both Councils to achieve these aims.

**5.2** Confirm the recommendation of the officer completing the EqIA (delete as appropriate):

- Approved (No major change): Your analysis demonstrates that the policy is robust, and the evidence shows no potential for discrimination and that you have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.

**5.3** Signature of individual completing EqIA:

Lizzie Wood

**5.4** Date of completion:

24.01.2024

## **Section 6: Sign Off**

**6.1** Approving officer EqIA review outcome: (delete as appropriate):

- Approved (No major change): Your analysis demonstrates that the policy is robust, and the evidence shows no potential for discrimination and that you have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.

**6.2** Do you give permission to publish this EqIA on SCDC website (delete as appropriate)? If no, please state reason

Yes





**6.3** When will this proposal next be reviewed and who will this be?

The SCI will be reviewed periodically on a basis of every 5 years, in accordance with national government guidelines,

**6.4** Approving officer signature:

Jonathan Dixon

**6.5** Date of approval:

15/02/2024

Please send a copy to [Equality.Schemes@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:Equality.Schemes@scambs.gov.uk)

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