

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

25 March 2025
5.30 - 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Nestor (Chair), Baigent (Vice-Chair), Bick, Clough, Porrer and Swift

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

In attendance: Councillor Blackburn-Horgan

Officers:

Joint Director for Planning: Stephen Kelly

Planning Policy Manager: Jonathan Dixon

Built & Natural Environment Manager: Jane Green

Environmental Health Manager: Yvonne O'Donnell

Built Environment Team Leader: Trovine Monteiro

Team Leader (Planning Policy and Strategic Planning): Terry DeSousa

Principal Planning Policy Officer: Lizzie Wood

Senior Urban Designer: Tom Davies

Policy Planner: Vaughan Bryan

S106 Officer: James Fisher

Committee Manager: Claire Tunnicliffe

Meeting Producer: Boris Herzog

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

25/1/PnT Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Divkovic and Griffin. Councillor Pounds attended as an alternate.

25/2/PnT Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Baigent	All	Personal: Member of Cambridge Cycle Campaign.

25/3/PnT Public Questions

There were no public questions.

25/4/PnT To Note Record of Urgent Decision Taken by the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure

Cambridge Northern Neighbourhoods Design Code for Arbury, King's Hedges and parts of West Chesterton

The decision was noted.

25/5/PnT Cambridge Neighbourhoods Design Code for Arbury, Kings Hedges and Parts of West Chesterton Supplementary Planning Document

The purpose of the report was to seek approval to adopt the Cambridge Neighbourhoods Design Code for Arbury Kings Hedges and parts of West Chesterton as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

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

- i. Considered the main issues raised in the public consultation, agreed responses to the representations received and agreed proposed changes to the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) as set out in the Statement of Consultation (appendix 01 of the Officer's report).
- ii. Subject to (i), adopted the amended Cambridge Neighbourhoods Design Code SPD for Arbury, Kings Hedges and Parts of West Chesterton, March 2025 (appendix 02 of the Officer's report).
- iii. Delegated to the Joint Director of Planning, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure, the Chair and Spokes for the Planning Policy and Transport Scrutiny Committee, the authority to make any necessary editing changes to the SPD prior to publication.

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 Built Environment Team Leader.

In response to comments from Members the Built Environment Team Leader and the Executive Councillor said the following:

- i. Noted the request to avoid having blank walls at the end of a facade, as a blank wall usually encouraged unsolicited graffiti. SPD wanted to encourage more active uses of blank walls throughout public spaces and at the end of terraced houses.
- ii. Developers were expected to take account of the detailed design of buildings including the accessible letterboxes as referenced in the character chapter of the Design Code.
- iii. The SPD would be reviewed through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The impact of the Design Code would also be assessed based on the outcome of planning applications received for the area.
- iv. The project team had carried out different types of public engagement, in person and online to try and capture local views. Did not expect members of the community to come to Officers, but instead Officers tried to go out into the community with the project.
- v. Officers had engaged with local schools on numerous occasions, engaging with the young people as the occupiers and users of houses in the future; working with schools through the Planning Department's Youth Engagement Service was also aimed at extending engagement to the student's families.
- vi. Local resident groups had also been consulted several times through various platforms.
- vii. Producing a Design Code which was area based and did not have a Master Plan was instead focused upon receiving views from residents to identify priorities that were important to those who lived, worked or studied in the area.
- viii. The Design Code had been led by a series of phased consultations. The first phase asked residents what they liked and didn't like about the area through an online and in person survey. The key principles were then drafted and through a series of consultations asked if they were the right principles. Once the responses had been received to the suggested principles, more detail had been added to formulate the document itself.
- ix. Would be difficult to provide a breakdown of percentages for favourable and non-favourable responses as there had been many phased consultations over a year and a half from initial concept ideas through to support on the principles, consulting on the detail informally and then formally.
- x. There had been approximately three hundred responses submitted with different levels of responses to each question.
- xi. Agreed there could be lessons learnt such as the length and size of the document.

- xii. Noted it would be interesting to see how this SPD and the newly adopted South Newnham Local Plan would be used for schemes coming forward and if these would encourage better place making.
- xiii. Taking the Design Code forward as an SPD would be the first step of validating the document.
- xiv. Officers wanted to make sure that the SPD would be used by developers and the community for designing schemes coming forward. For Planning Officers to scrutinise and assess these schemes using the SPD as an aid.
- xv. Through the new emerging Local Plan process, all SPD's may have to be reviewed, and amendments made if necessary.

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

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

The Executive Councillor thanked the Officers for all their hard work and looked forward to seeing how this would improve planning applications.

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

None

25/6/PnT Cambridge Biomedical Campus Supplementary Planning Document Adoption

The report referred to the Cambridge Biomedical Campus Supplementary Planning Document which set out the guidance on the implementation of policies within the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) and the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) regarding future development at the Cambridge Biomedical Campus.

The SPD set out planning principles to guide future development proposals at the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and provided a planning framework for consideration when determining planning applications.

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

- i. Considered the main issues raised in the public consultation, agreed responses to the representations received, and agreed proposed changes to the Cambridge Biomedical Campus Supplementary Planning

Document as set out in the Statement of Consultation (Appendix A of the Officer's report).

- ii. Subject to (i), adopt the amended Cambridge Biomedical Campus Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix B of the Officer's report).
- iii. Agreed to delegate to the Joint Director of Planning in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure and Chair and Spokes the authority to make any subsequent material amendments and editing changes to the SPD prior to publication.

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 Policy Planner.

In response to comments from Members the Principal Policy Planner, Joint Director of Planning, Team Leader (Planning Policy and Strategic Planning) and Executive Councillor said the following:

- i. Understood the delivery, phasing and mechanisms to ensure that deliveries were carried out effectively on the campus. The emerging Local Plan would also look at the use of logistic hubs for deliveries and how the site could work more efficiently
- ii. Would amend principle 4b 3.1 of the SPD to include reference to nursery provision.
- iii. Confirmed that CBC referenced in the comments was CBC Limited.
- iv. Members of the Planning Committee and Joint Development Control Committee had expressed frustration when considering individual applications that there was not a Master Plan. This SPD should help to bring cohesion to the development of this important area, but did not replace the need for a Master Plan.
- v. There were limitations of what could be included in an SPD as new policy could not be added, but the Council could encourage and support good practice..
- vi. The emerging Local Plan would also pick up on transport issues exploring movement to and around the site.
- vii. The SPD was also limited to what could be included as it had to follow the adopted Local Plan versus the ambitions of the emerging Local Plan.
- viii. Officers were working with the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA), as the transport authority, and other external partners

such as the Greater Cambridge Partnership, to look at, and model, the transport consequences for the biomedical campus. This would manifest itself into the emerging Local Plan.

- ix. Removing unnecessary trips to the campus through the development of accommodation on the site or development of consolidation hubs might form a part of the subsequent may be part of the transport strategy being developed by CPCA to address existing congestion challenges.
- x. The SPD should be used to aid development control decisions in the short term.
- xi. Officers were working with Housing colleagues from Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council to explore the potential housing options to meet some of the Campus housing needs.
- xii. Officers did not anticipate any housing schemes being brought forward ahead in the short term (potentially of the adoption of the Local Plan).

Councillor Blackburn-Horgan (Ward Councillor for Queen Edith's) spoke in support of the SPD.

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

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

The Executive Councillor again thanked the Officers for all their work on this document

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

None

25/7/PnT Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document Adoption

The report referred to the Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which set out the approach, policies and procedures taken by Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council in respect of the use of planning obligations.

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

- i. Considered the main issues raised in the public consultation, agreed responses to the representations received, as set out in the Statement of Consultation (Appendix A of the Officer's report).
- ii. Agreed that revisions to the draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and additional evidence be prepared, and a decision on revisions be taken by the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure in consultation with Chair and Spokes.
- iii. Agreed that subsequent to those revisions, an additional public consultation be carried out in summer 2025 on the amended draft SPD and supporting evidence.

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 Planning Policy Manager

In response to comments from Members the Planning Policy Manager and S106 Officer said the following:

- i. Noted the comment that the preference would be for biodiversity net gain wherever possible provided on site, or near to a site.
- ii. Officers had been careful with the wording on the matter of biodiversity as this SPD could not to change the Council's Planning Policy on biodiversity. There was already a separate Biodiversity SPD but would revisit the wording to ensure that the references were clear to the Council's approach on biodiversity net gain.
- iii. Nursery provision was a private enterprise but there were elements of the subject matter picked up in the education cost.
- iv. No date had been set for further public consultation as outlined in the recommendation but hoped this could be achieved in the summer term.
- v. The premise of the S106 monitoring contribution was to ensure that the costs in relation to administration of the agreement were fully covered. It was important that only the costs were covered.
- vi. A charging regime had been put forward to address infrastructure costs and the Council had received considerable representations on this

matter which was being reviewed by Officers. It was important to ensure that developers were not paying more than was necessary.

- vii. Noted the comment that all charges should be linked to inflation.

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

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

The Executive Councillor again thanked the Officers for all their work on this document.

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

None

25/8/PnT Health Impact Assessment Supplementary Planning Document Adoption

The report referred to the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that provided guidance on the implementation of policies within the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) and the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) with regards to the assessment and consideration of health impacts for some types of new development in Greater Cambridge.

The planning and design of the built environment had a major influence on human health and wellbeing and a HIA provides a structured way of assessing the prospective health impacts of a development on all parts of the community and ensuring that any potential negative impacts are avoided or minimised and that positive impacts are maximised.

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

- i. Considered the main issues raised in the public consultation, agreed responses to the representations received, and agreed proposed changes to the Health Impact Assessment Supplementary Planning Document as set out in the Statement of Consultation (Appendix A of the Officer's report).
- ii. Subject to (i), adopt the amended Health Impact Assessment Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix B of the Officer's report).

- iii. Agreed to delegate to the Joint Director of Planning in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure and Chair and Spokes the authority to make any subsequent material amendments and editing changes to the SPD prior to publication.

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 Policy Planner.

In response to comments from Members the Policy Planner and the Joint Director for Planning and Planning Policy Manager said the following:

- i. Officers had used and adapted (with permission) the Healthy Urban Development Unit checklist (HUDU) which was a document to create healthy sustainable communities and ensured that new developments were planned with health in mind.
- ii. There were HIA SPD's which had been rolled out with Local Authorities in London, Birmingham, Brighton and Hove, these were becoming more prevalent in practice, particularly after Public Health England had published their national guidance in 2020.
- iii. It had been important to make sure that the SPD had been relevant and in context to the local area.
- iv. Officers did not believe that it was appropriate for the SPD to address issues such as banning smoking in public places. It would be very difficult to ban smoking through an SPD as there were other legislative provisions outside the Planning Acts with primary responsibility for addressing this issue.
- v. Matters of air quality were picked up through the Environmental Health Team, such as, when looking at contaminated land and the compatibility of neighbouring land uses when considering the environmental impacts of new developments.
- vi. It was essential for all developers to consider and note the significance and importance of health in their developments. The SPD highlighted the importance of mental health in the design process and expectation was that developers would take this into consideration for new developments.
- vii. The SPD underlined how people in the local area and existing local communities could benefit from a new development, through a sense of

community, community facilities, green spaces and the quality of environment.

- viii. There had been a push for increased references to delivering healthy spaces in planning which had broadly derived post pandemic.
- ix. Limits and thresholds referenced in the SPD had been based on policy thresholds. The existing adopted Local Plans outline different thresholds for a HIA between the City and South Cambridgeshire District Council. With the emerging Local Plan, the limits and thresholds would be revisited.
- x. Monitoring would be through the Annual Monitoring Report and conversations were being held on the monitoring of the effectiveness of policies.

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

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

The Executive Councillor again thanked the Officers for all their work on this document.

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

None

The meeting ended at 7.00 pm

CHAIR