



Chapter 8

Protecting and
Enhancing the
Historic and Natural
Environment

CHAPTER 8 – PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE HISTORIC AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- 8.1 The city’s historic and natural environment are key features that define the character and setting of Cambridge, and contribute to the quality of life that people value here. It will be important that quality of life is maintained and enhanced against the backdrop of a growing City. This section addresses the policy options in relation to the protection of the historic environment, protection and enhancement of biodiversity and sites of nature conservation importance, and the need to protect the environmental quality of the city from pollution:

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Option 67 – Protecting and enhancing the historic and natural environment

To ensure that new development proposals contribute to the protection and enhancement of the historic and natural environment, including sites of nature conservation importance, heritage assets and their settings, and the wider landscape setting of the city. Development proposals should contribute to the aim of achieving a net gain in biodiversity and improvements to the environmental quality of the City, including improvements to air quality and the enhancement of tree canopy cover.

Key Facts

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT:

- The historic environment of Cambridge makes an important contribution to the setting, character and vitality of the city – it is at the heart of what makes Cambridge special;
- For the size of the city, there are an above average number of Listed Buildings. There are 868¹ Listed Buildings, 66 are Grade I, 52 Grade II* and 750 Grade II.
- The city has 5 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and 11 Historic Parks and Gardens
- There are currently 11 Conservation Areas, many promoted by local residents, which cover 21% of the city’s area;
- 1,032 buildings are designated as Buildings of Local Interest, although the formal protection this designation offers these buildings is limited, particularly outside Conservation Areas;
- A large number of applications are dealt with annually which concern or have the potential to affect heritage assets.

¹ Some entries such as those for colleges, terraces and houses include more than one building or property, therefore overall numbers are considerably higher (more than 1,500).

- Cambridge is rich in archaeological sites, with recent discoveries including a rare Anglo Saxon burial. Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Record provides a comprehensive record of heritage sites and finds in Cambridge, while the Cambridge Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) details archaeological remains within the historic core of the city.

PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE CITY SKYLINE

- Famous buildings such as King's College Chapel, St John's College Chapel, the Roman Catholic Church, the University Library, the chimneys at the Museum of Technology and Addenbrooke's are well known landmarks and key features of the Cambridge skyline;
- In recent years the Council has received an increasing number of planning applications for taller buildings. Planning applications for the following buildings have raised significant public debate around the subject of tall buildings:
 - o New buildings around the railway Station;
 - o The Botanic House Building at the junction of Hills Road and Station Road;
 - o The Belvedere;
 - o The Living Screen site on the corner of Cherry Hinton Road and Hills Road;
 - o The Fire Station site on Parkside;
 - o Travel Lodge on Newmarket Road; and
 - o The Varsity Hotel on Thompsons Lane.

NATURE CONSERVATION/BIODIVERSITY/TREES

- Cambridge has many mature parks and gardens, open common land and a network of diverse natural green spaces. However, areas to the north of the city are deficient in natural green space.
- The River Cam and a number of chalk stream tributaries run through the heart of the City and support riparian habitats and remnants of historic grazing meadows on the city's common land.
- There are 2 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in the city, one designated for biodiversity and one for geodiversity.
- There are 9 Local Nature Reserves and approximately 60 City and County Wildlife Sites, which have been designated to protect the habitats of most interest and importance.
- Key habitats include chalk grassland, wet woodland, chalk streams, hedgerows and farmland
- Key species include Great Crested Newt, Moon Carrot, Jersey

Cudweed, Otter, Skylark and Brown Hare.

- In total, Cambridge has in excess of 500 Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) in force and there are thousands of trees in the eleven conservation areas across the city that have a degree of protection.
- The Council's Nature Conservation Strategy (2006-2016) identifies the existing resource of habitats and corridors and proposes options and projects for protection and enhancement.

POLLUTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- Cambridge has an AQMA in place since 2004 (see Appendix E, Figure E.1). An air quality action plan has been developed to set out measures for the improvement of and protection from poor air quality.
- In addition to the AQMA, a Smoke Control Area also covers the city centre and land to the west of the centre in the Newnham ward.
- Air quality in parts of the city centre currently breaches EU limit values for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂).
- There are around 1,100 potentially contaminated sites of concern identified within the city. This contamination may place limits on the types of uses that this land can be utilised for.
- Sources of noise in Cambridge include transport noise from major roads such as the M11, A14 and A10, the railway and aircraft using Cambridge Airport, high levels of noise in the city centre from licensed premises and noise from commercial and industrial activities.
- Poorly designed artificial lighting, wastes energy, harms the amenity of residents (especially those trying to sleep) and impacts on ecology. Cambridge is an established centre for Astronomy which nightglow from excessive lighting can affect.

Objectives

- To protect and enhance all heritage assets in order to contribute to the setting, character, enjoyment and our understanding of the city;
- To recognise the positive contribution that heritage assets make towards the character of the city;
- To ensure that any new development proposals for buildings that break the established skyline are well considered, appropriate to their context and contribute to both near and distant views;
- To ensure that new developments of all scales protect existing species and features of ecological value, provide new appropriate habitats and seek to reconnect fragmented corridors;
- To manage and enhance the tree canopy cover of the city to ensure a wide age range profile of existing trees is maintained and that all new

developments contribute to the urban forest;

- To ensure that development is managed to minimise its impact on the local environment, health and amenity in terms of all sources of pollution and contamination;
- To ensure that new development is not located close to existing pollution sources unless sufficient mitigation measures are proposed as part of the development package.

Protecting and enhancing the historic environment of a growing city

- 8.2 The settlement of Cambridge can trace its origins back to Roman times with archaeological evidence of prehistoric activity, and it is this rich heritage that gives the city its special character and distinctiveness. This is emphasised by the large number of highly graded heritage assets, often connected to the University of Cambridge and its Colleges. Cambridge can be described as a small city with a diverse and vibrant character. The character of the city owes much to the juxtaposition of grand University and College architecture and the smaller scale domestic ‘vernacular’ buildings associated with an East Anglian market town. Some of the key distinctive qualities of Cambridge’s historic environment include:
- The richness of College and University architecture;
 - The wealth of public and private historic open spaces (including many trees and providing the strong landscape setting of the city);
 - The Victorian/Edwardian suburbs and post-war housing/employment developments.
- 8.3 Documents such as Conservation Area Appraisals, the Historic Core Appraisal, Suburbs and Approaches Studies, information contained within planning applications and the County Council’s Historic Environment Record all add to an understanding of the evolution of the city and the richness of the urban fabric.
- 8.4 Concern for the historic environment extends beyond physical buildings and spaces and must embrace a broader understanding of culture, sense of place and local distinctiveness. The historic setting of Cambridge and the clear distinction between the city and the rural area beyond is a key feature that the Council has sought to maintain through the Green Belt boundary to the city. A key issue for the new Local Plan will be to ensure that all new development respects and understands this heritage, balancing the need for growth against the need to protect and enhance the historic environment.
- 8.5 Only one policy option is put forward for policy development. Given the international importance of the city’s historic environment and its wider economic, social and environmental benefits there are not considered to be any reasonable alternatives to the option presented below. Such an approach is in keeping with the NPPF, which states that local planning

authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment:

Option 68 - Protection and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment

This option would allow for the development of a policy or series of policies aimed at preserving and enhancing the historic environment. These policies would consider the following:

- The continued preservation and enhancement of existing, and, where appropriate, designation of new Conservation Areas. This would need to be supported by the ongoing production and review of Conservation Area Appraisals;
- The continued protection and enhancement of listed buildings, historic parks and gardens and scheduled monuments, buildings of local interest and other heritage assets. ;
- The identification and, where appropriate, protection of the city's archaeological heritage and assets of local importance;
- The protection of strategic and local views, the wider historic setting of the city and the setting of heritage assets, as well as, where applicable, their townscape value; and
- Addressing Heritage at Risk (including those assets on the Heritage at Risk Register) in a positive and proactive manner.

Based on the above, future policy could include:

- Development proposals affecting a heritage asset should preserve or enhance the significance of the asset, its setting and wider townscape value;
- Proposals should demonstrate a clear understanding of the wider context in which they sit as well as an understanding of the significance of assets;
- Impacts of proposed development on the special character of a heritage asset should be identified and assessed; and
- Where development is proposed that would lead to the harm of a heritage asset or its setting, clear justification for the works is required so that the harm could be weighed against the wider public benefits of the proposal.

A strategy could also be developed to ensure that information about heritage assets produced as part of plan making and development proposals are made publicly accessible in order to improve our understanding of the historic environment, in line with the requirements of the NPPF.

Such a policy approach will help to ensure that the city's historic environment is protected and enhanced. The historic environment is an asset of significant cultural, social, economic and environmental value,

providing a valuable contribution to our sense of history, place and quality of life in Cambridge

Questions

- 8.1 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?
- 8.2 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?
- 8.3 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Effective protection of Buildings of Local Interest

- 8.6 Buildings of Local Interest are designated because of their local architectural merit and, in some cases, their historical associations. While they do not meet the national criteria for statutory listing, they are nevertheless locally important either by themselves or as part of a group of buildings. They may contribute to and help to define the character of the townscape of an area, or be significant in the historical and architectural development of Cambridge. Locally listed buildings are included within the NPPF's definition of heritage assets.
- 8.7 One issue that has come to light in recent years is that Buildings of Local Interest have very little protection outside of Conservation Areas. The current policy 4/12 in the 2006 Local Plan does not have enough weight for it to work as an adequate deterrent to demolition. As a result some buildings have been lost to new development, such as Milton Road Junior School and Romsey Junior School. Even in Conservation Areas some Buildings of Local Interest have been lost, such as Cambridge Regional College on Newmarket Road.
- 8.8 The Government promotes the drawing up of local lists of heritage assets and Buildings of Local Interest would comprise part of such local lists. Identification through a local list allows us to better understand the heritage assets of Cambridge, their individual heritage significance and their contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area as a whole. While locally listing a heritage asset will not, in itself, bring about additional consent requirements over and above the need for planning permission, it would mean that the conservation and contribution of these assets would be a material consideration when making planning decisions that affect them or their setting. As such, a policy could be considered, which gives a higher degree of protection to Buildings of Local Interest.
- 8.9 Only one option is presented below for policy development. While not statutorily listed, Buildings of Local Interest are an important element of the rich history of the city, helping to reinforce local distinctiveness and sense of place. A presumption in favour of retention of Buildings of Local Interest would be in keeping with the aim of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent

with their conservation as set out in the NPPF. Given the loss of Buildings of Local Interest in recent years and the level of public feeling that this loss has generated, it is felt that not having such a policy would not be a reasonable option. While such a policy would demonstrate the Council's commitment to protecting Buildings of Local Interest and enhancing their level of protection within Conservation Areas, planning legislation is such that planning permission is not required for the demolition of these buildings if they are situated outside Conservation Areas:

Option 69 – Protection of Buildings of Local Interest and development of a local list

This option would allow for the development of a policy that affords Buildings of Local Interest a greater level of protection. Such a policy would relate to proposals involving Buildings of Local Interest where planning permission or Conservation Area consent is required. There should be a presumption in favour of retaining a Building of Local Interest and a clear case would have to be made for its demolition or loss.

Where such proposals would involve the demolition of, or substantial alteration to the external appearance of Buildings of Local Interest, permission would not be granted unless:

- All reasonable steps had been taken to retain the building, including examination of alternative uses compatible with its local importance;
- Retention of the building, even with alterations, would be demonstrably impracticable; and
- The public benefits of the scheme outweigh the loss of, or harm to the building.

This would be linked to the development of a local list of heritage assets in line with the requirements of the NPPF.

Such a policy approach would help to address the difficulties that the Council has faced in protecting Buildings of Local Interest, which add to the character and distinctiveness of the city. While there could be a concern from some that the retention of Buildings of Local Interest may impact on the viability of schemes, the adaptive reuse of buildings is almost always the most sustainable option.

Questions

- 8.4 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?
- 8.5 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?
- 8.6 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Climate change and heritage assets

- 8.10 It is important that the historic environment is seen in a positive light and not as a constraint on development. Well managed heritage assets improve the overall appearance of the built environment, enhancing people’s quality of life by giving a sense of place and promoting civic pride. Vernacular design and construction has evolved over centuries to meet local needs and local conditions. There is a need to balance the preservation or enhancement of the historic environment against other objectives of the Local Plan such as the vision of Cambridge as a low carbon city. In addition, proposed works to heritage assets in order to comply with Part L of the Building Regulations need to be carefully considered and a judgement made as to when it is, or is not, appropriate to undertake such works.
- 8.11 All work to heritage assets will require a sensitive and hierarchical approach to design and specification. For example, when considering the role of heritage assets in responding to climate change, it should not always be assumed that historic buildings are inefficient in terms of their energy use as they often use renewable materials and can be better ventilated than their modern counterparts. Historic buildings have, in some cases, been in use for a number of centuries, and their adaptive reuse offers scope for potentially significant savings in terms of embodied carbon within the fabric of those buildings. Significant carbon emissions occur as a result of the manufacture and transport of building materials. Where it is possible to adapt a building for an alternative use, this can be a more sustainable option than demolishing and replacing a building.
- 8.12 There is a need to balance objectives related to carbon reduction and the transition to a low carbon city and economy against the need to protect the historic environment of the city. Works to improve the environmental performance of heritage assets need to be carefully considered so that they do not have a negative impact, e.g. use of double glazed windows in a listed building. It is felt that the development of a policy related to climate change and heritage assets represents a proactive approach that will help to ensure the protection of heritage assets. Such an approach is in keeping with the NPPF, which states that local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. In the light of this, not taking such a proactive approach is not considered to be a reasonable alternative:

Option 70 – Works to a heritage asset to address climate change

This option would allow for the development of a criteria based policy setting out the hierarchical approach that should be taken when carrying out works to heritage assets. Such an approach would build on a thorough understanding of the heritage asset in question. The policy could set out the approach that should be taken, which involves:

- Where at all possible, retain the heritage asset and its existing/original use;

- Make every effort to preserve the historic fabric and use traditional methods of adaptation/construction;
- In the case of a change of use, ensure the sympathetic re-use of the heritage asset;
- Seek to improve the energy efficiency of the building in order to reduce carbon emissions; using sympathetic approaches; and
- Specify environmentally conscious materials² suitable for the development. There should be a presumption in favour of traditional materials.

One advantage of such a policy is that it clearly sets out the steps that should be taken when planning works to heritage assets to improve environmental performance. This will help to ensure a balanced approach between protecting the heritage assets of Cambridge while ensuring that they contribute to tackling climate change and reducing the carbon emissions of the city. Such an approach should already be at the heart of good management practice for heritage assets and as such a policy option should not add additional burden for property owners and developers. The long-term costs of repairing any negative impacts brought about by inappropriate building interventions are likely to be much greater than the short-term impacts of taking such a hierarchical approach to heritage assets.

Questions

- 8.7 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?
- 8.8 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?
- 8.9 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Shopfronts and signage

- 8.13 High quality design is important to the success of Cambridge as a regional shopping centre and to maintain its thriving district and local centres. Many of the historic buildings in the City Centre have traditional shopfronts, which often date from the eighteenth, nineteenth or early twentieth centuries and many are Listed Buildings. Elsewhere in the Conservation Areas and in streets such as Mill Road, old shopfronts usually date from the late Victorian or Edwardian eras. Well designed shopfronts and associated signing add to the character and quality of the city and play an important part in defining distinctive and enjoyable shopping areas. Shopfronts should be designed to provide an active building frontage with a display window, which contributes

² Adapted from CIBSE (2002). Guide to building services for historic buildings. Sustainable services for traditional buildings.

to the vibrancy of the town centre and provides visual interest in the street scene. Signage should be subtle and complement the built environment.

- 8.14 Given the international importance of the city’s historic environment and its wider economic, social and environmental benefits there are not considered to be any reasonable alternatives to the option presented below. Proposals for new or alterations to existing shopfronts need to be carefully considered to ensure that they have a positive impact on the historic environment and wider environment of the city. While it is considered that there are no reasonable alternatives, there may be variations within the criteria identified that could be considered:

Option 71 – Shopfronts and signage policy

This option would allow for the development of a policy which states that works to shopfronts, signage and shop security measures will be permitted where they:

- Contribute to the design and character of the building and its surroundings; and
- Complement the quality of the built environment.

Elements from the Council’s Shopfront Design Guide could also be incorporated into this policy. This will be a carry forward of policy 3/15 of the 2006 Local Plan.

The advantages of such a policy approach are that it will help to ensure that works to shopfronts, including signage and security measures, promote high quality design that respects the local character of areas. Such a policy approach will have wider benefits in terms of maintaining a high quality environment, which will attract shoppers, visitors and investment into the city.

Questions

- 8.10 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?
- 8.11 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?
- 8.12 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Tall buildings and the skyline

- 8.15 The historic city of Cambridge has a rich and varied skyline, with renowned views such as that of King’s College Chapel from the ‘The Backs’. The overall character of the city’s skyline is one of individual, rather than clustered, comparatively tall and slender structures emerging above a low lying city. A large proportion of these structures comprise church and college towers, turrets, spires and chimneys. The city generally lacks clustered modern

towers and bulky buildings with the notable exception of the hospital buildings at Addenbrookes and the hangars at Cambridge Airport which sit in stark contrast to the surrounding, low lying suburbs.

- 8.16 There has been a move to build taller buildings across the city in recent years. This is in part due to a shortage of development land and the need to use land efficiently. There are further opportunities to have new taller buildings in the city but these must be carefully considered in the right locations. Local residents and conservation groups are rightly concerned that tall buildings could harm the character and skyline of both the historic centre and the city as a whole.
- 8.17 Three options are put forward for policy development below. These options build upon recent work carried out on the development of the Cambridge Skyline Guidance document, and have been informed by the outcomes of the public consultation on this guidance. They are considered to be the most reasonable options taking account of the special character of the Cambridge skyline and the role this has to play in the setting of the city. There will be a need for any proposals for new tall buildings to demonstrate how they have taken account of their context and enhance the skyline, and it is felt that the options presented below provide the most suitable ways in which this could be demonstrated. They seek to encourage innovative design while at the same time balancing the potential negative impacts that proposals may have on the historic environment and wider setting of the city. The NPPF is clear that guiding the height of new developments in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally is an element that local design policies should concentrate on:

Option 72 – Criteria based tall buildings policy

One option could be to develop a policy supported by guidance setting out design and locational criteria in order to assess the suitability of development proposals for tall buildings on a case-by-case basis. These criteria could include:

- Location, setting and context – analysis of features such as:
 - Topography;
 - Townscape and landscape types and character areas;
 - Site history;
 - Movement and access patterns;
 - Scale, height and massing of surrounding buildings and set backs of buildings;
 - Typical plot sizes and the rhythm of streets (urban grain);
 - Prevailing architectural character;
 - Land use;

- Areas of open space;
- City gateways and important junctions
- Local and long distance views, vistas and local landmarks; and
- Opportunities and constraints
- Impact of proposals on heritage assets;
- An assessment of the design rationale and how the scale, form, materials, silhouette and architectural quality of the building will deliver a high quality addition to the city that will respond positively to the local context and skyline;
- The impacts of the proposal on neighbouring properties and open space and the need to minimise potential negative impacts with respect to shadowing and daylight, loss of outlook, wind, noise and overlooking; and
- The design of the public realm around the building.

The advantages of such a policy approach are that it sets out a clear set of criteria against which all proposals for tall buildings will be assessed. Such an approach will help to protect and, where appropriate, enhance the characteristics of the Cambridge skyline, its setting and landscape and townscape character, valued views and vistas. Such an approach does not necessarily rule out the development of high quality tall buildings that are appropriate to their context and contribute positively to both near and distant views.

Option 73 - Policy identifying specific areas suitable for tall buildings

A second option could be to develop a policy that identifies specific and appropriate geographical areas within the city that are considered suitable for tall buildings. These areas could include larger zones where clusters of tall buildings may be appropriate. Smaller, more specific locations such as junctions, focal spaces or Local Centres could be identified for taller buildings. The location of these areas would be subject to the criteria set out above under Option 73.

The advantages of such a policy approach are that it will help to protect areas such as the historic core, while promoting high quality tall buildings in areas where their development may help to enhance local distinctiveness, deliver appropriate redevelopment, enhancing the viability of other uses, such as local shops and services. A possible impact of such a policy is that by focussing the development of tall buildings on certain areas, the character of these areas could change. Subject to the prevailing character of the locality, it should be recognised, however, that the new development could represent a positive introduction to the streetscene. It will be important that, if such a policy approach is taken forward, consideration is still given to context, impact on neighbouring properties and open space and the impact

of tall buildings on local and distant views.

Option 74 – Limits on building heights

A third option could be to develop a policy, which defines a maximum height for buildings in the city. Such a policy could identify maximum heights within the historic core and/or heights for the rest of the city.

While the above approach would have the advantage of protecting the city's skyline from inappropriate development, there may be a concern that it stifles innovative and sustainable approaches to development.

Questions

- 8.13 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?
- 8.14 Which option do you prefer?
- 8.15 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?
- 8.16 Do you have any suggestions as to the height limit that could be set across the city, should option 74 be the policy approach adopted? Should such a policy cover just the historic core, or should it cover the wider city?
- 8.17 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Cambridge Airport Public Safety Zone and Safeguarding Zones

- 8.18 The presence of Cambridge Airport in the city requires some restrictions on new development, in order to maintain public safety. The current Local Plan (2006) contains a policy (8/13) which sets out the limitations on development in the Public Safety Zone. This is supported by the defined zone indicated on the proposals map.
- 8.19 Public safety zones are areas of land at the ends of the runways at airports, within which development is restricted in order to minimise the number of people on the ground at risk in the event of an aircraft crash on take-off or landing. In the case of Cambridge Airport, there are two zones, one in the city and one in South Cambridgeshire. There is a general presumption against new development in these zones, although certain types of 'low intensity' development may be permitted. The Secretary of State for Transport regards the maximum tolerable level of individual third party risk of being killed as a result of an aircraft accident as 1 in 10,000 per year, and the Cambridge Public Safety Zone is considered to adhere to this, as it is subject to an individual risk of 1 in 10,000 per year or greater.
- 8.20 The policy in the 2006 plan is aligned to the Department for Transport (DfT) Circular 1/2002 'Control of Developments in Airport Public Safety Zones' that has since been replaced by DfT circular 01/2010.

- 8.21 In addition to Public Safety Zones, safeguarding zones also place restrictions on development height. Whilst not currently shown on the Proposals Map, they are used as constraints when considering planning applications. Developed by Marshall, they represent areas of the city, where the take-off and landing of aircraft could give rise to additional risk of aircraft accident over the built-up area. Anyone wishing to undertake within the zone should seek advice from Marshall and the Ministry of Defence, as appropriate
- 8.22 The policy option proposed represents a continuation of the current policy approach on Public Safety Zones, with the addition of the safeguarding zones in order to be transparent about the potential restrictions on development in some areas of the city.

Option 75 – Cambridge Airport Public Safety Zone and Safeguarding Zones

This option would allow for the development of a policy, which places restrictions on development within the Cambridge Airport Public Safety and Safeguarding Zones. This policy would restrict the type of development permitted within the area around the airport, and will require anyone looking to develop within the zone to:

- Consult with Marshall and the Ministry of Defence, as appropriate; and
- Consider the proposed building height of the new development in the context of the safety and safeguarding zones.

This would be similar to policy 8/13 in the 2006 Local Plan.

Despite Cambridge Airport not being a ‘major airport’, it is still considered good practice to have a Public Safety and Safeguarding Zones.

Questions

8.18 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

8.19 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

8.20 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Hard surfacing of front gardens

- 8.23 There is a concern that the hard surfacing of front gardens to provide car parking can be harmful to the appearance of streets and the character of Conservation Areas. In addition to impacts on visual amenity, the replacement of front gardens with hard surfacing can place extra pressure on surface water drainage, with the potential of increasing the risk of surface water flooding, and can have a negative impact on biodiversity and the wider ecological networks of the city.
- 8.24 In recognition of some of the concerns surrounding the paving of front gardens, notably the loss of domestic character and appearance and increase

in surface water flooding, specific rules now apply for householders wanting to pave over front gardens³. Planning permission is not required if a new or replacement driveway of any size uses permeable (or porous) surfacing, which allows water to drain through, such as gravel. If the surface to be covered is more than 5 square metres, planning permission will be needed for laying traditional impermeable driveways that do not provide for water to run to a permeable area. However, this requirement can be difficult to enforce, and this does not take account of the wider impacts of paving over front gardens, including impacts on the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

- 8.25 In response to this issue, a policy could be developed which in addition to reinforcing the requirement for the use of permeable paving/materials, also requires consideration to be given to the impact of proposals to pave over front gardens on the character and setting of the local area. Given that planning permission is not required where proposals involve the use of a permeable surface, such a policy could only apply to those proposals requiring planning permission:

Option 76 – Paving over front gardens

This option would allow for the development of a criteria based policy that would apply to proposals requiring planning permission. Criteria could include:

- The impact of the proposals on surface water run-off, particularly for those areas of the city with high levels of risk of surface water flooding. The preference would be for the use of porous surfacing on all applications;
- The impact of the proposals on the visual amenity of an area; and
- The impact of the proposals on biodiversity.

The advantage of such a policy is that it would ensure that proposals to pave over front gardens do not have a negative impact on visual amenity, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, surface water flooding and biodiversity. However, such a policy would only apply to those cases where planning permission is required, and as such may only have a limited impact.

³ The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No. 2) (England) Order 2008

Questions

- 8.21 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?
- 8.22 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?
- 8.23 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Protection of Sites of National and Local Nature Conservation Importance

- 8.26 Protecting and promoting biodiversity forms a key part of sustainable development. It is now well documented that biodiversity and its constituent ecosystems are critically important to our wellbeing and economic prosperity⁴. It is essential that we strive to restore and secure the long-term sustainability of the ecological and physical processes that underpin the way ecosystems work, thereby enhancing the capacity of our natural environment to provide ecosystems services. Such services can include the provision of clean water, regulation of the urban heat island effect, and crop pollination, as well as providing habitats for wildlife.
- 8.27 Cambridge has a number of nature conservation sites that form an important element of the character and setting of the city. These sites are protected by both national and local designations. The first of these are Sites of Special Scientific Interest, which represent key areas of national or international importance identified because of their special fauna, flora, geological or physiographical features. There are currently two sites in Cambridge covered by this statutory protection:
- East Pit at Cherry Hinton notified for plant species and exposed chalk habitat that has largely disappeared from the eastern counties of England.
 - Traveller's Rest Pit in North West Cambridge, which is notified because of its geology.
- 8.28 Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance represent areas of county and local interest of fauna, flora and their associated habitats. These non-statutory sites are vital to secure an ecological viable network. They are assessed according to the Criteria for Designation of County and City Wildlife Sites and include Protected Roadside Verges.⁵ Many of the larger County and City Wildlife Sites in the Council's ownership have been given the additional statutory designation of Local Nature Reserve. Further detail on these sites is provided within the Council's Nature Conservation Strategy.
- 8.29 The Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011), identified that the protection of existing biodiversity and potential for enhancement should be a priority. It identified a number of opportunities, including:

⁴ UK National Ecosystems Assessment (2011) – see <http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org>

⁵ Cambridgeshire and Peterborough County Wildlife Sites Panel, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough County Wildlife Sites Selection Guidelines, Version 5, January 2009.

- The creation of ‘bigger, better, and joined-up’ networks of biodiversity that connect and enlarge habitats and provide landscape-scale conservation initiatives that create and support healthy ecosystems and have greater resilience against chance events and the impacts of climate change;
- Protection and enhancement of existing habitats;
- Enhanced landscapes which provide benefits for public access, health, well-being, heritage and education.

8.30 Planning for new development can help to deliver some of these opportunities, through the protection of sites of nature conservation value and the provision of new multi-functional green infrastructure with biodiversity enhancement at its core. The importance of linking together of sites to make ecological corridors and a connected network was highlighted in the Lawton Report⁶, which recognised the role that planning authorities have to play in delivering the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Such an approach is consistent with the aims for conserving and enhancing the natural environment set out in the NPPF.

8.31 The NPPF states that local planning authorities should set criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting protected wildlife or geodiversity sites or landscape areas will be judged. Distinctions should be made between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites, so that protection is commensurate with their status and gives appropriate weight to their importance and the contribution that they make to wider ecological networks. As such, an option is put forward below in order to develop such a policy approach. Given the clear direction provided within the NPPF for the development of such a policy, no alternative policy approaches are put forward. However, there may be variations within the criteria identified that could be considered:

Option 77 – Protection of sites of nature conservation importance

This option would allow for the development of a criteria based policy against which all development proposals affecting sites of nature conservation important (and geological importance) would be assessed. Such a policy approach would give consideration to the hierarchy of sites from national through to local. Criteria could include:

- For developments proposed within, or adjoining, or which will otherwise affect SSSIs, the proposal will be referred to Natural England. A comprehensive survey of the historic and existing scientific importance of the site, an Appropriate Assessment (Habitats Regulations Assessment)⁷ of the impact of the proposed development and details of measures to protect the species, habitats or features

⁶ Lawton, J (2010). Making Space for Nature: A review of England’s Wildlife Sites and Ecological Networks.

⁷ The Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c) Regulations 1994, SI No 2716

identified will be required as part of the planning application submission;

- The consideration of direct or indirect adverse impact on on a Local Nature Reserve (LNR), a County Wildlife Site (CWS), a City Wildlife Site (CiWS) or Protected Roadside Verge (PRV); and
- The need to secure mitigation and/or compensatory measures to minimise any identified direct or indirect harm and where possible enhancement of the nature conservation value of the site affected through habitat creation and management.

Such a policy could also be applied to those sites not currently designated that, following appropriate surveys, are identified as meeting the criteria for the designation of a County Wildlife Site or City Wildlife Site. Sites could be identified on the proposals map.

Such a policy approach would be in keeping with the requirements of the NPPF for local planning authorities to set criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting protected wildlife or geodiversity sites or landscape areas will be judged.

Questions

8.24 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

8.25 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

8.26 Do you feel that one policy covering all sites of nature conservation importance would be appropriate?

8.27 Do you feel that we should develop separate policies for sites of national nature conservation importance and local nature conservation importance?

8.28 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Protection of priority species and habitats

- 8.32 The NPPF sets out the role of the planning system in the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, which came into force in 2006, requires the Secretary of States to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. Known as the Section 41 list, this should be used to guide decision makers in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the NERC Act to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England when carrying out their normal functions. The majority of the

priority species that occur, or have the potential to colonise, Cambridge have also been included in the Cambridgeshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

- 8.33 Only one option is presented below for policy development as we have a duty to conserve biodiversity when considering proposals for development under the NERC Act (2006). Such an approach is also consistent with the requirements of the NPPF. As such, it is considered that there are no reasonable alternatives to the policy option presented below:

Option 78 – Protection of priority species and habitats

This option would allow for the development of a policy that will not permit development if it will have a direct or indirect adverse impact on rare or vulnerable habitats and species identified in the Section 41 list or in the Cambridgeshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

Where development is permitted, proposals (informed by appropriate upfront surveys) should include measures to minimise harm, mitigate harmful impacts and ideally enhance the local status of the species or habitat.

Such a policy approach would be in keeping with our duty to conserve biodiversity as set out in Section 40 of the NERC Act (2006), and is also consistent with the NPPF. This will be similar to the existing policy 4/8 in the 2006 Local Plan.

Questions

8.29 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

8.30 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

8.31 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

New Development and Biodiversity

- 8.34 The NPPF and the Council’s Nature Conservation Strategy (2006) operate a no net loss of biodiversity principle, resulting from new development, whilst promoting opportunity for on- and off-site enhancement. In addition to safeguarding those sites designated for their ecological richness, all sites should seek enhancement for appropriate species in order to maintain healthy ecosystems across the city. For example, the smallest of development could incorporate features for nesting birds. For larger developments, consideration could extend to linking new development sites to neighbouring green infrastructure to help connect fragmented habitats.
- 8.35 A number of policy options are put forward below, which seek to promote the role of new development in enhancing the biodiversity of the city. These options range from having specific policies that could apply to either all development proposals regardless of their size, to a policy that would only

apply to major developments. A further option could be to integrate the enhancement of biodiversity as part of new development proposals within the Design of the Public Realm, Landscape and other External Spaces policy option presented in chapter 5 (Creating Successful Places):

Option 79 - Enhancement of biodiversity as part of all development proposals

One option could be to include a policy requiring all developments to assess the sites position in the ecological network and provide suitable protection and enhancement of important features of nature conservation. Simple guidance could be issued by the Council to enable developers to make informed decisions on a site-by-site basis. Such a policy, or its supporting text, could include examples of measures that could be implemented at different scales of development.

The advantage of such a policy approach is that it would recognise the opportunities that all scales of development present in terms of biodiversity enhancement.

There could be a concern that the assessment of a sites position in the ecological network would be too onerous a task for small householder developments, although the preparation of simple guidance would help to overcome this issue.

Option 80 - Enhancement of biodiversity as part of major developments

A second option could be to include a policy requiring all major new developments to assess a site's position in the ecological network and provide suitable protection and enhancement of important features of nature conservation. Simple guidance could be issued by the council to enable developers to make informed decisions on a site-by-site basis.

For the purposes of this policy, major development is defined as residential development of 10 or more dwellings or a site area of 0.5 hectares or more, or other developments where the new gross floor area is 1,000 square metres or more.

Such a policy approach would ensure the protection and enhancement of biodiversity as part of major developments, and indeed such developments may be better placed to provide larger scale linking of ecological networks. However, it would miss opportunities to enhance biodiversity as part of smaller developments, which still form an important element in the overall ecological network of the city.

Option 81 – Include reference to the enhancement of biodiversity within option 64 (The Design of the Public Realm, Landscape and other external spaces)

A third option could be that rather than having a stand alone policy explicit

reference to the need for developments to assess the sites position in the ecological network and provide suitable protection and enhancement of important features of nature conservation importance could be incorporated into option 64 (the Design of the Public Realm, Landscape and other External Spaces).

The advantage of such a policy approach is that the protection and enhancement of biodiversity would become part of an integrated approach to Creating Successful Places.

Questions

8.32 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

8.33 Which option do you prefer?

8.34 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

8.35 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Landscape scale enhancement of Biodiversity

- 8.36 In order to minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, the NPPF sets out the need for local planning policies to plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries and to identify and map components of the local ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration and creation. The term ‘landscape scale’ refers to a variety of different types of landscapes and ecosystems, free from administrative boundaries. Landscape scale biodiversity enhancement refers to large scale projects, the principle aim of which is to link together existing habitats by improving the ecological quality of the wider farmed and urban landscapes.
- 8.37 Cambridgeshire’s Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011 – 2020) recognises the considerable value of the network of green spaces through the city and the existing and potential links to the wider countryside. The delivery of the Council’s Nature Conservation Strategy and a number of landscape scale habitat restoration projects in the countryside surrounding the city are supported and promoted.
- 8.38 The option presented below looks to set out a policy approach to allow the city to plan positively for the enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure across the boundaries of the city, working with partners in adjoining local authorities and other organisations. The option are presented simply seeks to support in principle proposals where the enhancement of biodiversity is the primary objective through the

decision making process. Since it is not a reasonable option not to do this no other option is suggested:

Option 82 – Support for Strategic Biodiversity Enhancement Proposals

This option would allow for the development of a policy that would support in principle all proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity, particularly proposals for landscape-scale enhancement.

Sites for landscape scale biodiversity enhancement could be identified on the Proposals Map. The 2011 Green Infrastructure Strategy could form the starting point for the identification of these projects.

Such a policy approach would be in keeping with the requirements of the NPPF to plan positively for biodiversity enhancement, but would not necessarily help with the implementation of projects.

Questions

8.36 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

8.37 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

8.38 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

The protection of trees

8.39 Trees have a vital role to play in the sustainability of our towns and cities. They can improve people’s quality of life by absorbing particulate pollution, help reduce noise by acting as a sound barrier, support emotional well-being, help to cool the urban environment, contribute to biodiversity and add economic value to areas. Trees form an integral part of the built and natural environment, making a valued contribution to the character of an area. Their longevity, often spanning many centuries, provides continuity and focus within local communities. Many trees, such as the large Horse Chestnut tree outside King’s College Chapel, have an almost architectural role in the streetscape, complementing historic buildings and giving scale, texture and colour to landscapes and townscapes. The term ‘urban forest’ has been developed to collectively describe all the trees and woodland in an urban area, regardless of ownership¹⁵.

8.40 An overlooked and often undervalued element of the urban forest is the veteran tree population, which includes some of the most valuable trees in the landscape. Gnarled and aged in appearance, they provide a sense of history, as well as adding aesthetic appeal. They have significant value as a wildlife habitat for a wide range of fungal, plant and animal life, some of which can only be found in ancient trees. The 2004 Veteran Tree Survey,

¹⁵ National Urban Forestry Unit (2005). Trees for cities

carried out by the Council, found that there are few veteran trees on University or College land and those on public land are largely growing in Cherry Hinton and on common land, including Sheep's Green and Coe Fen. A significant number of veteran trees can also be found on private farmland and along the River Cam.

- 8.41 Recognising the value of trees, the Government established legal protection for trees under the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 in the form of TPOs. The TPO system allows local authorities to protect trees on the grounds of their amenity value. Trees in Conservation Areas are also subject to protection due to their location. In total, Cambridge has in excess of 500 TPOs in force and there are thousands of trees in the eleven Conservation Areas across the city. These trees play an important role in the character and setting of the city, and it is important that they are protected. As part of new development proposals, the planting of new trees is also required to help enhance the canopy cover of the city.
- 8.42 Only one option has been put forward for policy development as trees form an integral part of the built and natural environment of Cambridge, making a valued contribution to the character and environmental quality of the city. As well as environmental benefits, they have wider social and economic benefits and as such it is felt that it is appropriate to have a policy to protect trees. While it is considered that there are no reasonable alternatives, there may be variations within the criteria identified that could be considered:

Option 83 – Trees

This option would allow for the development of a policy to protect existing trees affected by development proposals. Such a policy could include the following criteria:

- A presumption in favour of the retention and enhancement of hedges, trees, including veteran trees and other landscape features of amenity and biodiversity value;
- Protection of trees that have significant amenity value as perceived from the public realm; and
- Where felling is required/appropriate replacement planting will be required wherever possible.

The consideration, role and value of trees as part of new developments is considered as part of Options 64 and 66 of chapter 7 – Creating Successful Places. This policy would be similar to existing policy 4/4 of the 2006 Local Plan, but would be expanded to consider the wider role and value of trees in urban environments and the importance of veteran trees and the habitat value of trees.

The advantage of such a policy is that it recognises the role of trees in the setting and character of the city. The protection of trees will have wider economic and social benefits as well as environmental benefits.

Questions

8.39 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

8.40 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

8.41 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Pollution and protection of environmental quality.

- 8.43 The planning and pollution control systems are separate but complementary. Pollution control legislation is concerned with preventing pollution through the use of measures to prohibit or limit pollution from different sources. The planning system's role in pollution control is to ensure that proposed development is suitable for a particular area of land bearing in mind existing or potential pollution of that land. It also has to consider whether a proposed development is likely to give rise to additional sources of pollution that would impact on the local environment, amenity and public health.
- 8.44 Pollution can arise from many sources and activities including traffic and transport, industrial processes, energy generation, agriculture, sporting facilities, licensed premises, commercial activity and waste storage/treatment. Land and groundwater can present potential sources of pollution if they have been contaminated by previous land uses. Polluting substances can enter and affect water, air or soil, while sources of pollution include odour, smoke, fumes, gases, steam, dust, vibration, light, heat, and electromagnetic radiation. Planning decisions can have a significant impact on the quality of air, water, land, noise, and therefore affect the environment. Some of the guiding principles when considering pollution control are that:
- New development must not, as far as practicable, cause pollution, for example, pollution of watercourses or an increase in air pollution;
 - Sensitive new development, for example new housing, must not be located near to pollution sources,
 - Where pollution is a concern, mitigation measures must be used to limit any potential impacts on the environment, health and amenity.
- 8.45 The policy options set out below represent the most reasonable options for setting out the role of planning policy in pollution control. These options are considered to be in keeping with the requirements of the NPPF, which sets out the broad requirements for local planning authorities both in terms of developing pollution policies and in decision making.⁸ Development of planning policies to control and minimise pollution and the impact of

⁸ National Planning Policy Framework, paras 7, 17, 109, 110, 120, 121, 122, & 125

pollution on new development is explicitly stated in a number of provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as amended):

Option 84 – General Pollution Policy

This option would allow for the development of an overarching policy, dealing with all forms of pollution, which would sit within a development principles section of the plan. This policy would set out criteria which proposals that might cause pollution would need to meet for permission to be granted, including:

- That the amenity of existing and future users of the site, or nearby residents is not put at risk;
- That air quality standards or objectives would not be breached, particularly for developments within the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA);
- That the water environment would not be detrimentally affected;
- That it would not lead to unacceptable deterioration in the quality or potential yield of surface and ground water resources;
- That external lighting would be of a minimum level of illumination and duration required for security, safety, and operational purposes and that it would not adversely affect light sensitive uses;
- That the development would not have a significant effect on existing or future occupiers or nearby residents due to noise, vibration, dust or odour; and
- That the health and amenity of existing and future users of the site, or nearby residents is not put at risk by virtue of substances in, on or under the ground, nor that development be allowed where a cannot be made suitable for the proposed end use.

The advantage of such a policy is that it covers all aspects of pollution, and will help to meet the requirement to develop suitable planning policies as set out in the Environmental Protection Act. A disadvantage of relying on this policy alone is that contains very little detail about specific pollution control requirements, which was useful for both developers and planning officers.

Questions

8.42 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

8.43 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

8.44 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

- 8.46 In addition to an overarching pollution development principle, detailed policies for significant pollution concerns could be developed. Examples for this policy option are provided below. The justification for such a policy approach is that the NPPF contains very little detailed information about the role of the planning system in dealing with pollution. Much of the former guidance contained within Planning Policy Statement 23 (planning and pollution control – PPS23) and PPG24 (Noise) has now been lost, leading to concerns of a policy vacuum related to issues of the role of planning in dealing with pollution. As such one option for the new local plan would be to develop a detailed policies dealing with contamination, air quality, noise and light pollution, incorporating guidance previously contained in PPS23 and PPG24.

Air Quality

- 8.47 The primary local impacts on air quality in Cambridge are from road transport, and domestic, commercial and industrial heating sources such that an AQMA was designated in the central part of the city in August 2004. It will be important to ensure that new development proposals do not lead to a worsening of air quality, both in the AQMA and the city as a whole:

Option 85 –Air quality policy

This option would allow for the development of a detailed air quality policy that would set out the criteria with which development proposals within or adjacent to the AQMA would need to comply, in addition to a general development principle policy. Developments would only be permitted where it could be demonstrated that:

- They would have no adverse impact upon air quality in the AQMA; or
- Air quality levels within the AQMA would not have a significant effect on the proposed use/users.

Further criteria would be developed based on the Council’s “Air Quality in Cambridge. Developers Guide” (2008) and information contained within Annex 1, Appendix 1G of PPS23. These criteria could include a hierarchy of methods for addressing air quality issues.

Such a policy would also need to consider development proposals that have the potential to cause an AQMA to be declared and where the granting of planning permission would conflict with or render unworkable elements of an authority’s air quality action plan. In some cases, developers will be required to submit an Air Quality Assessment as part of their planning application.

The advantages of such a policy approach is that it provides an additional level of detail that will prove useful in determining planning applications. In the absence of such detail, there is a concern that pollution issues could be overlooked, leading to expensive remediation measures being required at a later stage in the development process.

Questions:

8.45 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

8.46 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

8.47 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Noise

8.48 Noise can have a significant effect on the environment and on the quality of life enjoyed by individuals and communities. Planning can help to guide development to the most appropriate locations with noise sensitive developments (houses, hospitals, offices and schools) separated from major sources of noise, such as road and rail networks and certain types of industrial and commercial development. Noise can also be an issue from the construction of new developments, leading to impacts on existing residents of the city. The growth of Cambridge is also leading to some areas of new housing being located in closer proximity to major sources of noise:

Option 86 – Noise policy

This option would allow for the development of a detailed policy aimed at reducing and mitigating noise impacts that might arise from the construction of and use of new development. This would include managing noise sensitive development in already noisy locations. Such a policy could set out a range of criteria with which proposals would need to demonstrate compliance, including:

- That noise-generating developments should be appropriately located so as to minimise its impact on noise-sensitive land uses;
- That noise-sensitive developments should be located away from noise generating land uses and major sources of noise;
- The requirement to submit Noise Impact Assessments where necessary; and
- The application of suitable mitigation measures where required.

The advantages of such a policy approach is that it provides an additional level of detail. In the absence of such detail, there is a concern that pollution issues could be overlooked, leading to expensive remediation measures being required at a later stage in the development process.

Questions

8.48 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

8.49 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be

added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

8.50 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Contaminated Land

- 8.49 Land contamination is a material consideration for the purposes of planning. It is important to ensure that proposed developments are situated on land that will be safe and suitable for the proposed use. There will be situations where remediation works will be required to make land safe prior to being developed; for example if a site's previous use was a petrol station, there will be a need to ensure that no residual fuel in storage tanks or in the soil itself is left on-site as it may cause a health hazard for future users. In some instances, the level and type of contamination of land may make it unsuitable for certain types of development, for example recently closed landfill sites are considered to be unsuitable for residential development:

Option 87 – Contaminated Land Policy

This option would allow for the development of a detailed contaminated land policy that would set out the criteria with which development proposals would need to comply, including an assessment of risk. Such a policy would be based on the following principles:

- New development needs to be appropriate for its location, having regard to the effects of pollution on health, the natural environment or general amenity. It should also take account of the potential sensitivity of the area or proposed development to adverse effects from pollution; and
- The site is suitable for its new use taking account of ground conditions, pollution arising from previous uses and any proposals for land remediation.

The advantages of such a policy approach is that it provides an additional level of detail that will prove useful in determining planning applications. In the absence of such detail, there is a concern that pollution issues could be overlooked, leading to expensive remediation measures being required at a later stage in the development process.

Questions

8.51 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

8.52 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

8.53 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Light pollution

8.50 Light pollution is the emission of stray light or glare from lighting fixtures, which causes unnecessary illumination of the night sky, in other words light that shines where it is neither needed nor wanted. It can also cause 'light intrusion' into neighbouring properties, which can be a statutory nuisance under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The cumulative effect of light pollution of light pollution from a number of sources is known as 'sky glow'.

8.51 Impacts from light pollution include:

- Disruption of natural habitats for a wide range of wildlife, from insects and migrating birds to larger mammals and amphibians. Light pollution can impact on their feeding, breeding and migration patterns;
- Wastage of energy which not only has cost implications, but also leads to the unnecessary emission of carbon dioxide, exacerbating climate change;
- Reductions in nearby residential amenity; and
- Reduction in the visibility of the night sky.

8.52 The NPPF states that by encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation. While Cambridge is not an intrinsically dark landscape, minimising the impacts of light pollution on local amenity and nature conservation are important aspects. As such, a local policy could be developed in order to reduce light pollution:

Option 88 – Light pollution policy

This option would allow for the development of a detailed light pollution policy, setting out the requirements in relation to proposals involving new exterior lighting or changes to existing lighting. Criteria could include:

- Any lighting proposed is the minimum required giving consideration to public safety and crime prevention;
- Light spillage has been minimised;
- Impacts to amenity have been minimised;
- Impacts to wildlife and wider landscape, particularly for proposals on the edge of the city, have been minimised.
- Such a policy could also require the submission of the following information as part of planning applications:
 - An Assessment of the Need for Lighting;
 - A site survey; and
 - The design of the proposed lighting, including information on lighting levels and modelled levels of light spillage.

Questions

- 8.54 Is there a need for a policy covering these issues?
- 8.55 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?
- 8.56 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Visual pollution

- 8.53 Visual pollution is the term given to unattractive and man-made visual elements of a vista. Visual pollution is an aesthetic issue, referring to the impacts of pollution that impair one's ability to enjoy a vista or view. Advertising signs, satellite dishes and street furniture are among the things that can contribute to visual pollution. Visual pollution can have negative consequences for tourism and quality of life. Minimising the impacts of visual pollution on the built environment and on local amenity is important. As such, a local policy could be developed in order to reduce visual pollution.
- 8.54 An option is put forward to reduce visual pollution. While it is considered that there are no reasonable alternatives, there may be variations within the criteria identified that could be considered:

Option 89 – Detailed Visual Pollution Policy

This option would allow for the development of a detailed visual pollution policy that would set out the criteria with which development proposals would need to comply. Criteria could include:

- Any advertising signs or hoardings that may be required do not impact negatively on amenity or public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts;
- Every element of street furniture associated with a new development must have a clearly defined useful purpose to avoid unnecessary clutter;
- Elements that contribute to visual pollution (advertising signs, satellite dishes, street furniture) are kept to a minimum where possible.

The advantages of such a policy approach is that it provides an additional level of detail that will prove useful in determining planning applications. In the absence of such detail, there is a concern that pollution issues could be overlooked, leading to expensive remediation measures being required at a later stage in the development process.

Questions

- 8.57 Is there a need for a policy covering these issues?

8.58 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

8.59 Are there any other reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?