



To: Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change
Report by: Head of Planning Services
Relevant scrutiny committee: Development Plan Scrutiny Sub Committee 11/09/2012
Wards affected: All Wards

DRAFT CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE LOCAL PLAN - ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPORT

Non Key Decision

1.0 Executive summary

- 1.1 The City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council have a long and effective history of joint working on planning matters, particularly on plan-making. As part of the duty to cooperate, the three councils have agreed to work collaboratively and in parallel on new Local Plans and a transport strategy for the Cambridge area. This approach will ensure that cross-boundary issues and relevant wider matters are addressed in a consistent and joined-up manner.
- 1.2 On 12th July 2012, South Cambridgeshire District Council published their Local Plan – Issues and Options Report for consultation, hereafter referred to as Issues and Options. Consultation runs from 12th July through to 28th September 2012. This consultation forms the first stage in preparing an updated Local Plan for South Cambridgeshire that will set out the vision for the district for the period up to 2031.
- 1.2 This report sets out the Council’s suggested consultation response to the Issues and Options to be submitted to South Cambridgeshire District Council. The representations are set out in Appendix A of this report. The Council’s suggested response to the County Council’s Transport Strategy - Issues and Options report is also on this agenda.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 This report is being submitted to the Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee for prior consideration and comment before decision by the Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change.
- 2.2 The Executive Councillor is recommended to agree the comments set out in Appendix A and that these are subsequently submitted to South Cambridgeshire District Council as Cambridge City Council's formal response to the consultation.

3.0 Background

3.1 The current South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) suite of documents was adopted between January 2007 and January 2010. They set out a vision, policies and proposals for development and land use in South Cambridgeshire to 2016 and beyond for some longer term proposals, e.g. Northstowe. The LDF gives effect to a sustainable development strategy taken from the last Structure Plan and East of England Plan, and proposes a sequence of development in South Cambridgeshire with:

- (a) development on the edge of Cambridge on land removed from the Green Belt;
- (b) the new town of Northstowe;
- (c) development in the larger and better served villages designated as Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres.

3.2 The primary objective of this strategy was to locate more new homes close to the main concentration of jobs and jobs growth in and close to Cambridge. This approach involved a review of the inner boundary of the Cambridge Green Belt. This included Cambridge Airport where 12,000 new homes (7,500 in South Cambridgeshire) were expected to be built, mostly after 2016. This strategy represented a departure from previous plans, which constrained the growth of Cambridge and dispersed housing development to the villages and market towns.

3.3 Whilst the current South Cambridgeshire LDF remains an effective set of documents and progress is being made in terms of the delivery of its proposals, including a number of urban extensions to Cambridge and the new settlement of Northstowe, a number of factors have come together to mean that an update is timely.

3.4 South Cambridgeshire District Council is updating its current LDF as:

- the current plan has an end date of 2016;
- the national economic slowdown has slowed the delivery of housing development;

- Cambridge East will not be coming forward before 2031;
- the Localism Act 2011 and new National Planning Policy Framework have introduced a number of changes to national policy.

3.5 South Cambridgeshire District Council agreed in 2011 to review its plans, with adoption of a new Local Plan by early 2015. The preparation of a Local Plan involves a number of stages, including public consultation. The Issues and Options stage involves identifying and considering the issues that South Cambridgeshire will face over a period of at least 15 years from the adoption of a new Local Plan.

Joint Working

3.6 The City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council have a long and effective history of joint working on planning matters, particularly on plan-making. In addition, as part of the duty to cooperate, the three councils have agreed to work collaboratively and in parallel on new Local Plans and a transport strategy for the Cambridge area. This approach will ensure that cross-boundary issues and relevant wider matters are addressed in a consistent and joined-up manner.

3.7 Given the functional relationship between Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, many of the evidence base studies have been carried out jointly and further work in relation to the spatial strategy for the Cambridge area (including housing and employment provision), including site options consultation, has been programmed to be undertaken on a joint basis as the preparation of both Local Plans continues. The City Council supports the options explored by South Cambridgeshire District Council at this stage, including Waterbeach, Bourn Airfield and an extension to Cambourne.

3.8 In order to support these cooperative arrangements, a new Member Governance group has been set up and the Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire and County Council Strategic Transport and Spatial Planning Group has already met on a number of occasions. This group is supported by officers from all three councils, who are working in collaboration on the production of the two new Local Plans and the transport strategy.

Content of the Issues and Options Report

3.9 The Issues and Options Report follows a similar layout to the Council's own Issues and Options report. It includes a vision, strategic objectives, and specific chapters relating to the future spatial strategy, possible opportunity areas and other topic areas. The chapters are as follows:

- Chapter 1 is the introduction, which describes the overall purpose document;
- Chapter 2 sets out a possible vision for South Cambridgeshire to 2031;
- Chapter 3 contains the forecasts for jobs and housing. The jobs target identified in the chapter ranges from lower jobs growth of 14,000 additional jobs to a higher jobs growth of 29,200 additional jobs over the plan period. Housing provision detailed within this chapter ranges between a target of 18,500 dwellings in the plan period to 23,500 dwellings;
- Chapter 4 concerns the spatial strategy and focuses on the location of housing and employment. This chapter also contains broad locations within the Cambridge Green Belt, which have been consulted on in Cambridge City Council's recent consultation on the Cambridge Local Plan – Towards 2031, Issues and Options Report, June 2012;
- Chapter 5 sets out a number of development site options, which have estimated site capacities ranging from 10 dwellings to 12,750 dwellings. These sites have been included in the Issues and Options primarily as a result of South Cambridgeshire's 'call for sites' last summer;
- Chapter 6 covers climate change, including water;
- Chapter 7 deals with quality of design and landscape;
- Chapter 8 sets out options to protect and enhance the historic and natural environment;
- Chapter 9 is about delivering high quality housing;
- Chapter 10 deals with the local economy, including sections on employment, retail and tourism;
- Chapter 11 is concerned with successful communities, including the provision of open space, leisure and community facilities;
- Chapter 12 deals with transport and infrastructure;
- Chapter 13 addresses site-specific issues, including Cambridge East, North of Newmarket Road and Cambridge Northern Fringe East.

A copy of the Issues and Options Report has been circulated to each member of Development Plan Scrutiny Sub Committee in advance of the September committee meeting. A copy of the report can also be found at:
http://www.scambs.gov.uk/documents/retrieve.htm?pk_document=912649

A list of evidence base documents is available on the Local Plan pages of South Cambridgeshire District Council's website and is listed

in Appendix 1 of the Issues & Options. The evidence base documents can be accessed at:

<http://www.scambs.gov.uk/Environment/Planning/DistrictPlanning/LocalDevelopmentFramework/EvidenceBase/default.htm>

Key Issues for Cambridge

3.10 Officers have worked through the Issues and Options Report and many of the issues covered in the Report do not currently contain significant amounts of detail, or are not relevant to the City. However, whilst the Council is supportive of many areas of work and has worked jointly with South Cambridgeshire District Council on a range of issues, there are a number of areas of particular interest for Cambridge, which are discussed in the draft representations in Appendix A. These issues include:

- The strength of urban design policies and guidance to support the delivery of locally-specific high quality developments;
- The maintenance of the essential qualities of the Cambridge Green Belt and the landscape setting of the city;
- The need to work together on the designation of Local Green Space as a result of the introduction of this approach through the National Planning Policy Framework;
- The need to work together to produce policy and guidance on waterways, including the River Cam;
- The delivery of homes to Lifetime Homes standards with appropriate storage and space standards;
- The delivery of permanent and transit pitches for Gypsies and Travellers;
- The introduction of Local Development Orders for employment development;
- The provision of hotel development in South Cambridgeshire and the need for detail assessment of hotel need in the district;
- The provision of open space associated with new residential development.

What happens next?

3.11 Public consultation on the Issues and Options report started on 12th July and runs until 28th September 2012. Following this consultation, the three Councils will be undertaking further work in relation to the spatial strategy for the Cambridge area (including housing and employment provision), and there will be a joint site options consultation in January 2013. Timetables are also being updated for consultation on the draft Plans with joint consultation to take place in June/July 2013.

4.0 Implications

Financial Implications

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Staffing Implications

4.2 There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

Equal Opportunities Implications

4.3 There are no direct equal opportunities impacts arising from this report.

Environmental Implications

4.4 Decisions made in the process of producing the new Local Plan for South Cambridgeshire have scope to have direct environmental implications for the city. Cambridge City Council will work with South Cambridgeshire District Council to ensure the most sustainable outcomes for the area.

Consultation

4.5 There are no direct consultation implications arising from this report.

Community Safety

4.6 There are no direct community safety implications arising from this report.

5.0 Background papers

5.1 These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan – Issues and Options Report, July 2012, which can be accessed at: http://www.scambs.gov.uk/documents/retrieve.htm?pk_document=912649
- South Cambridgeshire Appendix 4: Analysis of Issues and Options, July 2012. http://www.scambs.gov.uk/documents/retrieve.htm?pk_document=912569
- Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment Internal Review – Report to South Cambridgeshire District Council’s Housing Portfolio Holder, 13th June 2012.

<http://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=870&MId=5529&Ver=4>

<http://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s65099/GATANA.pdf>

- Cambridge Local Plan – Towards 2031, Issues and Options Report, June 2012.

<http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/public/docs/local-plan-review-issues-and-options-report.pdf>

6.0 Appendices

- Appendix A – Proposed Responses to South Cambridgeshire Local Plan – Issues and Options report

7.0 Inspection of papers

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

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