

Item

STRATEGIC POLICIES FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING



To:

Councillor Kevin Blencowe, Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport
Planning & Transport Scrutiny Committee 15 January 2019

Report by:

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Wards affected:

All

Key Decision

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Neighbourhood Plans must be prepared in general conformity with the adopted Cambridge Local Plan 2018, and in particular the policies identified as strategic. This report identifies those policies.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

1. Agree the schedule attached at Appendix 1, containing the policies that are considered strategic for the purposes of neighbourhood planning, taking into account the broad guidance provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (2018) and the planning practice guidance.

3. Background

- 3.1 Neighbourhood Plans (NP) were introduced by the Localism Act (2011) to provide a planning tool for local people to use to guide future

development, regeneration and conservation of an area. Government policy and practice guidance for neighbourhood planning is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and in associated planning practice guidance. NP are prepared by local communities, and in Cambridge this is by Neighbourhood Forums.

3.2 The NP must support the strategic policies of the Local Plan as identified by paragraph 20 of the NPPF:

Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for:

- a) housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;*
- b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, waste water, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);*
- c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and*
- d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.*

3.3 Further, paragraph 076 (Reference ID 41-076-20140306) of the PPG identifies a number of useful considerations in identifying strategic policies:

- 1. whether the policy sets out an overarching direction or objective*
- 2. whether the policy seeks to shape the broad characteristics of development*
- 3. the scale at which the policy is intended to operate*
- 4. whether the policy sets a framework for decisions on how competing priorities should be balanced*
- 5. whether the policy sets a standard or other requirement that is essential to achieving the wider vision and aspirations in the Local Plan*
- 6. in the case of site allocations, whether bringing the site forward is central to achieving the vision and aspirations of the Local Plan*
- 7. whether the Local Plan identifies the policy as being strategic*

3.4 Neighbourhood Planning is optional, and at this stage there is only one defined Neighbourhood Area in Cambridge in South Newnham. Any Neighbourhood Plan that is prepared and passes a referendum to

become “made” becomes part of the statutory development plan for Cambridge. All planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Strategic Policies

- 3.5 There is a list of basic conditions in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 that must be met by a NP before it can be successful at independent examination and ultimately “made” by the local planning authority. One of these basic conditions is that any draft NP must be in “general conformity” with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for Cambridge. The NPPF (paragraph 20) sets out that the local planning authority should clearly set out the strategic policies for their area.
- 3.6 Outside of these strategic policies NPs can devise their own local policies for their areas. The NP only has to be in general conformity with the strategic elements of a Local Plan. Once a NP has found to be in conformity and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict (NPPF paragraph 30).
- 3.7 In order to guide the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans, it is necessary to clarify which policies in the new Cambridge Local Plan (2018) the Council considers to be strategic for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning. This takes into account the broad guidance in the NPPF and PPG. Appendix 1 includes the schedule which demonstrates which policies are considered strategic, and the reasons for this conclusion.
- 3.8 There are 85 policies within the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) of which 79 are considered to meet the requirements of the NPPF and the planning practice guidance, and are recommended to be identified as strategic policies for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning. Any Neighbourhood Plan that is prepared will need to be in general conformity with these policies and any relevant national policy. Neighbourhood Plans may also provide additional guidance to amplify the policies within the Cambridge Local Plan 2018, which will reflect the particular characteristics of their area.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

None

(b) Staffing Implications

Support for the preparation of Neighbourhood Plan is currently provided from within existing resources in the Planning Policy team. This position is kept under review, and the resource required is dependent on the number of Neighbourhood Plans that are prepared.

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

None

(d) Environmental Implications

None

(e) Procurement Implications

None

(f) Community Safety Implications

None

5. Consultation and communication considerations

None

6. Background papers

[National Planning Policy Framework 2018](#)

[Planning Practice Guidance](#)

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Strategic Policies for Neighbourhood Planning

8. Inspection of papers

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

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