

**REPORT TITLE: South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan – Making (adopting) the Neighbourhood Plan**

**To:**  
Council

Monday 24 February 2025

**Report by:**  
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**Wards affected:**  
Newnham

<b>1.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
1.1	It is recommended that Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Notes the results of the referendum for the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan that took place on 16 January 2025.</li> <li>b. ‘Makes’ (adopts) the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan as part of the Local Development Plan for the area as it was a successful referendum. The made version of the plan is Appendix 1 of this report.</li> </ul>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Purpose and reason for the report</b>
2.1	The purpose of this report is to set out the results of the referendum on the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan and make a recommendation to Council on whether the Neighbourhood Plan should be formally made (adopted) by Cambridge City Council.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Alternative options considered</b>
3.1	Where a Neighbourhood Plan is successful at its referendum, Cambridge City Council has limited options in how to respond. National planning legislation requires that the Council ‘makes’ (adopts) the Neighbourhood Plan, unless the making of the Neighbourhood Plan would breach or is otherwise incompatible with EU or human rights obligations.

	<p>Officers have concluded that the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan would not breach or be otherwise incompatible with EU or human rights obligations, as set out in the Considerations section.</p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Background and key issues</b></p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>If a Neighbourhood Plan is successful at a referendum as a result of the majority of those voting being in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan being used when making decisions on planning applications, then the Neighbourhood Plan must be ‘made’ (adopted) by the local planning authority unless by doing so would breach or otherwise be incompatible with EU or human rights obligations. National regulations set out that the Neighbourhood Plan must be ‘made’ (adopted) within 8 weeks of a successful referendum. A referendum on the ‘making’ (adoption) of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan was held on 16 January 2025. Following a majority vote in favour the decision to “make” (adopt) the plan is now being presented for decision by Full Council.</p> <p>No Neighbourhood Plans in Cambridge have yet been ‘made’ (adopted) by Cambridge City Council so once the decision is taken, South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan will be the first.</p>
<p>4.2</p>	<p><b>Designation of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Area</b></p> <p>On 9 January 2017 South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum applied to Cambridge City Council to designate an area in the Newnham Ward as a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. The neighbourhood area of South Newnham was designated for five years in 2017 and redesignated in 2022.</p>
<p>4.3</p>	<p><b>Preparation of the draft Neighbourhood Plan</b></p> <p>In April 2023, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion was prepared by Place Services on behalf of Cambridge City Council for the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan. The Council consulted Statutory Consultees: Historic England/Natural England/Environment Agency. The <a href="#">Determination Statement</a> was published that sets out the reasons for deciding that the plan is not likely to need a Strategic Environmental Assessment. It also states that the making of the Plan is compatible with certain European Union obligations.</p> <p>From 12 June to 30 July 2023, South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum carried out a consultation on their pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan. Officers provided a formal response to the consultation, providing constructive feedback about the Neighbourhood Plan to assist the neighbourhood plan group with finalising the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

	<p>The Executive Cllr agreed to the response and a <a href="#">Record of Decision</a> was published on 1 August 2023. Officers met with the Forum representatives to discuss these comments, and the Submission version of the plan took on board many of the suggested changes.</p>
4.4	<p><b>Submission and Examination</b></p> <p>South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum submitted its Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents to Cambridge City Council on 15 April 2024. Officers confirmed by carrying out a Legal Compliance Check for the Neighbourhood Plan that the submitted version of the Neighbourhood Plan and its accompanying supporting documents complied with all the relevant statutory requirements at this stage of plan-making. As a result, a public consultation on the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan was held by Cambridge City Council between 7 May and 18 June 2024, inviting comments, and notifying any consultation body referred to in the consultation statement.</p> <p>The Council along with a number of others responded to the public consultation on the submission version of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan. The Executive Cllr agreed to the response and a <a href="#">Record of Decision</a> was published on 18 June 2024.</p> <p>Officers, in conjunction with South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum, appointed an Independent Examiner to consider this Neighbourhood Plan. The examiner appointed was Andrew Ashcroft. On 26 June 2024 the Neighbourhood Plan, its accompanying supporting documents and all comments submitted during the public consultation on the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan were provided to the Examiner with a request for him to carry out the examination on the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The Examiner sent his final report to Cambridge City Council on 6 November 2024. The Examiner in his report concluded that subject to a series of recommended modifications, the Neighbourhood Plan met all the necessary legal requirements and should proceed to referendum. He also recommended that the referendum should be held within the Neighbourhood Area only.</p> <p>Once the <a href="#">Examiner's report</a> was received, the Council was able to consider the conclusions of the Examiner's report, and whether those conclusions should be acted upon and therefore that the Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to referendum. This included considering whether the Examiner's recommended modifications to the Neighbourhood Plan should be made, and whether the Council agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan met the Basic Conditions.</p>

	<p>Following the Examination, Cambridge City Council determined that the ‘referendum’ version of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan was ready for a public referendum.</p>
<p>4.5</p>	<p><b>Referendum on the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan</b></p> <p>A ‘referendum’ version of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan was prepared taking account of the Examiner’s recommended modifications. The ‘referendum’ version of the plan also included some additional minor modifications to update parts of the plan. On 3 December 2024, the <a href="#">decision</a> was made by the Joint Director of Planning in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure to proceed to referendum (with any necessary modifications that an Examiner has recommended that the neighbourhood plan).</p> <p>A referendum on the ‘making’ (adoption) of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan was held on 16 January 2025. Voters were asked “Do you want Cambridge City Council to use the neighbourhood plan to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?” The <a href="#">results were declared</a> as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes votes: 445 (63.5%)</li> <li>• No votes: 254 (36.2%)</li> <li>• Turnout: 37.5%</li> </ul>
<p>4.6</p>	<p><b>Making (adopting) the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan</b></p> <p>The formal ‘making’ (adoption) of the Neighbourhood Plan does not happen until the Council vote to do so at a Full Council meeting following the referendum. The South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan was successful at its referendum as more than half of those that voted were in favour of the Council using the Neighbourhood Plan to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area. The Council is therefore required to ‘make’ the Neighbourhood Plan, unless the making of the Neighbourhood Plan would breach or is otherwise incompatible with EU or human rights obligations, which is one of the ‘Basic Conditions’ set out in national planning regulations that all Neighbourhood Plans must meet.</p> <p>The South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan is considered to meet the ‘Basic Condition’ that the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU and human rights obligations at various stages during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan(see Appendix 2).</p> <p>The ‘made’ (adopted) version of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan is included in Appendix 1 of this report. Officers have worked with the South Newnham</p>

	<p>Neighbourhood Forum to agree minor (non-material) amendments to the referendum version of the Neighbourhood Plan to turn it into the made version of the Neighbourhood Plan. These amendments included updates to the wording on the front cover and to Chapter 1 (Introduction and Background) so that it is clear that the Neighbourhood Plan was voted in through referendum and the Plan forms part of the statutory development plan.</p> <p>Once formally 'made' (adopted), Officers will publish the decision to 'make' (adopt) the Neighbourhood Plan and send notifications to the necessary statutory bodies, organisations and others as required by national planning regulations.</p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Corporate plan</b></p>
<p>5.1</p>	<p>The decision to formally 'make' (adopt) the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan aligns with the visions and strategies as set out in the Cambridge City Council Corporate plan 2022-2027: <a href="#">Corporate plan 2022-27: our priorities for Cambridge - Cambridge City Council</a></p> <p><i>Priority 1: Leading Cambridge's response to climate change and biodiversity emergencies</i></p> <p>The South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan's vision recognises the challenges of climate change and promotes the natural environment for protection and enhancement to increase biodiversity and sustainability. Planning applications should consider appropriate measures through all aspects of development as set out in the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p><i>Priority 2: Tackling Poverty and Inequality and helping people in the greatest need</i></p> <p>The South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan includes policies that set out to improve and enhance neighbourhood community assets. The Plan will be used in decision-making on planning applications, the monitoring and implementation of the Plan will allow for members of South Newnham and wider community to participate fully in making decisions about the places they live in.</p> <p><i>Priority 3: Building a new generation of council and affordable homes and reducing homelessness</i></p> <p>Local communities can within a Neighbourhood Plan consider the existing and future needs for housing in their area and positively plan to meet this need through a range of policies and / or allocations in their plan. Whilst the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites for housing, it does provide policies that guide the design of future</p>

	<p>planning proposals for homes to ensure that they are of high quality. The Neighbourhood Plan also includes a policy to protect and support homes and facilities for older people through adapting buildings, sheltered housing and senior living facilities.</p> <p><i>Priority 4: Modernising the council to lead a greener city that is fair for all</i></p> <p>Neighbourhood planning engages local people in the planning process by giving them a tool to guide the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. Cambridge City Council has a duty to support Neighbourhood Forum’s preparing Neighbourhood Plans and this is a great opportunity for the Councils to work in partnership and to develop new ways of working together to deliver the Councils green and equitable strategies.</p>
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Consultation, engagement and communication</b></p>
<p>6.1</p>	<p>The South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to the following rounds of public consultation.</p> <p><i>a. Public Consultation on the designation of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Area</i></p> <p>From 20 January to 6 March 2017, a six-week public consultation was held on the designation of the area of South Newnham. The responses were considered by the Council’s Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee on 22 March 2017 where the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport was recommended to approve the application.</p> <p>According to the national regulations a Forum ceases to have effect after five years when the group must reapply for designation. In 2022 the group reapplied and after another six-week public consultation between May and June 2022, the redesignation for a Neighbourhood Forum was approved.</p> <p><i>b. Statutory Consultation on the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment</i></p> <p>In April 2023, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening opinion was prepared by Place Services on behalf of Cambridge City Council (CCC) for the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan. The Council consulted Statutory Consultees: Historic England/Natural England/Environment Agency and it was concluded from their comments that a SEA/HRA was not required.</p> <p><i>c. Public Consultation on draft versions of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan</i></p>

From 12 June to 30 July 2023, South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum carried out a consultation on their pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan.

South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum submitted its submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents to Cambridge City Council on 15 April 2024. A public consultation on the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan was held by Cambridge City Council between 7 May and 18 June 2024.

*d. Correspondence with the Independent Examiner*

South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan was submitted for examination on 26 June 2024. The Examiner sent documents to Cambridge City Council on 17 July 2024 that were shared with the South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum to respond to. The Examiner sent his final report to Cambridge City Council on 6 November 2024.

*e. Referendum on the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan*

The referendum on the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan took place on Thursday 16 January 2025. Residents of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Area were able to vote in the referendum and notified about the referendum on 6 December 2024.

*f. Engagement with South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum (the Qualifying Body)*

Officers have supported the Neighbourhood Forum throughout the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, including working through each stage and coordinating correspondence with the Independent Examiner.

Officers, in conjunction with South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum, have reviewed the 'made' version of the Neighbourhood Plan; and a review of the Basic Conditions undertaken by Officers have been shared with the South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum.

Officers recognise the hard work that members of the Neighbourhood Forum and other residents of South Newnham have put into preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.

*g. Consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure*

This report, the 'made' version of the Neighbourhood Plan, and the Basic Conditions Check undertaken by Officers have been shared with the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure.

7.	<b>Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact</b>
7.1	Once formally 'made' (adopted) the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the "Development Plan" for Cambridge City Council area and all planning decisions in the neighbourhood area will need to have appropriate regard to it.
8.	<b>Implications</b>
8.1	<b>Relevant risks</b>
	<p>In the writing of this report consideration was given to the following implications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Financial</li> <li>B. Legal</li> <li>C. Equality and socio-economic implications</li> <li>D. Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental Implications</li> <li>E. Procurement Implications</li> <li>F. Community Safety Implications</li> </ul>
	<b>Financial Implications</b>
8.2	The costs of the examination and referendum have to be initially met by Cambridge City Council. However, the Council can claim a £20,000 government grant per Neighbourhood Plan once the plan has been through the examination and a referendum date has been set. Officers have already submitted the claim for this government grant.
	<b>Legal Implications</b>
8.3	Following a successful referendum, national planning legislation requires that the Council 'makes' (adopts) the Neighbourhood Plan, unless the making of the Neighbourhood Plan would breach or is otherwise incompatible with EU or human rights obligations. A legal challenge may only be made on the basis of a procedural or other legal flaw in the plan making process.
	<b>Equalities and socio-economic implications</b>
8.4	The Neighbourhood Plan is required to meet EU obligations, including Human Rights. Included as part of the <a href="#">Basic Conditions Statement</a> for the plan is an Equalities Impact Assessment undertaken by South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum to examine the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan in relation to the 'protected characteristics' as identified in the Equality Act 2010. The Equalities Impact Assessment concludes that: a number of policies in the Neighbourhood Plan will have positive benefits for specific protected characteristics; there are no negative equality impacts that arise from the policies or proposals contained within the Neighbourhood Plan; and the Neighbourhood Plan does not raise any issues in relation to any of the convention rights in the Human Rights Act



	1998. The Examiner agreed with this assessment.
	<b>Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications</b>
8.5	By preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, local communities are being given the opportunity to create planning policies that will encourage greener and more sustainable communities. Neighbourhood plans can include policies to protect special green spaces, encourage net gains in biodiversity, ensure development is located close to services and facilities, and secure environmentally sustainable buildings. The South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan's vision recognises the challenges of climate change and promotes the natural environment for protection and enhancement to increase biodiversity and sustainability. Planning applications should consider appropriate measures through all aspects of development as set out in the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.
	<b>Procurement Implications</b>
8.6	There are no procurement implications arising from the report.
	<b>Community Safety Implications</b>
8.7	There are no community safety implications arising from the report.
<b>9.</b>	<b>Background documents</b> Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
9.1	<p><a href="#">National Planning Practice Guidance</a> – Neighbourhood Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Basic Conditions</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Examination</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Referendum</a></li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Neighbourhood plans - Cambridge City Council</a> – earlier stages and supporting documents</p> <p>Scheme of Delegation: <a href="#">Agenda for Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee on Thursday, 28th September, 2023, 5.30 pm - Cambridge Council</a></p> <p>Decisions made: <a href="#">Decision - Neighbourhood Planning – Application and designation of a Neighbourhood</a></p>

	<p><a href="#"><u>Area and Forum for South Newnham - Cambridge Council</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Decision - **Application to redesignate the Neighbourhood Forum for South Newnham - Cambridge Council</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Decision - ***ROD South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan - Cambridge Council</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Decision - ***RoD South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan – Response to consultation on the submission plan - Cambridge Council</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Decision - ****RoD South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan – Receipt of Examiners Report and Decision to Proceed to Referendum - Cambridge Council</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Decision - ****RoD South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan - Making (adopting) the Neighbourhood Plan - Cambridge Council</u></a></p>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
10.1	<p>Appendix 1: ‘Made’ version of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>Appendix 2: Basic Conditions Check on ‘Made’ version of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan</p>
	<p>To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact</p> <p>Lizzie Wood, Principal Planning Policy Officer, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning, Telephone: 07563 421045 Email: <a href="mailto:Lizzie.Wood@greatercambridgeplanning.org"><u>Lizzie.Wood@greatercambridgeplanning.org</u></a></p>