

Cambridge City Council

Record of Decision

Agreement to re-consult on Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Decision of: Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport

Reference: 25/PAS/02

Date of decision: 15/08/2025

Decision Type: Non-Key

Decision(s):

- a. To agree that the Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix 1 of this decision) and accompanying Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) (Appendix 2) can proceed to a re-consultation commencing August 2025.
- b. To agree that the preparation of materials and the management of the consultation be delegated to the Joint Director of Planning.

Reasons for decision (and alternative options considered):

The purpose of this decision is to consider the latest version of the Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and for it to proceed to consultation in August 2025. The aim of the Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations SPD is to provide guidance on how both Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council seek to apply planning obligations, through the Section 106 process, to new development proposals. It will supplement both Policies 85 and TI/8 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018: *Infrastructure delivery, planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy*; and *Infrastructure and New Developments* respectively. The SPD will also complement other policies within the adopted development plans that seek to mitigate the negative impacts of development or secure infrastructure necessary to support the needs generated by proposed developments.

The Councils had previously consulted on a draft version of the Planning Obligations SPD in November 2024. The results of the consultation were taken to [South Cambridgeshire District Council Cabinet meeting](#) and the [Cambridge City Council Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee meeting in March 2025](#). It was agreed that, subject to draft Planning Obligations SPD providing additional evidence and a decision being made by the Lead Cabinet Member for Planning at South

Cambridgeshire District Council and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport at Cambridge City Council on the revisions made to the SPD, that the SPD could then proceed to an additional round of public consultation in summer 2025.

It was considered by the councils to not hold a re-consultation and only consider comments received during the first consultation and then proceed with adoption. However, further consultation ensures that the scope of legal challenge on the adoption and application of the SPD is reduced.

The councils also considered not progressing with the draft Planning Obligations SPD and continuing to use the Cambridge City Council Planning Obligations Strategy (2010) and parts of the South Cambridge Open Space in New Development SPD (2009) when securing planning obligations.

Scrutiny Consideration: The Chair and Spokespersons of the Performance, Assets and Strategy Overview and Scrutiny Committee were consulted prior to the decision being taken.

Report: The Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document is attached as Appendix 1.

Conflict of interest: None.

Comments:

Briefing Paper

The Planning Obligations SPD forms part of a wider project the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service are undertaking to improve and speed up the Section 106 process. It has been prepared to:

- Improve transparency and clarity of the S106 process for communities and for those interested in development.
- Aid the smooth functioning of the planning application process by making developers and landowners aware of the procedures for securing planning obligations, including the provision of affordable housing;
- Clarify the types of planning obligations that may be sought depending on the nature of the development proposal and site circumstances;
- Clarify the relationship between planning obligations and planning conditions; and
- Help to deliver good quality sustainable growth across the Greater Cambridge area that accords with the policies and requirements of the adopted Development Plans.

The Planning Obligations SPD is intended to be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The SPD does not introduce new planning policy but seeks to give effect to existing development plan policies. The guidance in the SPD is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) and policies in the adopted Development Plans for Greater Cambridge. The SPD outlines the relevant policy requirements set out in the Development Plans, and the types of obligations likely to arise as a result of applying these local planning policies. In the Planning Obligations SPD, the process of negotiating, preparing, and completing a S106 agreement is also outlined.

The SPD is split into chapters that set out specific types of infrastructure or obligations that may need to be secured in line with adopted local planning policies. The types of infrastructure or mitigation applicable is dependent on the land use proposed (residential, commercial, mixed-used), the scale of development proposed, the location of development, and its impacts (environmental, economic, social) both on the immediate and wider area. In this respect, the SPD makes very clear that each planning application will be assessed on its merits and only those obligations applicable to the development proposed will be of relevance.

The first draft of the Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations SPD went out to consultation between November 2024 to January 2025. The results of the consultation were taken to the [South Cambridgeshire District Council Cabinet meeting](#) and the [Cambridge City Council Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee meeting in March 2025](#). It was agreed at both meetings that subject to the draft Planning Obligations SPD providing additional evidence and a decision being made by the Lead Cabinet Member for Planning at South Cambridgeshire District Council and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport at Cambridge City Council, on the revisions made to the SPD, that it could then proceed to an additional round of public consultation in summer 2025.

Following on from the South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) cabinet meeting and the Cambridge City Council (CCC) Planning Transport Scrutiny Committee meeting that were held in March 2025, the Councils have now processed all 198 representations received during the first consultations and have made changes to the SPD to address the matters raised as detailed in the Consultation Statement (See Appendix 3). Relevant services from across the Councils were re-consulted during the preparation of the SPD to assist with responding to the representations made and to ensure that sections remained up to date. The Councils have provided in Appendix 4 a track change version of the SPD which shows the changes proposed to the SPD.

Alongside the Planning Obligations SPD, a Planning Obligations SPD Costing Update paper will be published. At the time of the previous consultation this paper was still being produced and therefore could not be published alongside the SPD. The Planning Obligations SPD Costing Update paper was produced by AtkinsRealis as part of their commission in preparation of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and was completed in July 2025. The Costings paper provides an update on the costs of specific infrastructure provision – namely, open space, green infrastructure, indoor and outdoor sports facilities, playgrounds, and community buildings. These costs replace those previously relied upon from within the CCC Planning Obligations Strategy SPD (March 2010, updated 2023) and the approaches used by SCDC, including the Open Space in New Developments SPD (2009). Each section of the Planning Obligations SPD Costing Update paper provides evidence to support the updated costs, including setting out, in the respective sections, the approach taken to calculate these for each facility/typology (see Appendix 5). These costs have now been incorporated in the Planning Obligations SPD.

As outlined above, the Councils have now made necessary revisions to the Planning Obligations SPD and will be publishing further evidence in the form of the Planning Obligations SPD Costing Update paper to provide information to developers as to

how the Councils have derived specific costs for certain infrastructure provisions. If an agreed decision by the Lead Cabinet Member for Planning at South Cambridgeshire District Council and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport at Cambridge City Council is made, then the Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations SPD will proceed to Consultation in August 2025.