



**South
Cambridgeshire
District Council**

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan

Adopted

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South Cambridgeshire District Council adopted this Local Plan
at its meeting of Council on 27 September 2018.

- e. To ensure that all new development provides or has access to a range of services and facilities that support healthy lifestyles and well-being for everyone, including shops, schools, doctors, community buildings, cultural facilities, local open space, and green infrastructure.
- f. To maximise potential for journeys to be undertaken by sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling, bus and train.

2.27 South Cambridgeshire is a prosperous area with high levels of economic activity and low levels of unemployment. Its 350 square miles of countryside provide a high quality setting for its 105 settlements. In recent decades the district has experienced significant growth, reflecting the success of the local economy and the need for new homes. These high levels of growth have managed to balance development with maintaining a high quality social, built and natural environment which is valued locally and has ensured that South Cambridgeshire regularly performs well in national quality of life surveys. Public consultation in updating the Local Plan showed strong support for supporting economic growth, but a degree of nervousness amongst the residents of the district believing that continuing high levels of growth would put the environment and living standards at risk. This then is a clear challenge for the way in which the vision and objectives are implemented through policies and proposals in the Local Plan and decisions on planning applications to provide an appropriate balance between supporting the economy, providing for housing needs and protecting the environment.

Sustainable Development

Policy S/3: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

1. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals that accord with the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
2. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

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- a. Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- b. Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

2.28 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012) states that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development, and the NPPF (2012) has at its heart a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which it says should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking. For South Cambridgeshire, sustainable development means supporting the economic success of the Cambridge area, maintaining the setting of Cambridge as a compact historic city, and providing for development needs in a way that maintains the high quality of life enjoyed by residents that makes it such an attractive place to live, work and study, and locates new homes close to services and employment or on high quality public transport routes. The Local Plan has a number of chapters covering the full range of planning policy issues, which together contribute to the achievement of the three dimensions of sustainability: an economic role, a social role and an environmental role.

Cambridge Green Belt

Policy S/4: Cambridge Green Belt

A Green Belt will be maintained around Cambridge that will define the extent of the urban area. The detailed boundaries of the Green Belt in South Cambridgeshire are defined on the Policies Map, which includes some minor revisions to the inner boundary of the Green Belt around Cambridge and to the boundaries around some inset villages. New development in the Green Belt will only be approved in accordance with Green Belt policy in the National Planning Policy Framework.

2.29 The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts, and this is set out in the NPPF(2012). The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and a specific function of some Green Belts, such as the one around Cambridge, is to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns. Cambridge has had a Green Belt since the 1965 Development Plan, which includes about 25% of South Cambridgeshire. A review of the Green Belt was undertaken in the 1980s resulting in the Cambridge Green Belt Local Plan 1992. A further and more strategically significant review was started in the Regional Planning Guidance for East Anglia (RPG6) with locations for Green Belt release identified in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and detailed boundary changes made in the Cambridge Local Plan 2006 and the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007-2010.

Development Frameworks

Policy S/7: Development Frameworks

1. Development and redevelopment of unallocated land and buildings within development frameworks (as shown on the Policies Map) will be permitted provided that:
 - a. Development is of a scale, density and character appropriate to the location, and is consistent with other policies in the Local Plan; and
 - b. Retention of the site in its present state does not form an essential part of the local character, and development would protect and enhance local features of green space, landscape, ecological or historic importance; and
 - c. There is the necessary infrastructure capacity to support the development;
2. Outside development frameworks, only allocations within Neighbourhood Plans that have come into force and development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside or where supported by other policies in this plan will be permitted.

- 2.49 Within settlements, policies in the plan generally support development and redevelopment of previously developed land subject to a range of policies which seek to ensure the development is sustainable.
- 2.50 The development frameworks define where policies for the built-up areas of settlements give way to policies for the countryside. This is necessary to ensure that the countryside is protected from gradual encroachment on the edges of villages and to help guard against incremental growth in unsustainable locations. In the countryside development is generally restricted to uses that need to be located there. The plan includes some flexibility for reusing existing buildings, and for development which supports the rural economy.
- 2.51 Frameworks have been defined to take into account the present extent of the built-up area, and planned development. Buildings associated with countryside uses (e.g. farm buildings, houses subject to agricultural occupancy conditions or affordable housing schemes permitted under the rural exceptions policy) are not normally included within the framework. Frameworks have not been defined around small clusters of houses or areas of scattered development where such buildings are isolated in open countryside or detached from the main concentration of buildings within Cambridge or a nearby village. Although it is recognised that such dwellings may be considered locally as 'part' of the nearest settlement in community terms, it is important in planning policy terms to limit the amount of new development that can take place in rural areas with few services and little or no public transport.

- 2.52 Property boundaries shown on the Ordnance Survey map have been taken into account in defining frameworks. However, since there are many large gardens on the edge of settlements, the framework boundaries sometimes cut across such gardens, especially (but not solely) if parts of those gardens relate more to the surrounding countryside than they do to the built-up areas. The 'cutting' of some gardens is regarded as a positive development control tool to limit the potential for further residential development in smaller villages with few facilities and little or no public transport. However, in such circumstances this policy will not be operated to establish a presumption against the grant of planning permission for ancillary domestic buildings in those parts of residential curtilages excluded from the framework. Where permission is required for such developments, applications will be considered on their individual merits.

Strategy for the Rural Area

- 2.53 The Local Plan classifies villages into four groupings, to reflecting their relative sustainability. This is an important element of the sustainable development strategy, helping to direct housing to the most sustainable locations and control the level of windfall development that takes place in the least sustainable areas of the district whilst enabling the recycling of land and delivering new homes to meet local housing needs. Villages were classified following a review of the services and facilities, education, public transport and employment available at each settlement.
- 2.54 A local community preparing a neighbourhood plan may wish to make allocations for community led proposals in a neighbourhood plan that lie outside of the development framework of a village. As such are parish-led proposals the Council is supportive of such developments where they have received community support which means that the proposals are capable of being included in a neighbourhood plan.

Rural Centres

Policy S/8: Rural Centres

1. The following villages are identified as Rural Centres:
 - a. Cambourne
 - b. Cottenham
 - c. Great Shelford and Stapleford
 - d. Histon and Impington
 - e. Sawston
2. Development and redevelopment without any limit on individual scheme size will be permitted within the development frameworks of Rural Centres, as defined on the Policies Map, provided that adequate services, facilities and infrastructure are available or can be made available as a result of the development.

protected from pollution in these areas. Groundwater Protection maps are prepared by the Environment Agency, identifying zones of greatest risk.

- 4.30 Anglian Water and the Cambridge Water Company are the statutory undertakers responsible for water supply, sewerage and sewage disposal. The Environment Agency is responsible for water resource management, fluvial flooding, river management, pollution control and regulating the handling and disposal of waste water. Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) manage all drainage within their areas excluding main rivers. Those applying for planning permission should consult statutory undertakers and IDBs as they may levy an infrastructure charge. Maps showing the area covered by individual Internal Drainage Boards can be found in the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, and in the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document.
- 4.31 South Cambridgeshire is a rural district, and not all developments will have access to a public sewer. It is essential that development provides appropriate plant that will treat effluent safely and protect the environment. A package treatment plant will be sought where practicable, and only where it is not practicable will a system incorporating septic tanks be acceptable.

Sustainable Drainage Systems

Policy CC/8: Sustainable Drainage Systems

Development proposals must incorporate appropriate sustainable surface water drainage systems (SuDS) appropriate to the nature of the site.

Development proposals will be required to demonstrate that:

- a. Surface water drainage schemes comply with the Sustainable Drainage Systems: Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems and the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document or successor documents;
- b. Opportunities have been taken to integrate sustainable drainage with the development, create amenity, enhance biodiversity, and contribute to a network of green (and blue) open space;
- c. Surface water is managed close to its source and on the surface where it practicable to do so;
- d. Maximum use has been made of low land take drainage measures, such as rain water recycling, green roofs, permeable surfaces and water butts;
- e. Appropriate pollution control measures have been incorporated, including multiple component treatment trains; and
- f. Arrangements have been established for the whole life management and maintenance of surface water drainage systems.

- 4.32 Well planned and well designed surface water management infrastructure is necessary for the creation and ongoing maintenance of sustainable communities. It provides a flood risk management function alongside benefits for amenity and

biodiversity and can be linked to a network of green (and blue) open spaces. It can also conserve water resources and help improve the quality of water as it passes through the system. All these aspects make a significant contribution to climate change adaptation.

- 4.33 The Government is committed to protecting people and property from flood risk and expects that SuDS will be provided in new developments wherever this is appropriate. However, there is still a risk that SuDS are seen as later additions to development, and do not fully realise their potential multifunctional benefits. They should be considered from the beginning of the design and masterplanning process, taking account of all opportunities and constraints, including heritage and wildlife assets.
- 4.34 In some areas of the district infiltration SuDS will not be practicable due to ground conditions, but there are a wide range of measures that can be implemented to find suitable solutions for all sites. Detailed guidance on developing proposals that include the use of SuDS that effectively manage water, are aesthetically pleasing, conserve, accommodate and enhance biodiversity, and provide amenity for local residents is provided in the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document.

Managing Flood Risk

Policy CC/9: Managing Flood Risk

1. In order to minimise flood risk, development will only be permitted where:
 - a. The sequential test and exception tests established by the National Planning Policy Framework demonstrate the development is acceptable (where required).
 - b. Floor levels are 300mm above the 1 in 100 year flood level plus an allowance for climate change where appropriate and where appropriate and practicable also 300mm above adjacent highway levels.
 - c. Suitable flood protection / mitigation measures are incorporated as appropriate to the level and nature of flood risk, which can be satisfactorily implemented to ensure safe occupation, access and egress. Management and maintenance plans will be required, including arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime;
 - d. There would be no increase to flood risk elsewhere, and opportunities to reduce flood risk elsewhere have been explored and taken (where appropriate), including limiting discharge of surface water (post development volume and peak rate) to natural greenfield rates or lower, and

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- e. The destination of the discharge obeys the following priority order:
 - i. Firstly, to the ground via infiltration;
 - ii. Then, to a water body;
 - iii. Then, to a surface water sewer;
 - iv. Discharge to a foul water or combined sewer is unacceptable.
 - 2. Site specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and the risks involved, and which takes account of future climate change, will be required for the following:
 - f. Development proposals over 1ha in size;
 - g. Any other development proposals in flood zones 2 and 3;
 - h. Any other development proposals in flood zone 1 where evidence, in particular the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment or Surface Water Management Plans, indicates there are records of historic flooding or other sources of flooding, and/or a need for more detailed analysis.
 - 3. FRAs will need to meet national standards and local guidance (including recommendations of the South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2010) and the Phase 1 and 2 Water Cycle Strategy or successor documents).
- 4.35 The NPPF (2012) requires a risk based sequential approach to flood risk, to avoid high risk areas and steer development to areas at lower risk. As well as minimising risk to the development itself, development should not increase flood risk elsewhere, and opportunities should be taken to reduce risk downstream, such as by reducing run off rates.
- 4.36 The Environment Agency publishes a Flood Map for Planning on their website, which identifies areas with an annual likelihood of flooding greater than 1% in any year for fluvial inland flooding (equivalent to 1 flood event in 100 years). They do not take account of existing flood defences, but show where these are present.
- 4.37 South Cambridgeshire District Council, in partnership with Cambridge City Council, commissioned a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, which explores the nature and extent of flood risk across the area, taking account of the anticipated impacts of climate change. In addition, Cambridgeshire County Council, now the lead local flood management authority, has prepared a Surface Water Management Plan. These should be used to support the consideration of planning applications. A flooding and water management Supplementary Planning Document will be prepared in liaison with stakeholders to assist developers and key stakeholders with the effective delivery and implementation of the policy.
- 4.38 The appropriate responsible bodies including The Environment Agency, Anglian Water, Internal Drainage Boards and Cambridgeshire County Council should be

consulted, as appropriate, during the initial design process for any new development or redevelopment.

Chapter 5 Delivering High Quality Places

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012) establishes that Planning should “always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings”.
- 5.2 South Cambridgeshire has been voted amongst the top 10 places in the country to live in a number of national surveys over recent years. The Local Plan seeks to shape development of all scales, be that small scale rural housing to major new communities, to create sustainable and successful places that protect the special qualities of the district’s rural character, whilst using the opportunities presented by development to enhance the built and natural environment, and create vibrant communities.
- 5.3 The District Council has signed up to the Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth, which is a clear policy statement of the aspiration to create new developments that offer communities a fulfilling, visually pleasing and environmentally sensitive way of life.

Key Facts:

- The district has settlements of varied and distinct local character, ranging from compact hamlets through larger villages with linear street patterns to new settlements and extensions to the urban fabric of Cambridge.
- The Council has signed up to the Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth, published in 2010, which sets out core principles for the level of quality expected in new developments.
- South Cambridgeshire has adopted a District Design Guide (2010) to provide additional guidance on how developments can ensure they are sustainable and achieve a high quality of design in a way that respects the local context.

Securing High Quality Design

Policy HQ/1: Design Principles

1. All new development must be of high quality design, with a clear vision as to the positive contribution the development will make to its local and wider context. As appropriate to the scale and nature of the development, proposals must:
 - a. Preserve or enhance the character of the local urban and rural area and respond to its context in the wider landscape;
 - b. Conserve or enhance important natural and historic assets and their setting;

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- c. Include variety and interest within a coherent, place-responsive design, which is legible and creates a positive sense of place and identity whilst also responding to the local context and respecting local distinctiveness;
- d. Be compatible with its location and appropriate in terms of scale, density, mass, form, siting, design, proportion, materials, texture and colour in relation to the surrounding area;
- e. Deliver a strong visual relationship between buildings that comfortably define and enclose streets, squares and public places, creating interesting vistas, skylines, focal points and appropriately scaled landmarks along routes and around spaces;
- f. Achieve a permeable development with ease of movement and access for all users and abilities, with user friendly and conveniently accessible streets and other routes both within the development and linking with its surroundings and existing and proposed facilities and services, focusing on delivering attractive and safe opportunities for walking, cycling, public transport and, where appropriate, horse riding;
- g. Provide safe and convenient access for all users and abilities to public buildings and spaces, including those with limited mobility or those with other impairment such as of sight or hearing;
- h. Ensure that car parking is integrated into the development in a convenient, accessible manner and does not dominate the development and its surroundings or cause safety issues;
- i. Provide safe, secure, convenient and accessible provision for cycle parking and storage, facilities for waste management, recycling and collection in a manner that is appropriately integrated within the overall development;
- j. Provide a harmonious integrated mix of uses both within the site and with its surroundings that contributes to the creation of inclusive communities providing the facilities and services to meet the needs of the community;
- k. Ensure developments deliver flexibility that allows for future changes in needs and lifestyles, and adaptation to climate change;
- l. Mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change on development through location, form, orientation, materials and design of buildings and spaces;
- m. Include high quality landscaping and public spaces that integrate the development with its surroundings, having a clear definition between public and private space which provide opportunities for recreation, social interaction as well as support healthy lifestyles, biodiversity, sustainable drainage and climate change mitigation;

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- n. Protect the health and amenity of occupiers and surrounding uses from development that is overlooking, overbearing or results in a loss of daylight or development which would create unacceptable impacts such as noise, vibration, odour, emissions and dust;
 - o. Design-out crime and create an environment that is created for people that is and feels safe, and has a strong community focus.
2. Larger and more complex developments will be required to submit Masterplans and Design Codes to agree an overall vision and strategy for a development as a whole that demonstrates a comprehensive and inclusive approach.

- 5.4 The NPPF (2012) sets out a clear national policy framework for promoting good design as a key element to achieving sustainable development and emphasises the indivisible link between good design and good planning (paragraphs 56-68).
- 5.5 All new development will have an impact on its surroundings. Development needs to be of an appropriate scale, design and materials for its location and conform to the design principles set out in the policy above. The aim must be that any development from a major urban extension to Cambridge to an extension to an existing home respects, preserves and enhances the special character of South Cambridgeshire generally and the locality specifically. Any development must also take proper care to respond to its surroundings, and create sustainable, inclusive and healthy environments where people would wish to live, work, shop, study or spend their leisure time. Well designed buildings and places contribute to the quality of life, increase economic vitality, achieve high environmental standards, reduce emissions and deliver a high quality public realm.
- 5.6 A fully integrated and responsive design-led approach to development is needed rather than design being approached as a simple checklist or as an optional extra. Policy HQ/1 establishes a set of fundamental design principles that should be applied to all development to ensure it contributes to social, economic and environmental sustainability and makes a positive difference to people's lives to help provide homes, jobs and better opportunities for everyone, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, and conserving the countryside and open spaces that are important to everyone. Applicants will be required to demonstrate how their proposals meet the principles of sustainability, by submitting a Sustainability Statement, under Policy CC/1 in Chapter 4 Climate Change.
- 5.7 The Government requires Design and Access Statements to be submitted with most planning applications, intended to demonstrate how a proposal is functional, attractive and accessible to all. Comprehensive guidance on their format and content is provided in the Council's Design & Access Statements Briefing Note.
- 5.8 Developments should be planned comprehensively in an integrated manner, not piecemeal. Some larger scale developments or complex sites can take a number of

years to complete and are often delivered and planned in stages. In order to ensure developments take place in a coherent and structured way, Masterplans and Design Codes should be produced to agree an overall vision and strategy for a development as a whole at the outset. Guidance on what should be covered in Masterplans and Design Codes is provided in the District Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

- 5.9 Further guidance to support Policy HQ/1 will be provided in the review of the District Design Guide SPD. Other detailed local context information can be found in Conservation Area Appraisals. Some parish councils have prepared Village Design Guides, or are considering neighbourhood plans, which also provide local context. Other useful guidance on design includes: By Design (DETR, 2000); Urban Design Compendium (Llewelyn-Davies for English Partnerships, The Housing Corporation and Urban Design Alliance); Car parking what works where (English Partnerships); RECAP Waste Management Design Guide SPD (Cambridgeshire County Council 2012).

Public Art

Policy HQ/2: Public Art and New Development

1. The Council will encourage the provision or commissioning of public art that is integrated into the design of development as a means of enhancing the quality of development proposals, in particular from:
 - a. Residential developments comprising 10 or more dwellings; and
 - b. Other developments where the floor area to be built is 1,000m² gross or more, including office, manufacturing, warehousing and retail developments.
2. Where development is unable to achieve an appropriate scheme on site the Council will encourage developers to make a financial contribution to support public art initiatives. Financial contributions may be pooled (up to a maximum of five), where appropriate.
3. The provision of public art must involve the local community and could be community-led and have regard to the local circumstances of the site and/or local aspirations.
4. Where public art is provided, contributions and commuted maintenance sums for up to 10 years will be required and include the cost of decommissioning where appropriate.

- 5.10 The provision of quality visual arts and crafts as part of new developments can bring social, cultural, environmental, educational and economic benefits, both to new development and the local community. Done well, public art that is designed to reflect and enhance its surroundings will help to raise the visual quality of

- 6.13 South Cambridgeshire has a significant resource of good quality agricultural land. Much of the best agricultural land lies around Cambridge and the larger settlements, which may be the most sustainable locations for future development. The need to identify and maintain a large supply of land for development means there is pressure for development of agricultural land. In addition, the impact of development on soils and the protection of soil quality must be considered.
- 6.14 Farmland is also important for biodiversity whether it is arable or pastoral. South Cambridgeshire being still a largely rural district has a large proportion of open farmland which has a variety of habitats on both high and low grade agricultural land. This provides an extensive biodiversity resource for the district. Due to the pressures of increasing land use and the past needs of intensive cultivation, the farmland of the district in places is under severe stress and this resource needs to be protected.

Biodiversity

Policy NH/4: Biodiversity

1. Development proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity will be permitted.
2. New development must aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity. Opportunities should be taken to achieve positive gain through the form and design of development. Measures may include creating, enhancing and managing wildlife habitats and networks, and natural landscape. The built environment should be viewed as an opportunity to fully integrate biodiversity within new development through innovation. Priority for habitat creation should be given to sites which assist in the achievement of targets in the Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and aid delivery of the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy.
3. If significant harm to the population or conservation status of a Protected Species, Priority Species¹ or Priority Habitat resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission will be refused.
4. Where there are grounds to believe that a proposal may affect a Protected Species, Priority Species or Priority Habitat, applicants will be expected to provide an adequate level of survey information and site assessment to establish the extent of a potential impact. This survey information and site assessment shall be provided prior to the determination of an application.

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5. Previously developed land (brownfield sites) will not be considered to be devoid of biodiversity. The reuse of such sites must be undertaken carefully with regard to existing features of biodiversity interest. Development proposals on such sites will be expected to include measures that maintain and enhance important features and appropriately incorporate them within any development of the site.
6. Planning permission will be refused for development resulting in the loss, deterioration or fragmentation of irreplaceable habitats, such as ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.
7. Climate change poses a serious threat to biodiversity and initiatives to reduce its impact need to be considered.

¹ *Priority Species and Habitats are those that are identified within a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and / or the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006, Section 41.*

- 6.15 National legislation and planning guidance place a duty on local authorities to consider biodiversity through their Local Plans. The Council is committed to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and will work with partners to ensure a proactive approach to protection, enhancement and management of biodiversity identified in national and local strategies and plans such as Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- 6.16 Whilst the need for development will be carefully considered against its impact on biodiversity, opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and the creation of new habitats can arise through sensitively located and carefully designed developments. For example, where habitats would be fragmented by new developments, it may be possible to create green corridors to reconnect habitats and assist species' movement and dispersal into the wider landscape thereby contributing to wider ecological networks.
- 6.17 BAPs provide guidance on targets and actions for habitats and species conservation. Further guidance on sites, species and habitats are set out in the Council's Biodiversity SPD. This also contains guidance for developers of how biodiversity should be considered in the development process.
- 6.18 It is recognised that climate change poses a serious threat to biodiversity. As a means to make biodiversity more resilient to climate change applicants will be encouraged to reduce habitat fragmentation and to strengthen ecological networks to aid migration, natural dispersal and the exchange of genetic material within species.

Proposals for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Sites on Unallocated Land Outside Development Frameworks

Policy H/22: Proposals for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Sites on Unallocated Land Outside Development Frameworks

Planning permission for Gypsy and Traveller caravan sites and sites for Travelling Showpeople (as defined in the Government's Planning Policy for Travellers) on unallocated land outside development frameworks, and outside the Cambridge Green Belt, will only be granted where:

- a. The Council is satisfied that the applicant has adequately demonstrated a clear need for a site in the district, and the number, type and tenure of pitches proposed, which cannot be met by a lawful existing or available allocated site;
- b. The site is located in a sustainable location, well related to a settlement with a range of services and facilities, including a primary school, a food shop and healthcare facilities, and is, or can be made, safely accessible on foot, by cycle or public transport;
- c. The needs of residents of the site can be met appropriately by local facilities and services without placing undue pressure on them;
- d. The number and nature of pitches provided on the site is appropriate to the site size and location, will address the identified need;
- e. The site would not present unacceptable adverse or detrimental impact on the health, safety and living conditions of the residents of the site by virtue of its location;
- f. The site, or the cumulative impact of the site, in combination with existing or planned sites, would respect the scale of, and not dominate, the nearest settled community;
- g. The site, or the cumulative impact of the site in combination with existing or planned sites, would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenity of surrounding land uses, the countryside and landscape character, village character, on heritage or biodiversity interests, or from traffic generated;
- h. The site location would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the effectiveness and amenity of existing or proposed public rights of way;
- i. Sites for Travelling Showpeople must also be suitable for the storage, maintenance and testing of items of mobile equipment.

Gypsy and Traveller sites are inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Any proposals in the Green Belt would have to demonstrate they comply with National and Local Policy regarding development in the Green Belt. If, through the application of such Policy, provision of a Gypsy and Traveller site in the Green Belt is considered acceptable in principle, the proposed development is required to comply with the criteria set out within this policy.

- 7.87 This policy will be used to assess planning applications for Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots which come forward on sites which have not been allocated through the Local Plan, often referred to as windfall proposals. The GTAA 2016 identified that there could be additional need from existing households where need could not be appropriately assessed. Proposals for additional sites will be assessed using this policy. Applicants will need to demonstrate that they meet the definitions provided by the Government's Planning Policy for Travellers Sites.
- 7.88 Proposals for Gypsy and Traveller caravan sites are predominantly residential uses and will be acceptable within development frameworks where policies in the Local Plan are met; in particular in terms of the scale and design of development being appropriate to the settlement. Development outside development frameworks is tightly controlled, and applicants seeking planning permission for sites will need to demonstrate the need for a site in the district.
- 7.89 The Government's Planning Policy for Travellers Sites establishes that the existing level of provision and need for sites, the availability of alternative accommodation, and the personal circumstances of the applicant are material considerations when considering planning applications.
- 7.90 Note: The GTAA identifies a need for 9 additional Travelling Showpeople plots in the next 5 years plus an additional 2 by the end of the plan period. This is beyond current levels of supply. The new need for Travelling Showpeople plots has arisen well into the plan making process and there was no need identified in the previous study. It is considered that the criteria based policy approach in Policy H/22 is a reasonable, pragmatic and proportionate response to the current situation for the Local Plan and the stage it has reached. It can provide an appropriate response to any proposals received to address the modest level of identified need. In parallel with the Local Plan process, the Council is continuing to move forward via discussions the Showmen's Guild and with neighbouring authorities to identify a site close to the strategic highway network that is sufficient to meet this modest need.
- 7.91 The policy excludes land in the Green Belt. National planning policy establishes a general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The definition of inappropriate development includes Gypsy and Traveller sites and Travelling Showpeople sites. Subject to the best interests of the child, personal circumstances and unmet need are unlikely to clearly outweigh harm to the Green Belt and any other harm so as to establish very special circumstances. If future need arises for affordable sites, which cannot be met outside the Green Belt, consideration of Gypsy and Traveller caravan site provision in the Green Belt will be treated in accordance with the approach to affordable housing exceptions sites.
- 7.92 Issues of sustainability apply to Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites, emphasised by government policy. National planning guidance also requires that local planning authorities very strictly limit new traveller site development in open countryside that is away from existing settlements.

- 7.93 Sites must be sited in locations that provide a safe environment for the occupants including in terms of their general health well-being, and should avoid locations in the vicinity of dangerous roads, railway lines, water bodies, or power lines unless impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated. The use of unstable or contaminated land, or hazardous areas will not be permitted unless appropriate mitigation can be achieved. Sites must also appropriately address flood risk. Caravans and mobile homes intended for permanent use will not be permitted in areas of a high probability of flood risk or on the functional floodplain or where sites would increase risk of flooding elsewhere.
- 7.94 Proposals will need to be served by a vehicular access point which adheres to the highway authority's guidance and standards. There will also need to be sufficient capacity in the local highway network to accommodate the site.
- 7.95 Travelling Showpeople sites differ in that they need to provide secure, permanent bases for the storage of equipment when not in use. Most Showpeople need to live alongside their equipment, so sites must be suitable for both residential and business use, and be capable of accommodating equipment which is sometimes large. Care needs to be taken that such activities are appropriately designed and located in order to avoid nuisance to neighbouring uses.

Design of Gypsy and Traveller Sites, and Travelling Showpeople Sites

Policy H/23: Design of Gypsy and Traveller Sites, and Travelling Showpeople Sites

Proposals for Gypsies and Traveller sites and Travelling Showpeople sites will only be granted planning permission where they are of a good design layout, have regard to government good practice guidance, and where:

- a. The proposal clearly demarcates the site and pitch boundaries using appropriate boundary treatment and landscaping sympathetic to, and in keeping with, the surrounding area. There should also be clear delineation of public communal areas and private space, and between residential areas and any non-residential areas;
- b. Site design takes account of the needs of residents, and provides an appropriate pitch layout that ensures security and safety of residents, and allows ease of movement, whether walking, cycling or driving;
- c. There is safe access for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, including for turning and parking, vehicles towing caravans, emergency vehicles and servicing requirements, including waste collection;
- d. All necessary utilities can be provided on the site including mains water, electricity supply, drainage, sanitation and provision for the screened storage and collection of refuse, including recyclable materials;
- e. The site is not located on contaminated land, unless the land is capable of adequate amelioration prior to occupation;

(continued)

- assess the suitability of the site for development proposed, having regard to noise impact on quality of life and health both internally and externally; and
- propose noise protection measures to achieve acceptable internal and external noise levels, including consideration of adequate distance separation from noise sources, site and building layout / orientation, provision and retention of acoustic barriers, acoustic insulation of buildings / noise sources, noise limits at site boundaries, restrictions on types of activity, limitations on hours of operation. Where acceptable internal noise levels cannot be met with open windows, alternative means of ventilation may be required. Noise should be mitigated at source in the hierarchy of mitigation measures.

9.55 Further guidance is included in the current District Design Guide SPD and will be included in an Environmental SPD to support the Local Plan.

9.56 The overarching objective is to ensure development is appropriate and compatible for its location. It is important that noise sensitive developments are located away from existing sources of significant noise, and that potentially noisy developments are located in areas where noise will not have an unacceptable impact on surrounding land uses or the environment, unless its impact can be mitigated by planning conditions or obligations to provide an adequate protection against noise both internally and externally. Aviation-related development proposals must also comply with Policy TI/5 in Chapter 10.

Land Contamination

Policy SC/11: Contaminated Land

Where development is proposed on contaminated land or land suspected of being impacted by contaminants the Council will require developers to include an assessment of the extent of contamination and any possible risks. Proposals will only be permitted where land is, or can be made, suitable for the proposed use.

9.57 The adoption of a contaminated land policy at a local level is supported by the NPPF (2012), which states that policies and decisions should ensure that land is suitable for its new use taking account of ground conditions and land instability. After remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (paragraph 120 of the NPPF 2012).

9.58 Land contamination has the potential to affect adversely public health and safety, and unless dealt with appropriately, can inhibit the reuse of otherwise suitable brownfield sites. It is important that potential contamination is identified at the earliest stage in the development process to ensure that appropriate remediation measures are identified and addressed early in the preparation of proposals for a site. Remediation should remove unacceptable risk and make a site suitable for its new use.

- 9.59 Further guidance is included in the current District Design Guide SPD and will be included in an Environmental SPD to support the Local Plan.

Air Quality

Policy SC/12: Air Quality

1. Where development proposals would be subject to unacceptable air quality standards or would have an unacceptable impact on air quality standards they will be refused.
2. Where emissions from the proposed development are prescribed by EU limit values or national objectives, the applicant will need to assess the impact on local air quality by undertaking an appropriate air quality assessment and detailed modelling exercise having regard to guidance current at the time of the application to show that the national objectives will still be achieved.
3. Development will not be permitted where it would adversely affect air quality in an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA); or lead to the declaration of a new AQMA through causing a significant deterioration in local air quality by increasing pollutant levels either directly or indirectly; or if it would expose future occupiers to unacceptable pollutant levels.
4. Larger development proposals that require a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan as set out in Policy TI/2 will be required to produce a site based Low Emission Strategy. This will be a condition of any planning permission given for any proposed development which may result in the deterioration of local air quality and will be required to ensure the implementation of suitable mitigation measures.
5. Development will be permitted where:
 - a. It can be demonstrated that it does not lead to significant adverse effects on health, the environment or amenity from emissions to air; or
 - b. Where a development is a sensitive end use, that there will not be any significant adverse effects on health, the environment or amenity arising from existing poor air quality.

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- 10.13 Chesterton Sidings includes an area of Jersey Cudweed. This is a protected species under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. Development will need to incorporate measures for protecting this species.

Planning for Sustainable Travel

Policy TI/2: Planning for Sustainable Travel

1. Development must be located and designed to reduce the need to travel, particularly by car, and promote sustainable travel appropriate to its location.
2. Planning permission will only be granted for development likely to give rise to increased travel demands, where the site has (or will attain) sufficient integration and accessibility by walking, cycling or public and community transport, including:
 - a. Provision of safe, direct routes within permeable layouts that facilitate and encourage short distance trips by walking and cycling between home and nearby centres of attraction, and to bus stops or railway stations, to provide real travel choice for some or all of the journey, in accordance with Policy HQ/1;
 - b. Provision of new cycle and walking routes that connect to existing networks, including the wider Rights of Way network, to strengthen connections between villages, Northstowe, Cambridge, market towns, and the wider countryside;
 - c. Protection and improvement of existing cycle and walking routes, including the Rights of Way network, to ensure the effectiveness and amenity of these routes is maintained, including through maintenance, crossings, signposting and waymarking, and, where appropriate, widening and lighting;
 - d. Provision of secure, accessible and convenient cycle parking in accordance with Policy TI/3;
 - e. Securing appropriate improvements to public and community transport (including infrastructure requirements) in accordance with the aims of the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan and South Cambridgeshire Community Transport Strategy.
3. Developers will be required to demonstrate they will make adequate provision to mitigate the likely impacts (including cumulative impacts) of their proposal including environmental impacts (such as noise and pollution) and impact on amenity and health. This will be achieved through direct improvements and Section 106 contributions and/or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), to address transport infrastructure in the wider area including across the district boundary.

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4. Developers of 'larger developments'¹ or where a proposal is likely to have 'significant transport implications'² will be required to demonstrate they have maximised opportunities for sustainable travel and will make adequate provision to mitigate the likely impacts through provision of a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan. All other developments will be required to submit a Transport Statement. Where a Transport Assessment / Statement or Travel Plan is required, a Low Emissions Strategy Statement should be integrated.
5. Travel Plans must have measurable outputs, be related to the aims and objectives in the Local Transport Plan and provide monitoring and enforcement arrangements. Planning obligations may be an appropriate means of securing the provision of some or all of a Travel Plan, including the requirement for an annual monitoring and progress report. Submission of area-wide Travel Plans will be considered in appropriate situations. Outline planning applications are required to submit a framework for the preparation of a Travel Plan.

¹ Larger development includes proposals of over 20 dwellings or 0.5 hectares for residential development and over 1,000m² or 1 hectares for other development.

² Developments with 'significant transport implications' are those:

- In particularly congested locations and/or generating larger numbers of trips;
- Where there are particular local travel problems;
- That will have an adverse impact on an existing, or will result in the declaration of new, Air Quality Management Area or an unacceptable adverse impact on local air quality.

10.14 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012) requires that plans and decisions ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised, and that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe. The development strategy in Chapter 2 addresses the development needs of the district and where that development should be focused, ensuring that distances and links between homes and employment, education, health, shopping, leisure and other services and facilities, are practical. Achieving sustainable transport has been a key consideration influencing the strategy. Transport impacts of individual developments will still need to be considered at the planning application stage.

10.15 In assessing whether the development proposal is likely to give rise to a material increase in travel demand, the Council will consider the existing use of the building(s) / site, existing transport conditions in the immediate and wider area, and likely transport generation from the development proposals.

- 10.16 All development should strive to offer real travel choice for all people by non-car modes appropriate in scale and kind to the development. Development must be designed to promote road safety, and to create places where walking and cycling have priority over motorised traffic, so that people feel safe. Development should ensure good accessibility by walking and cycling to local facilities, services and to bus stops or railway stations. For the average person cycling has the potential to substitute for short car trips, particularly under 5 kilometres, and walking under 1km.
- 10.17 The measures applicable to each development proposal will vary on a case-by-case basis, according to the type and scale of development proposed, its location, and the level of existing transport infrastructure and services in the immediate area. This could also include a financial contribution for the implementation of schemes beyond the scope of an individual development to deliver.
- 10.18 Development must also mitigate its traffic impacts, including its environmental impacts and impacts on amenity and health. Measures designed to encourage people to make sustainable travel choices, such as car clubs, car sharing, infrastructure / facilities for electric charging plug-in points and other ultra-low emissions vehicles, provision of cycle lanes and parking, and encouraging the accelerated uptake of cleaner fuels and technologies resulting in carbon and vehicle emission reductions can assist with reducing these impacts. Well designed developments may actively help to enhance air quality, manage exposure and reduce overall emissions, therefore reducing possible health impacts. Further information on addressing air quality, including Air Quality Management Areas, noise and health impacts is contained in Chapter 9 Promoting Successful Communities.
- 10.19 Planning applications need to address the transport implications of the proposed development. Many schemes will require the submission of a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan to explore the transport impacts of their proposals, how they will be addressed, and how sustainable travel will be delivered in the long term. These should be agreed with the highway authority. For smaller developments with lower impacts, a simpler 'Transport Statement' is required, which should demonstrate how it will encourage travel planning activities. A Low Emissions Strategy Statement should be integrated within this work.
- 10.20 Information on producing Travel Plans is available on the Department for Transport website: [Smarter Choices](#). Detailed guidance on workplace Travel Plans is available from Travel for Cambridgeshire. Area-wide Travel Plans will be acceptable where appropriate, such as on business parks, which would enable businesses to coordinate their efforts and pool resources for the benefit of everyone using the business park.