



GREATER CAMBRIDGE  
SHARED PLANNING

# STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

GREATER CAMBRIDGE  
SHARED PLANNING

FEBRUARY 2019

**CAMBRIDGE CITY  
COUNCIL**

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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## **Glossary**

DPD – Development Plan Document

LPA – Local Planning Authority

NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework

SCI – Statement of Community Involvement

SPD – Supplementary Planning Document

## **Statement of our intention to engage with our communities**

This statement is part of a wider commitment made by Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils to create and maintain effective working relationships with all sectors of the community, where citizens feel that they are listened to and have the opportunity to influence public decision making. Elected District and City Councillors have an important role in the planning process. Local protocols in each authority set out the relevant requirements that Members are to follow.

This document sets out how we will consult and engage with you in relation to the majority of our planning functions, with the overarching aim of engaging with communities in an efficient, effective and meaningful way both now and in the future.

We would encourage you, as residents and stakeholders (including Parish Councils and Residents' Associations as appropriate), to use this Statement of Community Involvement and the protocols set out within it, to hold the Authorities to account and ensure that all local people have sufficient opportunities to have their say. We recognise that consultation and engagement activities are constantly evolving and this SCI will be revisited at regular intervals to ensure it is fully up-to-date and reflects local and national priorities, practices and policies.

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **What is a statement of community involvement?**

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council will engage the public in the planning process. The SCI describes how the public, businesses and interest groups within the local authority areas can get involved in the creation of local planning policy and the planning application process aiming at shaping where we live, work and trade. This is essential to help improve understanding and openness of the planning process.
- 1.2 There is a legal requirement on Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to undertake public consultation on local plans, neighbourhood plans and planning applications. It is important that this is undertaken in a cost-effective, efficient and proportionate manner. This SCI is an important document as it will establish a minimum standard of consultation and publicity on planning matters for both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils. This SCI has been split into three sections which cover the following roles and responsibilities of the planning service:
- Planning Policy including the production of planning policy documents including the Local Plan
  - Development Management including how the councils consider and publicise planning applications, and
  - Neighbourhood Planning setting out how the councils will assist groups who are preparing neighbourhood plans

### **How does the statement of community involvement relate to the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service?**

- 1.3 In 2015 Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council agreed to the principle of working in partnership to deliver a range of shared services. They also agreed to the principle of moving to a fully integrated shared planning service, known as the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, to deliver the suite of services consistent with their obligations as the LPA for the two areas.
- 1.4 In reading this Statement, it is important to understand that although the Councils are sharing their planning services and have prepared this joint Statement, Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District remain separate legal entities, in so far as the designated Local Planning Authority (LPA), is concerned. This Statement has been written in this context.

- 1.5 As part of the work being undertaken to move towards a fully integrated shared planning service, the LPAs have committed to jointly prepare a new Local Plan for the combined area (known as Greater Cambridge).

### **Draft SCI 2019 Public Consultation**

- 1.6 This draft SCI has been published to give residents, businesses, parish councils, neighbourhood forums and other groups an opportunity to have a say in how they want to be involved in guiding the development of the City of Cambridge and the District of South Cambridgeshire. The SCI will be subject to the same consultation procedures as draft Supplementary Planning Documents (further information is provided in Section 3.0). The consultation period for the SCI is between 11 February 2019 and 25 March 2019. Further information regarding how to submit your comments on the draft SCI can be found online<sup>1</sup>.

### **Why has a new Statement of Community Involvement been prepared?**

- 1.7 The councils have prepared this new SCI as there have been significant changes in development management and planning policy procedures since the adoption of the previous SCIs. The previous South Cambridgeshire District Council SCI was adopted in 2010 and the Cambridge City Council SCI was adopted in 2013. The changes to this SCI were in part due to changes to national policy and legislations, and reviews carried out by both authorities.
- 1.8 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017, state that LPAs in England must review their SCI every five years to ensure it is up to date and reflects current legislation and best practice. This SCI has been prepared to ensure that the LPAs are in accordance with this regulatory requirement.
- 1.9 Further to these changes to national planning policy and legislation, the Localism Act 2011 introduced the opportunity for local people to prepare neighbourhood plans and orders. These may be prepared by parish councils in South Cambridgeshire or neighbourhood forums in Cambridge City. The councils have a statutory<sup>2</sup> role in the preparation of neighbourhood plans and orders.
- 1.10 These requirements have provided the opportunity to prepare a new SCI for the Greater Cambridge area. This will ensure both a consistent approach to consultations on planning applications and that the most effective consultation mechanisms are in place to support successful involvement of the local

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<sup>1</sup> [www.scamb.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-and-neighbourhood-planning/statement-of-community-involvement/](http://www.scamb.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-and-neighbourhood-planning/statement-of-community-involvement/)

<sup>2</sup> Neighbourhood Planning (General Regulations) 2012

community in the emerging Joint Local Plan. This SCI also reflects current practices in community engagement, including greater use of electronic communications such as email and social media.

- 1.11 The councils want to ensure local communities are better informed about planning matters within the Greater Cambridge area. To achieve this, the councils will continue to promote the use of electronic methods of consultation including email and social media to make involvement easier, quicker and more cost effective. The councils are keen to explore new methods of communication and engagement with local communities, recognising that e-communications are the most appropriate way of publicising information on all aspects of the planning service to the widest possible number of people and organisations.

### **What is planning?**

- 1.12 Most new buildings, certain changes to existing buildings (including their use) or significant changes to the local environment need consent – known as planning permission.
- 1.13 Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are the local planning authorities (LPAs) within the Greater Cambridge area. The authorities are responsible for a number of planning functions, including preparing an up to date Local Plan for the area as well as deciding whether a development proposal should be permitted.
- 1.14 Preparing a Local Plan involves a number of key stages in which local communities and key stakeholders can have their say on the emerging vision and planning policies for the area. Local communities also have the opportunity to prepare their own policies for their areas in a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.15 In determining planning applications, regard must be had to the relevant planning policies which have been adopted for the area as well as any comments that have been made by local people and other stakeholders.
- 1.16 The public can also get involved in the planning process by reporting planning control breaches to the councils' Planning Enforcement teams.
- 1.17 This SCI sets out in further detail the LPAs functions in relation to preparing planning policy, determining planning applications and how local community groups and parish councils will be assisted in preparing their own Neighbourhood Plans. Within each of these sections, the LPAs have also set out how they will publicise public consultation and the time periods that will be



applied to ensure an appropriate balance between effective public participation and efficient plan and decision making.