

1 Introduction

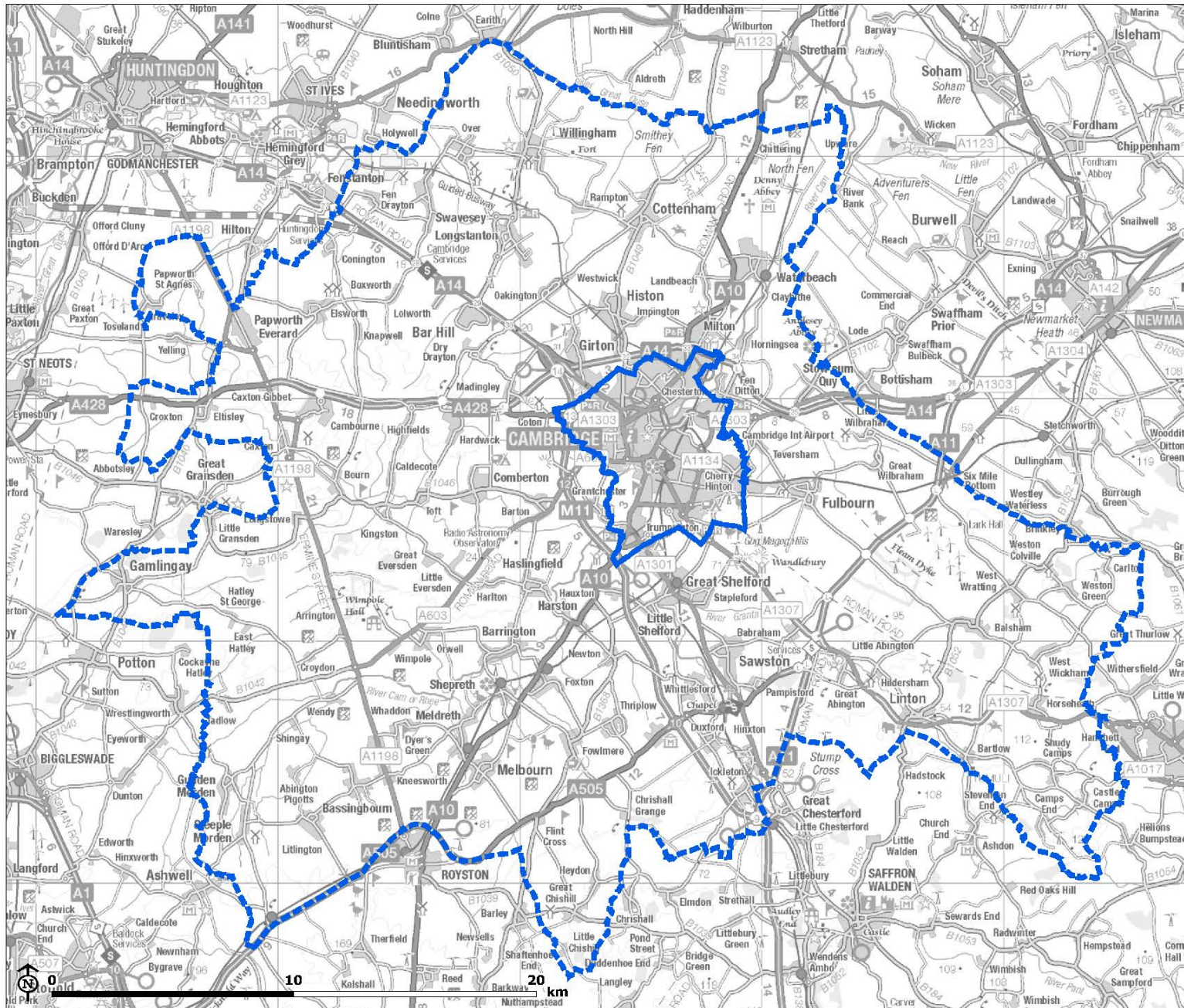
- 1.1 South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council (the Councils) commissioned LUC in July 2019 to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Health Impact Assessment and (HIA) and Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) of their Local Plan.
- 1.2 SA is an assessment process designed to consider and report upon the significant sustainability issues and effects of emerging plans and policies, including their reasonable alternatives. SA iteratively informs the plan-making process by helping to refine the contents of such documents, so that they maximise the benefits of sustainable development and avoid, or at least minimise, the potential for adverse effects.
- 1.3 The purpose of a Scoping Report is to provide the context for and determine the scope of the SA of the Local Plan and to set out the assessment framework for undertaking the later stages of the SA. It also explains the approach that will be taken to the HIA and EqIA (both of which will be reported on as part of the SA/SEA).
- 1.4 The Scoping Report contains chapters on a number of sustainability topics, each of which starts by setting out the policy context of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, before describing the current and likely future environmental, social and economic conditions in the plan area. This contextual information is used to identify the key sustainability issues and opportunities that the Local Plan can address. The key sustainability issues and opportunities are then used to develop a framework of SA Objectives used to appraise the likely significant effects of the constituent parts of the Local Plan, including strategic policies, site allocations and development management policies.
- 1.5 The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on the proposed approach to the SA, in particular:
 - 1) Whether the scope of the SA is appropriate for considering the role of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan to help meet and manage the growth needs and development ambition of Greater Cambridge.
 - 2) Whether there are any additional plans, policies or programmes that are relevant to the SA policy context that should be included.
 - 3) Whether the baseline information provided is robust and comprehensive, and provides a suitable baseline for the SA of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.
 - 4) Whether there are any additional SA issues relevant to the Local Plan that should be included.
 - 5) Whether the SA Framework is appropriate and includes a suitable set of SA objectives and site-based assumptions for assessing the effects of the options included within the Greater Cambridge Local Plan and reasonable alternatives.
- 1.6 The three statutory consultation bodies (the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England) have already had an opportunity to comment. A summary of their comments is provided in **Appendix 2**, which also records how the SA Scoping Report has been updated in response to their comments.

Figure 1.1: Location of Greater Cambridge Plan Area

-  Cambridge City Council Boundary
-  South Cambridgeshire District Council Boundary

Source: CCC, SCDC, ONS

Map Scale @ A4: 1:225,000



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CB:CB EB:Bean C LUC FIG1_1_10824 Location_r0_A4L 26/09/2019

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.11 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, SA is mandatory for Development Plan Documents. For these documents it is also necessary to conduct an environmental assessment in accordance with the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (European Directive 2001/42/EC), as transposed into law in England by the SEA Regulations¹. Therefore, it is a legal requirement for the Local Plan to be subject to SA and SEA throughout its preparation.
- 1.12 The requirements to carry out SA and SEA are distinct, although it is possible to satisfy both using a single appraisal process (as advocated in the National Planning Practice Guidance²), whereby users can comply with the requirements of the SEA Regulations through a single integrated SA process – this is the process that is being undertaken in Greater Cambridge. From here on, the term ‘SA’ should therefore be taken to mean ‘SA incorporating the requirements of the SEA Regulations’.
- 1.13 The SA process comprises a number of stages, with scoping being Stage A as shown in **Figure 1.2** below:

Figure 1.2 Main stages in Sustainability Appraisal

<p>Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope</p> <p>Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects</p> <p>Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report</p> <p>Stage D: Consulting on the Local Plan and the SA report</p> <p>Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan</p>

Health Impact Assessment

- 1.14 Health Impact Assessment (HIA) aims to ensure that health-related issues are integrated into the plan-making process. HIA of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan will be carried out and integrated into the SA and will make recommendations for how the health-related impacts of the Local Plan can be optimised as the options are developed into detailed policies.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 1.15 The requirement to undertake formal Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) of plans was introduced in the Equality Act 2010, but was abolished in 2012. Despite this, authorities are still required to have regard to the provisions of the Equality Act, namely the Public Sector Duty which requires public authorities to have due regard

¹ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004 No. 1633)

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal>

for equalities considerations when exercising their functions. The SA will consider whether the Local Plan is likely to disproportionately affect any groups with particular 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act, as well as whether the Local Plan may disproportionately affect any other groups, such as different socio-economic groups.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 1.16 The requirement to undertake Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of development plans was confirmed by the amendments to the Habitats Regulations published for England and Wales in July 2007 and updated in 2010 and again in 2012 and 2017³. The Regulations translate Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitats Directive) and 79/409/EEC (Birds Directive) into UK law. The purpose of HRA is to assess the impacts of a land-use plan against the conservation objectives of a European Site and to ascertain whether it would adversely affect the integrity of that site.
- 1.17 The HRA will be undertaken separately but the findings will be taken into account in the SA where relevant (for example to inform judgements about the likely effects of potential development locations on biodiversity).

Approach to Scoping

- 1.18 **Figure 1.3** below sets out the tasks involved in the Scoping stage.

Figure 1.3 Stages in SA Scoping

Stage A1: Setting out the policy context for the SA of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan i.e. key Government policies and strategies that influence what the Local Plan and the SA needs to consider.

Stage A2: Setting out the baseline for the SA of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan i.e. the current and likely future environmental, social and economic conditions in Greater Cambridge.

Stage A3: Drawing on A1 and A2, identify the particular sustainability problems and/or opportunities ('issues') that the Local Plan and SA should address.

Stage A4: Drawing on A1, A2 and A3, develop a framework of SA Objectives and assessment criteria to appraise the constituent parts of the Local Plan in isolation and in combination.

Stage A5: Consulting on the scope of the SA.

- 1.19 This Scoping Report fulfils the requirements set out above with a view to establishing the likely significant effects of constituent parts of the Local Plan in isolation and in combination. In accordance with national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), published on-line by the Government, the Scoping Report should be proportionate and relevant to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, focussing on what is needed to identify and assess the likely significant effects.

³ *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* (Statutory Instrument 2017 No. 1012) consolidate the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 with subsequent amendments.

Meeting the Requirements of the SEA Regulations

- 1.20 **Table 1.1** below signposts the relevant sections of the Scoping Report that are considered to meet the SEA Regulations requirements (the remainder will be met during subsequent stages of the SA of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan). This table will be included in the full SA Report at each stage of the SA to show how the requirements of the SEA Regulations have been met through the SA process.

Table 1.1 Meeting the Requirements of the SEA Regulations

SEA Regulations' Requirements	Covered in this Scoping Report?
Environmental Report	
<p>Where an environmental assessment is required by any provision of Part 2 of these Regulations, the responsible authority shall prepare, or secure the preparation of, an environmental report in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of this regulation. The report shall identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of:</p> <p>implementing the plan or programme; and</p> <p>reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme.</p> <p>(Regulation 12(1) and (2) and Schedule 2).</p>	<p>The full SA Report produced to accompany consultation on the Greater Cambridge Local Plan will constitute the 'environmental report' as well, and will be produced at a later stage in the SA process.</p>
<p>An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.</p>	<p>Chapters 1 to 10.</p>
<p>The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.</p>	
<p>The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.</p>	
<p>Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds and the Habitats Directive.</p>	
<p>The environmental protection, objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.</p>	

SEA Regulations' Requirements	Covered in this Scoping Report?
<p>The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, on issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) biodiversity; (b) population; (c) human health; (d) fauna; (e) flora; (f) soil; (g) water; (h) air; (i) climatic factors; (j) material assets; (k) cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage; (l) landscape; and (m) the interrelationship between the issues referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (l). 	<p>Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.</p>
<p>The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.</p>	<p>Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.</p>
<p>An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.</p>	<p>Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.</p>
<p>A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with regulation 17.</p>	<p>Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.</p>
<p>A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 9.</p>	<p>Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.</p>
<p>The report shall include such of the information referred to in Schedule 2 to these Regulations as may reasonably be required, taking account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> current knowledge and methods of assessment; the contents and level of detail in the plan or programme; the stage of the plan or programme in the decision-making process; and the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that 	<p>This Scoping Report and the Environmental Reports will adhere to this requirement.</p>

SEA Regulations' Requirements	Covered in this Scoping Report?
<p>process in order to avoid duplication of the assessment.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (3))</p>	
<p>Consultation</p>	
<p>When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the environmental report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies.</p> <p>(Regulation 12(5))</p>	<p>This Scoping Report will be published for consultation with the three statutory bodies (the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England), other stakeholders and the public.</p>
<p>Every draft plan or programme for which an environmental report has been prepared in accordance with regulation 12 and its accompanying report ("the relevant documents") shall be made available for the purposes of consultation in accordance with the following provisions of this regulation.</p> <p>As soon as reasonable practical after the preparation of the relevant documents, the responsible authority shall:</p> <p>send a copy of those documents to each consultation body;</p> <p>take such steps as it considers appropriate to bring the preparation of the relevant documents to the attention of the persons who, in the authority's opinion, are affected or likely to be affected by, or have an interest in the decisions involved in the assessment and adoption of the plan or programme concerned, required under the Environmental assessment of Plans and Programmes Directive ("the public consultees");</p> <p>inform the public consultees of the address (which may include a website) at which a copy of the relevant documents may be viewed, and the period within which, opinions must be sent.</p> <p>The period referred to in paragraph (2) (d) must be of such length as will ensure that the consultation bodies and the public consultees are given an effective opportunity to express their opinion on the relevant documents.</p> <p>(Regulation 13 (1), (2), and (3))</p>	<p>Public consultation on the Local Plan and accompanying SA Reports will take place as the Local Plan develops.</p>

SEA Regulations' Requirements	Covered in this Scoping Report?
<p>Where a responsible authority, other than the Secretary of State, is of the opinion that a plan or programme for which it is the responsible authority is likely to have significant effects on the environment of another Member State, it shall, as soon as reasonable practicable after forming that opinion:</p> <p>notify the Secretary of State of its opinion and of the reasons for it; and</p> <p>supply the Secretary of State with a copy of the plan or programme concerned, and of the accompanying environmental report.</p> <p>(Regulation 14 (1))</p>	<p>Unlikely to be relevant to the Local Plan, as there will be no effects beyond the UK.</p>
<p>Taking the environmental report and the results of the consultations into account in decision-making (relevant extracts of Regulation 16)</p>	
<p>As soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of a plan or programme for which an environmental assessment has been carried out under these Regulations, the responsible authority shall:</p> <p>make a copy of the plan or programme and its accompanying environmental report available at its principal office for inspection by the public at all reasonable times and free of charge.</p> <p>(Regulation 16(1))</p>	<p>Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.</p>
<p>As soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of a plan or programme:</p> <p>the responsible authority shall inform (i) the consultation bodies; (ii) the persons who, in relation to the plan or programme, were public consultees for the purposes of regulation 13; and (iii) where the responsible authority is not the Secretary of state, the Secretary of State,</p> <p>that the plan or programme has been adopted, and a statement containing the following particulars:</p> <p>how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;</p> <p>how the environmental report has been taken into account;</p> <p>how opinions expressed in response to: (i) the invitation in regulation 13(2)(d); (ii) action taken by the responsible authority in accordance with regulation 13(4), have been taken into account;</p> <p>how the results of any consultations entered into under regulation 14(4) have been taken into account;</p>	<p>Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.</p>

SEA Regulations' Requirements	Covered in this Scoping Report?
<p>the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and</p> <p>the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.</p>	
Monitoring	
<p>The responsible authority shall monitor the significant effects of the implementation of each plan or programme with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action.</p> <p>(Regulation 17(1))</p>	<p>Requirement will be met after adoption of the new Local Plan.</p>

Structure of the Scoping Report

- 1.21 This chapter describes the background to the production of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan and the requirement to undertake SA and other assessment processes. The remainder of this Scoping Report is structured around a set of SA subject areas designed to draw out the full range of possible sustainability effects generated by the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, including all the SEA topics listed in Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations (2004).
- 1.22 **Chapter 2** describes the relationship of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan with other plans and programmes. Each of the subsequent chapters set out the policy context and baseline for each SA subject area. The subject area chapters are as follows:
- **Chapter 3:** Population Growth, Health and Wellbeing.
 - **Chapter 4:** Economy.
 - **Chapter 5:** Transport and Air Quality.
 - **Chapter 6:** Land and Water Resources.
 - **Chapter 7:** Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation.
 - **Chapter 8:** Biodiversity.
 - **Chapter 9:** Historic Environment.
 - **Chapter 10:** Landscape.
- 1.23 SEA Guidance recognises that data gaps will exist, but suggests that where baseline information is unavailable or unsatisfactory, authorities should consider how it will affect their assessments and determine how to improve it for use in the assessment of future plans. Where there are data gaps in the baseline and forthcoming reports, these are highlighted in the text. The collection and analysis of baseline data is regarded as a continual and evolving process, given that

information can change or be updated on a regular basis. Relevant baseline information will be updated during the SA process as and when data is published.

- 1.24 **Chapters 3 to 10** highlight the key sustainability issues for the Greater Cambridge plan area for each subject area and set out their likely evolution without the new jointly prepared Local Plan.
- 1.25 **Chapter 11** sets out the SA Framework and explains how this has been developed.