

21/283. GCP consultation

Greater Cambridge Local Plan – the First Proposals

Background

- Cambridge City Council and South Cambridge D.C. are working together to produce a joint update to 2041 of their 2018 Local Plans. They are part the way through a statutory process, started in 2019, to produce a revised Local Plan by Spring 2024.
- The First Proposals are supported by a host of very detailed background evidence documents assessing the current situation and commitments to inform the plan making process.
- The Councils conducted a call for sites which yielded 900 responses, identifying over 600 sites where owners were interested in bringing forward development. Assessment of these sites is included in the evidence documents.
- The Councils have calculated, using the governments preferred methodology, that they need to allow sites for 44,400 homes to come forward by 2041. There are already commitments for 37,198 dwellings applying the policies of the 2018 Local Plans. This level of development would allow for the expected economic expansion in the Local Plans joint area.

Plan Proposals

- Following an initial round of consultation (the First Conversation) the Councils are seeking to develop Local Plans that prioritise reducing global warming, significantly reducing the climate impact of development and increase the quality of life.
- The proposals at this stage concentrate on allocating sites for housing and economic development with issues such as environment and green spaces left for further development of the plan after this consultation.
- The Plans allow for 10% more housing than required using the governments standard method “to positively prepare to meet housing need” to provide flexibility in meeting supply tests to “avoid losing control over housing development that comes forward in planning applications that are not proposed in the plan”. The plan therefore proposes sites and allowances for 48,840 dwellings, that is 11,642 more than in 2018 Local Plans.
- The First Proposal suggests a strategy of concentrating development in a limited number of allocations in sustainable locations on the edge of Cambridge and in the larger villages/towns in South Cambridgeshire (Cambridge East (the airport), North East Cambridge(Rail station and sewerage works), Eddington, Bourne Airfield, Cambourne and speeding up development at Waterbeach and Northstowe etc).
- Sustainable locations are defined as those with the least climate impact, active public transport, and opportunities to provide green infrastructure, jobs, services and facilities. These criteria are applied to the selection of new sites for development.
- Cottenham does not meet this definition particularly in relation to active transport choices and therefore no new housing sites have been identified in the Plans.
- A number of employment sites to meet identified employment needs have been suggested. An Employment site at the Old Highways Depot on Twenty Pence Road is the only Cottenham allocation to emerge at this stage
- There are no proposals at this stage to improve transport connectivity for Cottenham, and given the land use orientation of the Local Plan process there seems little opportunity to improve the current situation through this process.

We are invited to comment on the First Proposals:

Proposed comments:

- Welcome the Councils' strategy for development.
- Support the allocation of 10% more housing than required by the standard test to avoid unplanned development as happened in Cottenham (an extra 500 houses now being built in unplanned locations as a result of speculative development) while waiting for the adoption of the 2018 South Cambridge District Plan.
- Support the allocation of the Old Highways Depot site for economic development, subject to protection of view of the church.
- Look forward to an integrated approach between SCDC and CCC Highways for the development and delivery of integrated sustainable transportation for pedestrian, cyclists and vehicle users.
- Look forward to co-operation between SCDC and CCC on sustainable drainage solutions so that developments along the East West Rail arc do not impact on the Independent Drainage Board areas and Cottenham Lode in particular and consideration to take varying infiltration rates to accommodate the impact of climate change.
- Look forward to more consideration of the sustainable transport in the rest of the rural area, including bus and cycle links to rail hubs such as Waterbeach and Cambridge North, improved direct bus access to Cambridge from existing centres and generally better cycling connectivity. Including reinstatement of the Citi8 bus continuing to the northern end (Church) of the village and incorporating a bus turning area in the Voland Ind Est development area.

Resolution

That the proposed comments are submitted to the Greater Cambridge Partnership as Cottenham Parish Council's response to the First Proposals. Passed at CPC Full Council meeting on 7th December 2021