

Comments on Cambridge Biomedical Campus Supplementary Planning Document

The *Cambridge Biomedical Campus SPD* is the only SPD specific to one site in this consultation, though others have in the past been provided for other sites (eg the Ridgeon's site on Cromwell Road). It differs in tone from the two other SPDs: while the *Planning Obligations SPD* is clearly written to 'provide detailed guidance' on the 2018 local plans, parts of the *Cambridge Biomedical Campus SPD* read more like a promotional brochure for the campus, with regular statements such as:

'The Cambridge Biomedical Campus will be a world- leading location for healthcare, medical innovation and life science research, integrated with surrounding communities as well as the wider landscape beyond the city.'

Indeed the publicity jargon 'world class', 'world-leading' and 'centre of excellence' appear some twelve times in the Campus SPD but never in the *Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations SPD*.

The Introduction states that 'This SPD has been prepared by the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service'. However, I note that the SPDs for other specific planning and development sites (such as that for the Ridgeon's site) have been prepared jointly by the council and the partner (for example, the University for the New Museums Site) – if this is true for the Campus SPD this should be made clear.

Paragraph 3.8 on Page 15

Paragraph 3.8 reads 'The Local Plan identifies a site allocation M15 set out in the Map below, alongside the Area of Major Change allocation of Policy 17'. This needs clarification – in the *Cambridge Local Plan 2018* M15 is defined as 'Cambridge Biomedical Campus (including Addenbrooke's Hospital)' and appears to cover the area of Policy 17, rather than being 'alongside' it.

Paragraph 3.8 could be reworded as follows: 'The Cambridge Local Plan identifies a site allocation M15 (the area covered by Policy 17) set out in the Map below.'

Map 2 on page 16

On page 16 Map 2 ('Map of South Cambridgeshire Local Plan E/2 land') is presented as if it were taken from the South Cambridgeshire local plan 2018. I have not, though, been able to find it in the local plan document itself – the closest is part of Figure 5 on page 61 which includes E/2.

However I did track down a very similar map, including CSF/5 (2f-m) but with no reference to E/2, on the final page of the 2008 Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan which was later 'comprised within' the 2018 South Cambridgeshire local plan. However, it here served a very different purpose, as CSF/5 (2f-m) was identified as a 'Countryside Enhancement Strategy'. This is described as follows:

‘A Countryside Enhancement Strategy will be prepared for the area bounded by the Cambridge City boundary, Babraham Road, Haverhill Road, and the edge of the built up area of Great Shelford and Stapleford. The Strategy will comprise:

- New copses on suitable knolls, hilltops and scarp tops.
- Management and creation of chalk grassland.
- Management of existing shelter belts.
- New mixed woodland and shelter belts.
- Creation of a landscape corridor along Hobson’s Brook.
- Reinforcement and planting of new hedgerows.
- Roadside planting.’
- New footpaths, cycle paths and bridleways creating routes through the area and linking to Wandlebury Country Park / The Magog Down.’

A more detailed and useful map of the area is the ‘South of Addenbrookes: Concept Diagram’ on Page 13 of the *Action Plan*.

It is worth noting that, the *Action Plan* stresses that: ‘The scale of development in the Cambridge Southern Fringe both within Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire will require substantial mitigation measures over a wide area of countryside to the south of the built-up area to mitigate the impact of development.’

I can trace no further reference to the *Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan* in the *CBC Supplementary Planning Document*. I was therefore surprised to see the map appear with no clear statement of its original purpose as an area for Countryside Enhancement and Ecological Study rather than for possible development.

Map 2 should be replaced by Figure 5 on page 61 of the *South Cambridgeshire Local Plan* (or if retained, sourced correctly with full reference to its original purpose).

Paragraph 3.11 on page 16

This paragraph would appear to say the same thing as Paragraph 3.13 but less clearly and with greater scope for misinterpretation. In particular the phrase ‘this SPD has been prepared to guide development until the adoption of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan *and the subsequent masterplan update from CBC* has been approved through the planning process’ suggests that approval of the masterplan update will be a rubber stamping exercise.

I recommend deleting Paragraph 3.11.

John Meed, December 2024. See johnmeed.net/ecology