



South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Landscape in New Developments Supplementary Planning Document

Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment Adoption Statement

Introduction

South Cambridgeshire District Council adopted the Local Development Framework (LDF) Landscape in New Developments Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on 2 March 2010.

This statement has been prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (16) (3) and (4), which require a statement to be produced on adoption of a plan or programme, to detail:

1. How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;
2. How the Environmental Report has been taken into account;
3. How opinions expressed through public consultation have been taken into account;
4. The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with;
5. The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.

Planning Policy Statement 12 widens these considerations from environmental, to broader sustainability issues, so that this statement provides information on the wider sustainability appraisal process.

This statement examines each of these points in turn.

1. How sustainability considerations have been integrated into the plan

The LDF aims to improve the overall quality of life for residents of South Cambridgeshire in a way, which will also benefit future generations. Taking a sustainable approach to economic, social and environmental issues is at the heart of the plan and will be closely related to the national strategy for sustainable development, which has four objectives:

- Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- Effective protection and enhancement of the environment;
- Prudent use of natural resources; and
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

Policy Context

The national context is set out in Planning Policy Statements (the replacement to Planning Policy Guidance Notes), Circulars and other advice from Government. Whilst some of those national policies require local interpretation, a great number do not.

The regional context is set out in the East of England Plan that was published by the Secretary of State in May 2008. It continues the strategy that was set out in the Regional Planning Guidance for East Anglia (RPG6). It aims to focus a higher proportion of Cambridgeshire's growth into the Cambridge Sub-Region and proposes a sequential approach to the planning of development, with much of the development concentrated into and on the edge of Cambridge (subject to a review of the Cambridge Green Belt), including development in South Cambridgeshire, and into a new town beyond the outer boundary of the Green Belt.

The East of England Plan 2008 replaced the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan when it was published in its final form by the Secretary of State in May. A number of Structure Plan policies were 'saved' after September 2007 and remain valid until they will be superseded by policies in LDFs as these plans are adopted across the County.

Landscape in New Developments SPD Policy Approach

The Landscape in New Developments SPD expands on a number of district-wide policies in the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD), adopted in July 2007, and a number of policies in Area Action Plans for major development locations. These policies seek to ensure that a landscape scheme forms an integral part of the planning application, and that landscape features, landscape character and associated biodiversity are adequately addressed throughout the development. This SPD provides additional details on how these policies will be implemented.

The SPD builds on national policy in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1: Delivering Sustainable Development, PPS 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 15: Planning and the Historic Environment and PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation. These planning documents promote sustainable well designed and high quality landscapes that are fully considered at the outset and integrated into each development.

Specific objectives for the Landscape in New Developments SPD are as follows:

- Assist applicants' understanding the role of a landscape scheme to both the actual site and to the wider landscape as part of a high quality design.
- Assist applicants' understanding of the landscape assessment, design, implementation and aftercare implications of their proposals to ensure a sustainable scheme.
- To guide applicants through the planning process by informing them of what landscape information is required to accompany their planning applications.
- Ensure that development works are sustainable and undertaken in an appropriate manner, to ensure there will not be an unacceptable impact on the countryside, landscape character or biodiversity.

2. How the Sustainability Appraisal had been taken into account

The Sustainability Appraisal has contributed to plan development by providing an independent assessment of the sustainability of the Council's proposed options and policies as they were developed. It demonstrates that sustainability considerations have been incorporated into the development of the LDF and subsequently that of the SPD from an early stage, and provides a formal statement and audit trail of the assessment.

The Sustainability Report is a key output of the plan preparation process. It reflected and supported the draft plan on which formal public consultation and participation was carried out.

The SPD is adding detail to policies to assist the implementation of adopted Development Plan Document policies and therefore the process had begun with the preparation of a Sustainability Report for these DPDs. The policies in these DPDs were therefore subject to Sustainability Appraisal.

It was decided not to do a Sustainability Appraisal for the SPD as recent changes to planning legislation makes it clear that government no longer requires an SA to be undertaken for SPDs. The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 were amended in 2008 and 2009. Following the 2009 amendments there is no longer a requirement to undertake a SA of SPD. The

European Union Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) only requires assessment of those LDDs likely to have a *significant effect*. As SPDs are not able to create new policy and the parent policies, upon which the SPD expands, have already been fully appraised through the SEA / SA process, the Council considers that there is no need to undertake further assessment of the SPDs. The SA for the parent policies can be viewed on the Council's website: www.scamb.gov.uk/ldf.

One of the requirements of the SEA Directive is to monitor the *significant environment effects* of the implementation of plans to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects, and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action. Although there are not anticipated to be any significant impacts beyond any identified in the SA of the parent policies, the impact of the SPDs can be monitored through the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

3. How consultation taken into account (draft plan and the Environmental Report)

In this statement the Council is required to detail how opinions expressed in response to consultation have been taken into account.

Key Environmental Bodies

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires that authorities referred to in Article 6(3) shall be consulted when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information, which must be included in the Environmental Report. In England, the key bodies are the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England.

Consultation on a draft of the LDF Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report with these key bodies was carried out in June 2004. The consultation enabled these bodies to comment on the appropriateness of the objectives, indicators, baseline assessment and issues / problems. A report on the outcome of these consultations is included in Appendix 7 of the Scoping Report. The consultation resulted in a number of changes to the Scoping Report, including changes to the sustainability objectives and questions, new issues for the area being identified, new plans and strategies being analysed in the report, and revised and new monitoring indicators.

Public Participation

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the draft plan or programme and the accompanying Environmental Report before the adoption of the plan or programme or its submission to the legislative procedure.

The Council consulted the public on the SPD and its Sustainability Appraisal Statement. Full details can be found in the Statement of Consultation – Regulation 18(4)(b), available to view on the Council's website. This outlines the main issues

raised in the representations received and how they have been addressed in the SPD, which is to be adopted.

Consultation under Regulation 17

The public consultation on the draft SPD and Sustainability Appraisal Statement was carried out over a 6-week period, which was in accordance with Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004 as amended.

There were in total 79 representations received. 12 were in support, 29 objecting and 38 comments. No representations were received on the Sustainability Appraisal Statement.

The main issues raised include:

- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) – several respondents noted that the references to SUDS were brief, and should be extended.
- Maintenance and Management - several replies noted that it was important that Maintenance (generally short term) and Management (Long term vision of the scheme) should be made distinct.
- Green Infrastructure - requests were made for further support for green infrastructure.
- Landscape examples - requests for examples of good and bad landscapes, and clarification of maps and drawings.
- Request for inclusion of reference to allotments.

The consultation resulted in a number of changes to the SPD. These are listed in Appendix A.

4. Reasons for choosing the document as adopted in light of other reasonable alternatives.

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (12) (2) requires environmental reports to examine reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme.

This statement is required to set out the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with.

PPS12 makes clear that full regard should be had to the chain of conformity to avoid duplication of assessment.

The alternative to having an SPD was to have no SPD at all and to carry out “Business As Usual” implementing the adopted Development Control Policies DPD without published detailed guidance. The Landscape in New Developments SPD, once adopted will provide further guidance on the implementation of the Council’s adopted policies. As such, it is considered more likely to result in the inclusion of landscape scheme as an integral part of the planning application, and that landscape features, landscape character and associated biodiversity are adequately addressed throughout the development than existing policies alone.

5. Monitoring

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 requires authorities to set out the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.

Details of the monitoring measures envisaged are summarised in Appendix 7 of the Final LDF Sustainability Report.

The indicators created in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, will continue to be monitored annually. They have been utilised as 'significant effect indicators', to be collated in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report. This report includes an analysis of the implications of the results, and should a need arise a review of LDF documents could be triggered by this information.

The South Cambridgeshire Annual Monitoring Report is available to view on the Council's website.

Appendix A – Amendments made to SPD as a result of the public consultation.

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- Add reference to PPG17 in paragraph 1.3.
- Text added after 3.81:
"GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
Green Infrastructure describes a network of public open spaces, routes, wildlife habitats, landscapes and historic sites. It includes a wide range of elements such as rivers and watercourses, country parks, historic landscapes, archaeological sites and rights of way, and combines a range of functions.

Green Infrastructure provides an essential environmental foundation and support system to a high quality natural, historic and built environment. It is key to creating places that are attractive, healthy and give a good quality of life, and delivers a range of other social, economic and environmental benefits.

Green infrastructure plays an important role as part of both existing and new communities at county, district and neighbourhood scales.

Within new developments, Green Infrastructure should be a fundamental part of the design and planning process from the start, and be fully integrated with the development and its setting. In existing communities it should manage, protect, enhance and add to existing green spaces and other environmental and historic resources. Green Infrastructure within both new and existing developments should provide links to wider green infrastructure networks.

The provision of Green Infrastructure is supported at national and regional, levels and is in PPS 12: Creating strong, safe and prosperous new communities through spatial planning Natural England's Green Infrastructure Guidance (2009) and CABI's Grey to Green (2009). Green infrastructure is also included in the East of England Plan (May 2008).

At a local level Green Infrastructure elements and approaches are supported and described in Local Development Documents such as Area Action Plans, the Development Control Policies DPD and Site Specific Policies DPD, as well as a number of Supplementary Planning Documents eg, Landscape, Biodiversity.

In 2006 Cambridgeshire Horizons and partners (including South Cambridgeshire District Council) produced the first Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region. This Strategy and its results have been reviewed and a new strategy is currently being prepared which will cover the whole of Cambridgeshire. Other planned work will identify the costs

of green infrastructure and mechanisms for funding including through development.

The District Council strongly supports the planning, delivery and management of green infrastructure as an essential part of new development and crucial to its success. Cambourne and Trumpington Meadows are examples of the successful provision of green infrastructure as part of new developments and their settings. They show how it can deliver a number of specific objectives including sustainable drainage and flood management as well as creating attractive places and encouraging people to walk, cycle and enjoy their surroundings.”

- Paragraph 1.3 amended to read:
"These planning documents promote sustainable well designed and high quality landscapes that are fully considered at the outset and integrated into each development."
- Text amended at paragraph 1.7, bullet point 1 to read:
"Assist applicants' understanding the role of a landscape scheme to both the actual site and to the wider landscape as part of a high quality design."
- Text amended at paragraph 1.7, bullet point 3 to read:
"To guide applicants through the planning process by informing them of what landscape information is required to accompany their planning applications."
- All References to 'landscaping' replaced with 'landscape'.
- Text amended at paragraph 1.8 to read:
"The key objectives arising from these policies are summarised as follows:"
- Combine third and fourth bullet points to read:
"To conserve and enhance biodiversity, and achieve a net increase."
- Text amended at paragraph 1.8, bullet point 7 to read:
"The major development locations are also required to identify early provision of landscaping and biodiversity features."
- Text amended at 2.4 (d):
'To add maturity to developments - The retention of existing landscape features such as established trees and hedgerows, combined with a high standard of new planting and materials can add character and maturity to a new development.'
- Text amended at 2.4 (g):
'for example by providing space for Sustainable Drainage Systems, reducing replanting or maintenance requirements.'
- Add two new paragraphs after 3.64 to read as follows:

"Allotments

Demand for allotments is growing, and large-scale housing applications often require space for allotments as part of the social infrastructure provision. Allotments can not only provide food for the household, but also benefit the community by encouraging physical exercise, healthy eating, and community interaction.

In addition to the traditional allotment plot, a well thought out landscape scheme can offer a number of opportunities for residents to grow their own food in even the smallest developments. These can include:

- * Roof gardens and green walls
 - * Raised beds and container areas
 - * Opportunities to grow food in schools, hospitals and care homes
 - * Temporary allotments on land parcels awaiting development - This is of particular relevance to major schemes where land in the later stages of a development may lie unused for several years."
- Text amended at 2.4 (i):
'To provide a 'feel good factor' - Many of the benefits outlined above can combine to greatly enhance everyday life, and can have a positive effect on health. They will also enhance the desirability of the development.'
 - Text amended at 2.4 (c):
'To reduce the visual impact of development -The landscape scheme can help to integrate the development into the local landscape, and can provide visual screening, softening and mitigation of negative visual effects.'
 - Text amended at 2.4 (d):
'To add maturity to developments - The retention of existing landscape features such as established trees and hedgerows, combined with a high standard of new planting and materials can add character and maturity to a new development.'
 - Text amended at 2.4 to read:
'A well-designed and executed landscape scheme can become an on-going asset to the community, contributing in a wide variety of ways.'
 - Text amended at 2.7
'It is important that the scheme should sit well within its locality.'
 - Text amended at 2.8:
'The Landscape Character of an area can greatly influence the design of the scheme. A more detailed description of Landscape Character is included below at Chapter 3 and Appendix 2.'

- Text amended at 2.9:
'Whatever the scale of the landscape scheme it should be of a sufficient size to function correctly, and be robust, safe and pleasant to use. Trees and plants should have sufficient space to grow without overcrowding or the need for excessive maintenance. The scheme should complement the adjacent landscapes and land uses.'
- Text amended at 3.1:
'Some examples of when a landscape scheme may be required as part of the planning application are described below:'
- Text amended at 3.2:
'Even the most basic of landscape schemes will benefit greatly from time and thought to both the practical points - does the scheme conflict with planning policy? or How large will the specified trees grow?'
- Text amended at 3.3 (g):
'Hard landscaping - paving, street furniture, walling and fencing materials.'
- Text amended at 3.3 (k):
'Staff issues - appointing professional services such as a landscape architect and landscape contractor.'
- Replace paragraphs 4.26-4.29 with the following:

"MAINTENANCE SPECIFICATION & LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

4.26 Proposals for maintenance and landscape management may be included on the design details drawings, or more usually as part of a written landscape Specification, together with a supporting plan.

4.27 For public spaces the applicant is normally responsible for maintenance of the landscape for a minimum of one year after the scheme is completed, but in many cases this will be extended to five years. For very large Landscape schemes - for new communities or for establishment of major green spaces - a maintenance period of ten or more years may be required.

4.28 The maintenance specification will typically include a description of the work to be carried out, the standards required, the frequency of maintenance visits and the quantities of the landscape to be maintained

4.29 Typical landscape maintenance issues will include:

* Watering to establish new planting, trees and grass areas, and maintain good growth.

* Weeding of planting areas and topping up mulches - a good choice of plant material and a high standard of implementation will assist here. Application of herbicides should be kept to a minimum.

* Formative pruning of trees, cutting back and pruning of shrubs and herbaceous plants according to species.

- * Thinning of planted areas to allow unrestricted growth.
- * Replacement of dead or failing trees, plants and grass areas.
- * Mowing of lawns, informal grass and meadow areas.
- * Adjusting ties, stakes and guards and replacement as necessary.
- * Maintenance of special landscape features such as Sustainable Drainage Systems, ponds or boardwalks.
- * Maintenance of hard surfaces including patching or re-roiling (e.g. hoggin or gravel areas) as re-pointing of block or stone areas.
- * Maintenance of street furniture, fencing and landscape lighting.
- * Litter collection.

4.30 On larger or more complex schemes, particularly if implementation of the proposals covers a considerable period of time (for example a major housing development or the creation of a country park) the applicant should provide a Landscape Management Plan. This will describe the long-term goals of the landscape scheme and how these will be achieved, in addition to the regular maintenance tasks.

4.31 Typically the landscape Management plan will cover the following areas:

- * Describing the overall vision for the scheme.
- * Securing long term management of the landscape to enhance and sustain the character of the development and its setting.
- * Identifying the time frames required for each stage of the management programme - for example the Establishment period (say years 1-5), Maturation period (years 6-15) and long term mature period (Year 16 onwards) - and the essential tasks required within each.
- * To identify and describe 'one off' or occasional works which nevertheless may involve considerable expertise and expense - the dredging of a lake or major works to veteran trees for example.
- * To ensure through proactive management that foreseeable risks to the users of the landscape are maintained at reasonable, low levels.
- * To monitor the progress of the scheme, which may also include amending and priorities and targets as the landscape matures over time."

- New text added after 3.3 (j):
'Landscape management objectives'
- Paragraph 3.4 (p) amended:
'Compliance with relevant national standards, for example BS 5837 2005 Trees in Relation to Construction.'
- Text amended at 3.11 - 3.12
Reference to BS 5837 2005 removed at 3.11

Text added after 3.11:

"For further information regarding tree and habitat surveys see the 'Trees and Development Sites SPD', paragraphs 3.10, 3.11 and Chapter 4, and the 'Biodiversity SPD', paragraphs 3.7 and 3.16."

- Text amended at 3.12:
'The concept plan will be supported by additional written material, for example as part of Design and Access Statement.'
- Review compatibility with the Design Guide SPD.
- Text amended at 3.13 - 'Landscape management' added.
- Text amended at 3.20:
Replace 'local character' with 'the local landscape character'
- The image will be amended and referenced.
- Text strengthened with reference to SUDS at 3.77.
"The applicant must ensure that sufficient space is made available within the landscape scheme, both at a domestic level (provision of water butts, green roofs or soakaways) and for larger scale development (for example permeable car parks, swales and attenuation ponds)."

Also links to SUDS documents:

SUDS are covered at 3.74 - 3.78 and Appendix 2 which has links to the Cambridge City Council 'Design and Adoption Guide for Sustainable Drainage Systems' (which references PPS25 and the F&WMB at page 22), the Anglian Water 'Guidance on the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and an Overview of the Adoption Policy' and the SCDC Biodiversity SPD.

- Text amended at 3.42 - 'The National Plant Specification' added.
- Text at 3.42 amended:
'CABE' deleted, 'National Building Specification' added.
- Further Photographs and sketches included in Appendix 2. Text strengthened with reference to SUDS at 3.77.
'The applicant must ensure that sufficient space is made available within the landscape scheme, both at a domestic level (provision of water butts, green roofs or soakaways) and for larger scale development (for example permeable car parks, swales and attenuation ponds). The scheme should also include areas for statutory maintenance of the drainage system. Although for large projects, the land take required for SUDS can be considerable, many schemes can also offer an efficient multi-use of space by combining the drainage function with public open space, wildlife areas or transport routes.'
- Link to Anglian Water adoption policy added at Appendix 2.
- Text amended at 4.1 to differentiate between 'Site Survey' and 'Appraisal Plan.'
'The Site Survey and the Appraisal Plan form the first stage of the landscape

design process, and information provided at this stage can make a significant difference to the eventual success of the landscape scheme.'

- Text amended at 4.4, bullet point 3:
'see 'Trees and Development Sites' SPD. See Appendix 1 for details.'
- Text at 4.4 moved to precede bullet points.
- Text amended at 4.5:
'The site survey and appraisal plan inform the next element of the landscape submission, the Landscape Concept Plan.'
- Text amended at 4.11:
'The Detailed Layout of the scheme will normally follow the concept plan, either as a condition of the Outline approval or as a Reserved Matters application. Unless circumstances have altered, the detailed designs should be based on the design principles of the concept plan.'
- Text amended at 4.20:
'Due to the level of detail and technical information, all detailed design information should be clearly labelled. Full botanical names should be used for plant species wherever possible. If lack of space makes extensive use of abbreviations or symbols necessary, the applicant should consider supplying the information at a larger scale or spread over more than one drawing.'