

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan

Parish Council Workshop

29 March 2012

Attendees:

Parish Council representatives (see Appendix 1)

Cllr Tim Wotherspoon – Northstowe and New Communities Portfolio Holder

Jo Mills – SCDC Corporate Manager, Planning and New Communities

Keith Miles – SCDC Planning Policy Manager

Caroline Hunt – SCDC Local Development Framework Team Leader

Jonathan Dixon – SCDC Principal Planning Policy Officer

These notes are a record of points raised in open discussion sessions by those attending the workshop, where a wide variety of views and ideas were put forward. The notes capture the range of issues and views identified, sometimes by individual stakeholders, and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Council. They do not represent any specific decisions made.

Discussion 1: What is South Cambs Like Now? What is the Vision for South Cambs at 2031?

Things to Retain and Protect

- Village hierarchy and village frameworks
- Green Belt
- Countryside access – especially footpaths
- High tech companies
- Protecting heritage – Conservation Areas
- Green infrastructure
- Support for the arts – quality environment
- Youth bus
- Quality of the wider countryside
- Living in a rural area
- Quality of village centres

Things to Improve

- Not enough water
- Haven't been so good at delivering necessary infrastructure
- Some local primary schools are now full
- Insufficient live / work units or SME firms
- Lack of affordable housing for local people
- Not enough facilities for young people
- Traffic volumes through villages are too high
- Losing employment sites to housing
- Is there a point at which South Cambs is full up and the environment / services / infrastructure can support no more? No megalopolis here.
- Broadband is still not good enough
- Allotments and cemeteries / burial grounds

2031 Vision

- No growth without strategic infrastructure
- CIL in operation and delivering
- 2km stand off for wind farms
- A comfortable target for renewable energy generation
- Stronger policy steer on design, materials, etc. to secure high quality development
- More development using advanced building techniques
- Development in scale with each village and with their services and infrastructure
- Sustainable balance between housing and employment
- SCDC villages are not just dormitories for Cambridge
- Planned within environmental / social limits
- Co-operated with neighbouring districts / counties
- Good quality broadband everywhere

Discussion 2: Scale of Growth, Green Belt and Options for the Development Strategy

Sustainable Development Strategy

- Greenfield development in small villages is of great concern. Lack of facilities and infrastructure, therefore large new settlements are good as they come with infrastructure
- Do we have to accept in-migration
- Small (1-2 houses) developments are acceptable in small villages.
- What is the logic for current village frameworks? Some opinion that development outside could be ok in the right areas
- Concern about commuting to London and Cambridge
- Put houses where there are jobs or links to new station (CNFE) or boost jobs accessible to the villages
- Support for using rail based public transport including guided bus

Options for Development

- Depends on transport infrastructure and services - if develop more rural transport options, then can develop rural areas
- Can we expand existing planned development?
- Food capacity – loss of farm land
- Large area of flood risk
- South Cambs is too attractive to out of county commuters
- Link new homes and jobs.

Green Belt

- Keep!
- Development outside Green Belt
- Don't review Green Belt
- Grow Cambridge? What about character?

Villages

- Loosen village frameworks (but that won't provide 10,000). If everyone expands a bit, that's quite a lot together
- Keep hierarchy of villages, with flexibility for local communities to expand beyond this if they want
- Infill designation has decimated villages' infrastructure
- Some infill villages want growth, but minority, large scale growth not sustainable

- Look at what can be accommodated rather than be target driven – on village by village basis
- Make allocations to protect village character
- Some villages could take some more development compatible with local character, bespoke approach
- Gaps between villages are really important, each village has its own character.
- Open character, ability to see stars and go out into the countryside, is very important to keep, to avoid ‘creeping death’
- Maintaining village character by keeping open space / loose knit character

Neighbourhood Plans

- Evidence can be set out in neighbourhood plans based on good local engagement
- But... challenge for villages to gather hard evidence individually for a 15 year plan
- Cluster of villages producing neighbourhood plans, link up smaller villages
- Want neighbourhood plans and good dialogue with SCDC local Planner and they'll pay attention to them
- Can Local Plan address neighbourhood plan issues?

New Settlements

- If can't accommodate need in villages, consider new villages
- Create new places with identity e.g. a sports town

Infrastructure

- Adequate infrastructure is key, road capacity, drainage, etc.
- Put houses in villages where social infrastructure already exists
- Do villages have capacity?
- What about water?
- Do we have sewage / waste capacity?
- Need public transport.
- Improve links between clusters of villages by cycle ways
- CIL should help fund infrastructure
- Modal shift – get freight off the A14
- Improve the A14 to relieve our local roads
- Is it cheaper to do infrastructure for a new town or in villages?
- Local village employment important
- More local employment in villages
- Build council houses with no RTB
- Type and mix of housing types and sizes to meet local needs including young people
- Ageing population
- Support village facilities
- Phasing of development over a longer period of time, e.g. a 30 house site, built in three phases of 10 houses over fifteen years (5 in each five year period)
- Exemplar – Innovate build 'special houses' and employment

Discussion 3: Key issues

Travel, Services and Facilities

- Lack of bus services in rural areas
- Traffic / congestion
- Loss of bus services – force use of the car. No local services

- More / better connected cycle ways
 - Current road infrastructure (A505) too dangerous for cycling. A505 splits villages
 - Better buses – better routes – speedier services
 - Local shuttle buses to key facilities
 - Better transport interchanges / hubs e.g. at CGB
 - Another guided bus way
 - A more effective and cheaper bus service across the district
 - Outer ring of park and ride sites in or near villages
 - A more extensive / non-profit making bus service along the lines of community transport (Parishes need help to deliver)
 - More buses – but flexible, dial-a-ride, ‘wiggle’ but not just more of the same
 - Complete the Cambridge ring road (A14 – M11)
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- Linking jobs and homes
 - More home working – need broadband to help reduce journeys
 - Local community to identify what is essential
 - Stop fighting the car – better use it thru car sharing and integrate with buses and other methods
 - Car sharing for children – getting to and from school
 - Provide more services in rural areas
 - All villages need broadband
 - Need services for older people
 - Allotments – CPO’s
 - Cemeteries – an adequate supply
 - Solar lamps on CGB
 - Youth services

Economy

- Flexible to have other types of business moving into South Cambs - Diversify the economy
- Need a range of jobs, not just for high earners - Grow/support care services, plumbers, mechanics, etc, locally
- ‘Home grow’ our workers for forward thinking jobs
- High tech manufacturing
- Can’t just think ‘local’ = South Cambs – it’s wider
- Keep a sense of ‘Cambridge specialness’
- Focus jobs in accessible locations
- Allow current businesses to expand in villages
- Better communications infrastructure - Broadband
- Reduced business rates in villages
- More home working
- More flexibility for new / expanding business, and small starter units. De-regulate to encourage more employment
- If staying vacant for long time, consider changing
- Mobile facilities to support small scale employment e.g. mobile banking
- Maintain agriculture - save farm land of best quality
- How do we get more employment in villages?

Housing

- What does ‘affordable’ mean in South Cambs? Current definition not helpful
- Mixed development – just a danger of encouraging more development
- Current mix is unaffordable

- Need more smaller houses – one or two beds to support ‘downsizing’ and starters
- Need lower priced market housing
- To encourage release of land for social housing, landowner should get one off payment and income from rent
- More flexibility on density
- More high rise and greater density
- Where appropriate adopt new building technologies
- Encourage self-build
- Exception sites can include an element of market housing to cross fund, e.g. scheme in ECDC 40-70% affordable / Support for exception sites but concerned at allowing some market housing
- Exception housing – villages supportive. Landowners not
- Affordable housing should be rent only
- Should be some element of part ownership
- Neighbourhood plans
- To get cheap housing, need cheap land. Compulsory Purchase?

Heritage / Design

- Stronger design policies - clearer policies need to be implemented
- Need village character assessment / more village design statements
- Involve Parishes in the design process
- Conservation policy applied too strictly or not at all
- Conservation area status does not bring much benefit
- Need better balance between conservation and economic development
- Need to integrate conservation into future development
- New developments need to be of high quality and have adequate gardens, can include modern design
- Public transport poor – need more car parking
- Consider functionality and variety
- In keeping with village character – but let character change incrementally
- Mixed views about system built housing. Flats in some locations. Many do not want private gardens
- Design to support neighbourliness (to say hello, keep an eye out)
- Building round a central green (shared back garden) with parking at the front on the street, and paths at the backs
- Grow and use coppicing
- Village industries e.g. make use of green belt

Sustainable Development and Climate Change

- Each village should be sustainable in its own terms – local housing, jobs, etc.
- Seek high development standards, higher levels of Code for Sustainable Homes
- Energy efficient houses / Minimise energy use
- All new houses to have ‘green energy’ source
- High standards of water efficiency – grey water recycling
- Passive houses
- Carbon off-setting by investing in existing dwelling stock
- More community level energy generation
- New large developments with energy centres, electricity and heat / Central combined heat and power, with incinerators
- More trees, small orchards
- Solar panels on public buildings – investment for the future
- Plan for fewer street lights in new developments

- More home working – more employment in the villages
- Communications Infrastructure - Broadband
- Need cycle routes
- Sustainable drainage
- All large developments must have allotments
- Village residents should be able to live sustainable lifestyle locally 'liveability'
- Stop loss of village pubs. Can double up as shops and Post Offices and drop off spots for internet deliveries
- Sustainable development = meaningless catchphrase
- How can District Council really influence policy at national or international level
- Planning policies to encourage employment conversion / extension in the village
- Employment near houses - Wide range of employment to provide jobs for all abilities
- Links skills programmes and education to our jobs plan, including house building

Discussion 4: What can we learn from the current Local Development Framework?

What is good / bad about our existing policies?

- One policy does not necessarily fit all circumstances
- Village frameworks are very important
- Parish views are not listened to when PC wants something approved
- Provide feedback to PCs when their recommendation is not supported by the Council
- Poor enforcement of conditions
- When consultees secure changes, re-consult Parishes
- Some PCs can't produce full blown neighbourhood plans but still want Localism to give them the benefits
- 50% extensions policy not being applied consistently, losing small houses
- Stronger policies to protect local character
- Listen more to Parishes
- As much about process as policy
- Consult Parishes much earlier at pre-application stage
- How do we put pressure on Anglian Water when its poor infrastructure is prohibiting development
- Parish comments need an explanation where they are not agreed

Appendix 1

Parish Council attendees to the Local Plan Workshop – 29 March 2012

Abington Pigotts	EGL Sclater	
Arrington	Sally Warmesley	
Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth	Mike Hallett	
Barton	Margaret Penston	
Bourn	Nigel Ball	Gill Pountain
Cambourne	Roger Hume	Peter Drake
Carlton-cum-Willingham	Caroline Revitt	Malcolm Stennett
Comberton	Tim Scott	Simon Moffat
Dry Drayton	Peter Fane	Isabel Harrison
Duxford	Tim Chudleigh	
Eltisley	Roger Pinner	Angela Weldon
Fen Ditton	Geoffrey Peel	
Fen Drayton	Harry Webster	Judith Christie
Gamlingay	Peter Dolling	Gerry Burne
Great Abington	Bernie Talbot	
Great and Little Chishill	Andrew Gardiner	
Hardwick	Pauline Joslin	
Harlton	Peter di Mambro	Julia Lindley
Harston	Niall O'Byrne	
Haslingfield	Raymond Jack	
Heydon	Diana MacFayden	Michael Carroll
Ickleton	Terry Sadler	Lewis Duke
Impington	Brian Ing	

Kingston	Julie Conder	
Linton	Enid Bald	Paul Poulter
Little Abington	Genevieve Dalton	Chris Nutt
Little Wilbraham & Six Mile Bottom	Christine White	Chris Tebbit
Litlington	Alan Biles	Marjorie Baker
Longstanton	Brian Robins	
Melbourn	Mike Sherwen	Peter Simmonett
Meldreth	Rob Searles	
Oakington & Westwick Orchard Park Community Council	David Reeves	
Orwell	Wayne Talbot	Colin Hoptroff
Papworth Everard	Chris Howlett	
Sawston	Tony Orgree	
Shepreth	Donna Thomas	Sean Griffin
Steeple Morden	Sean Traverse-Healy	
Swavesey	Martin Johnston	John Pook
West Wrating	Suan Rowland	Donna Gilmour
Whittlesford	Ken Winterbottom	Ian Skellern