



South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Submission
Sustainability Appraisal

Appendix 1: Reviewing the Sustainable Development Strategy
for the Cambridge Area

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1 Introduction

This Appendix sets out the Council's approach to its review of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Cambridge Area. This work was undertaken by the District Council, jointly with Cambridge City Council and has been reviewed by independent consultants ENVIRON. It also includes a high level assessment of the range of broad strategies / options available for growth. This is reported in section 2 of this Appendix.

1.1 Reviewing the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Cambridge Area

1. Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are updating their Local Plans for the Cambridge area for the period up to 2031.
2. The existing development plans for the area are the Cambridge Local Plan (adopted 2006) and the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (adopted between 2007 and 2010). They include a development strategy based on a sustainable development sequence focusing development on Cambridge, sites on the edge of Cambridge brought forward through a review of the Green Belt, a new town (Northstowe), and limited development in better served villages.
3. The updated local plans extend the plan period to 2031, and consider development needs for this period, and how they should be addressed. This paper considers the evolution of the development strategy for the Cambridge area, and how the preferred approach was identified.
4. It includes the following:
 - The Current Development Strategy for Cambridgeshire - How the existing strategy for development in the Cambridge area was developed.
 - Continuing a Sustainable Development Strategy – Considerations regarding how the strategy could be moved forward to 2031.
 - Considering Options for a new Development Strategy – How strategy options were considered through the Issues and Options process.
 - Existing Housing Supply – Details the existing supply of sites with planning permission or existing allocations, and how they relate to the development hierarchy.
 - Identifying New Site Options – How site options for testing were identified, how they were tested through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process, and how reasonable alternative allocations were distinguished from rejected options.
 - Identification of the proposed development strategy.

The Current Development Strategy for the Cambridge Area

5. Whilst regional and structure plans are no longer produced, throughout the plan making process South Cambridgeshire District Council has worked closely with Cambridge City Council. There is a strong interaction between the two administrative areas. South Cambridgeshire encircles Cambridge and many residents of the district look to the city for services and jobs.
6. The current development strategy for the Cambridge area stems from as far back as 1999, from the work undertaken by Cambridge Futures, which influenced the 2000 Regional Plan for East Anglia and the 2003 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan. Prior to that date, development in Cambridge had been constrained by

the Green Belt. One of the effects of this constraint was that housing development which would have taken place in Cambridge was dispersed to towns and villages beyond the outer boundary of the Green Belt, with people commuting back to jobs in Cambridge contributing to congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, air quality problems and other quality of life issues. The change in strategy introduced in the 2003 Cambridgeshire Structure Plan recognised that a significant change in the approach to the planning of the city was required in order to help redress the imbalance between homes and jobs in, and close to, Cambridge, whilst ensuring that the special qualities of Cambridge and the surrounding area which are protected by a Green Belt are maintained. It also needed to provide for the long-term growth of the University of Cambridge and Addenbrooke's Hospital, whilst minimising increases in congestion on radial routes into the city.

7. The existing Cambridge Local Plan (2006) and South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (adopted between 2007 and 2010) introduced a step change in levels of planned growth, unmatched since the interwar years. This was consistent with the agreed development strategy for the Cambridge area set out in the 2003 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan. The Plans released significant land from the Cambridge Green Belt and allocated a number of urban extensions to the city in the south, north west, north east and east of the city.
8. The strategy in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and carried into the two Councils' current plans aims to focus development according to a sustainable development sequence:
9. Current Development Sequence:
 - a. Within the urban area of Cambridge
 - b. On the edge of Cambridge
 - c. In the new town of Northstowe
 - d. At the market towns in neighbouring districts and in the better served villages.
10. The Cambridgeshire Structure Plan envisaged the following approach to Development following this sequence.

Structure Plan 2003 Development Sequence	Cambridge only	South Cambs Only	Cambridge and South Cambs	%
Cambridge	6,500	2,400	8,900	27
Edge of Cambridge	6,000	2,000	8,000	25
New settlement(s)		6,000	6,000	18
Villages		9,600	9,600	30
TOTAL 1999 to 2016	12,500	20,000	32,500	

11. The 2003 Structure Plan identified broad locations to be released from the Green Belt on the edge of Cambridge, which had been identified in Green Belt reviews as having less significance in terms of the purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt. The only exception to this was land in north west Cambridge to meet the long term development needs of Cambridge University given its international significance. The strategy was

put into effect through the Cambridge Local Plan, the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework, and the joint Area Action Plans for North West Cambridge and Cambridge East. All of these plans were subject to extensive periods of public consultation and examination by planning inspectors. The strategy was endorsed and included in the East of England Plan 2008. Significant progress is being made on the growth sites identified in the Councils' current plans, although progress was slowed just as sites were coming forward due to the effects of the recession when it took hold in 2008. However, almost all sites are now progressing well and are either under construction, with planning permission or at pre-application discussion stage.

12. At the heart of the strategy established in 2003 was the review of the Cambridge Green Belt which released land for a total of around 22,000 homes, of which some 10,000 to 12,000 were to be built at Cambridge East in both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. This included development that would take place beyond 2016 where it required the relocation of Cambridge Airport. In 2009, the landowner - Marshalls of Cambridge - advised that Cambridge Airport would not be made available in this plan period at least, as an appropriate relocation sites could not be found. This means that the major development opportunities at Cambridge East cannot be part of the development strategy in the new Local Plans, and so the full implementation of the current development strategy cannot take place in the plan period to 2031. Marshall has recently announced a renewed intention to develop the allocated site north of Newmarket Road for around 1,200 homes with a planning application expected in 2013 and development north of Cherry Hinton in both Councils' areas following later which the Councils consider could provide around 500 homes.

Continuing a Sustainable Development Strategy

13. Throughout the preparation of the existing plans, there was strong local acknowledgement of the growing need for future growth to follow a more sustainable spatial pattern of development in the Cambridge area to help mitigate commuting by car to jobs in and close to Cambridge and the resulting congestion and emissions, this included traffic restraint through the introduction of a congestion charge which was subsequently rejected.
14. As part of the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the East of England, the Cambridgeshire authorities commissioned consultants to prepare the Cambridgeshire Development Study. The study was completed in 2009 and looked at how well the existing development strategy was working, forecasts for economic growth, taking account of the beginning of the downturn and how the strategy could be developed if further growth was needed.
15. The study identified a range of challenges for growth beyond the current development strategy. These included that significant additional expansion to Cambridge (where the economy is strongest) would impact on the integrity of the Green Belt and the concept of Cambridge as a compact city. The study also concluded that without deliverable solutions for transport and land supply, Cambridge centred growth would be difficult to achieve, and would require a fundamental step change in traffic management and travel behaviour.
16. The study recommended a spatial strategy for Cambridgeshire that was based on delivering the current strategy with further balanced expansion through regeneration in selected market towns, and focussed on making best use of existing infrastructure. However, it did indicate that some additional growth could be located on the edge of

Cambridge incorporating a limited review of the Green Belt boundary, in the long term. The key objective of the strategy was to locate homes close to Cambridge or other main employment centres, avoiding dispersed development, and ensuring that travel by sustainable modes is maximised through connections focussing on improved public transport and reducing the need to travel.

17. For the review of the development plans the Councils have considered whether the current strategy remains the most appropriate development strategy to 2031, or whether an alternative would be more suitable as a result of current circumstances. The interrelationship between Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire means that decisions cannot be taken in isolation and the future approach needs to remain joined up, as it has been in the past. This is also now a requirement on the authorities under the Duty to Cooperate introduced by the Localism Act 2011. On the whole, South Cambridgeshire looks towards Cambridge in functional terms whilst Cambridge is affected by a tight administrative boundary and surrounding Green Belt, and therefore any decision relating to the spatial strategy in South Cambridgeshire is likely to have an impact on Cambridge and vice versa.
18. The Councils have reviewed jointly how far the current sustainable development strategy has progressed, what evidence there is that it is achieving its original objectives and what a new sustainable development strategy looks like in view of changes in economic and other circumstances since the current strategy was adopted. It must balance the three strands of sustainability – economic, social, and environmental.
19. For plan making, Councils are required to positively seek opportunities to meet the objectively assessed development needs of their area in a flexible way, unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
20. Where Green Belts are defined, they should only be altered in exceptional circumstances when preparing a Local Plan. When reviewing Green Belt boundaries, Councils are required to take account of the need to promote sustainable development and consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas within Green Belts, to villages inset within the Green Belt and to locations beyond the Green Belt.
21. This sets a considerable challenge for the Cambridge area, in the context of:
 - A strong and growing economy;
 - The need for new homes to support the jobs and the aim to provide as many of those new homes as close to the new jobs as possible to minimise commuting and the harmful effects for the environment, climate change and quality of life that it brings; and
 - A tightly drawn Green Belt to protect the unique character of Cambridge as a compact, dynamic city with a thriving historic centre, to maintain and enhance the quality of its setting, and to prevent it merging with the ring of necklace villages, that helps underpin the quality of life and place in Cambridge, fundamental to economic success
22. Achieving an appropriate balance between these competing arms of sustainable development is a key objective of the development strategy for the new Local Plans.

Note: The amount of development that should be planned for is addressed separately and not in this document.

Sustainable Development Strategy Review

23. The current sustainable development strategy was extensively scrutinised and challenged during its evolution through the regional plan and structure plan into the Cambridge Local Plan and South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF). Independent planning inspectors confirmed it as the most sustainable development strategy for the two Districts to 2016 and beyond.
24. Moving forward into the new Local Plans and having regard to the new Duty to Co-operate, the recently established Cambridgeshire Joint Strategy Unit has worked with the Councils to carry out a further review of the sustainable development strategy for the two Councils' areas. Overall, the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Development Strategy Review document concludes that the development strategy in the Cambridge Local Plan and the South Cambridgeshire LDF remains the most sustainable for the two areas, subject to striking the right balance between meeting the needs and demands for new homes and jobs, with environmental, infrastructure and quality of life factors. The most sustainable locations for development are within and on the edge of Cambridge and then in one or more new settlements close to Cambridge, which are connected to the city by high quality public transport and other non-car modes. Development in market towns (outside Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire) scores broadly similar to new settlements although travel distances are much further making non-car modes potentially less attractive than new settlements. Development in villages is the least sustainable option and only appropriate in the larger better served villages with good quality public transport.
25. The review concluded that in addition to the key sustainability considerations of proximity to employment, services and facilities and access to good public transport, the central themes that emerge from this broad assessment are:
 - The need to have regard to the scale of development that is planned at different locations, not least to ensure that development allocations do not undermine the delivery of the existing sustainable development strategy and lead to a return to unsustainable patterns of development;
 - Its ability to deliver the necessary infrastructure to create sustainable communities; and
 - Overall delivery implications and timescales.
26. Whilst the new Local Plans need to add some supply to the significant existing supply of housing, planning permission already exists for more employment development than is forecasted by 2031. Whatever decisions are made on supplying additional houses, jobs growth will continue. The challenge will be to develop Local Plans that deliver a sustainable development strategy that balances employment growth with good quality and deliverable travel options with short journey times from the key locations for new and existing homes. Consideration also needs to be given to the special character of Cambridge and quality of life for existing and future residents.
27. In its National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Government carries forward the advice from earlier Planning Policy Statements that, when drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. They should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary. As part of

preparing new Local Plans and given the change in circumstances since the current development strategy was agreed, it was therefore considered appropriate to look again at the inner Cambridge Green Belt boundary in order to establish whether there were any more options for development that should be consulted on.

Considering Options for a new Development Strategy

28. The Issues and Options consultations sought comments on whether the current development strategy remains the soundest basis for development in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire for the period to 2031.

Cambridge

29. The Cambridge Issues and Options Report 2012 focussed on the City Council's area by assessing options for continued development within the urban area as well as exploring whether there should be further development on the edge of Cambridge in the Green Belt. This included:
- Whether there should be more development than is already committed in the 2006 Local Plan on the edge of Cambridge?
 - Should more land be released from the Green Belt?
 - If so, where should this be? Ten broad locations around Cambridge were included in the consultation document.
 - Whether there were any other approaches that should be considered at this stage?
30. There was also strong acknowledgement of the good progress that is being made towards implementing the current strategy, with development progressing on fringe sites on the edge of Cambridge.

South Cambridgeshire

31. The South Cambridgeshire Issues and Options 2012 consultation included a question on how the sustainable development strategy should be taken forward.
32. It explained that any development strategy for South Cambridgeshire needs to recognise the links with Cambridge, particularly in terms of providing employment to support the successful economy of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, and housing to provide opportunities for the workforce, both existing and new, to live close to where they work. As with the current strategy, the updated Local Plan is likely to need to be a combination of sites at different stages in the sequence in order to meet housing targets and in particular some village housing developments to provide a 5 year supply, given the long lead in time for new major developments which would realistically only start to deliver later in the plan period.
33. The options for the development strategy consulted on that lie within South Cambridgeshire were to:
- Focus on providing more development on the edge of Cambridge, in part to replace development previously planned on Cambridge airport which is no longer available in the plan period, through a further review of the Green Belt.
 - Focus on providing more development through one or more new settlements, of sufficient size to provide sustainable development, including provision of a secondary school, and with good public transport links to Cambridge.

- Focus on providing development at the more sustainable villages that have the best levels of services and facilities and accessibility by public transport and cycle to Cambridge or, to a lesser extent, a market town.
 - A combination of the above.
34. As for Cambridge, strategy options considered included whether there should be further development of land on the edge of Cambridge, through a review of the Green Belt. The same ten broad Green Belt locations were identified for consultation around the edge of Cambridge.

Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire

35. Through the joint Issues and Options Part 1 consultation in 2013, the Councils sought views on the appropriate balance between protecting land on the edge of Cambridge that is of high significance to Green Belt purposes, and delivering development away from Cambridge in new settlements and at better served villages
36. The majority of representations were that the Green Belt should be protected from further development. Development should be concentrated in new settlements and better served villages, to reduce congestion and avoid pressure on village infrastructure. Further urban extensions received a more limited level of support.

The Sustainability Appraisal of Strategic Approaches

37. The Sustainability Appraisal process has been a key element of considering the relative merits of different strategic approaches.
38. Building on the Sustainability Appraisals supporting each of the Issues and Options consultations, section 2 of this appendix includes a high level assessment of the sustainability implications of focusing on different stages of the development sequence (Cambridge Urban Area, Edge of Cambridge, New Settlements, more Sustainable villages, and although not part of the development sequence for comparison the less sustainable villages).
39. In outline, the benefits of utilising land within the urban area of Cambridge are the re use of previously developed land and reducing the need for greenfield development. It also delivers housing closest to the highest concentration of jobs, services and facilities.
40. Development on the edge of Cambridge is the next closest option to the City, but would require use of greenfield land in the Green Belt. The purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt recognise the qualities and importance of the area for the landscape and townscape setting of the City and surrounding villages. The Green Belt review has shown that significant additional development would be detrimental to these purposes.
41. New settlements offer the opportunity to focus development in a way that would support delivery of new services, facilities and employment to meet the needs of residents. Whilst there would still be travel to Cambridge they offer a higher degree of self-containment than more dispersed strategies. They would enable the delivery of focused transport improvements, to deliver a higher share of travel by sustainable modes than more distributed strategies, although they would also focus traffic into specific corridors.
42. Village based strategies would disperse growth. It may enable incremental improvements to existing services and transport, but would provide less focus for

delivery of high quality services, and could put pressure on existing village services where expansion could be challenging. There would be less access to high quality public transport, and the modal share of travel by car would be higher.

Existing Housing Supply

43. Notwithstanding the loss of a significant number of homes at Cambridge East, a significant supply of housing has already been identified through existing plans. This includes land with planning permission, and land that was identified and allocated in previous plans which remain available, suitable and deliverable, with these attributes being tested through Annual Monitoring Reports.

Within Cambridge

44. Since 2011, 280 homes have been built within the urban area of Cambridge. At the end of March 2013 there was an existing supply of 2,698 homes in Cambridge City Council's urban area of Cambridge either with planning permission or outstanding allocations. This excludes the major developments on the edge of Cambridge in the current Local Plan 2006, that are considered under the edge of Cambridge stage below. Orchard Park also forms part of the urban area of Cambridge, having been released in an earlier plan, although it lies within South Cambridgeshire. It is largely built, but a further 309 dwellings are expected to be built between 2011 and 2031. There is therefore a total existing supply of 3,287 homes within the urban area of Cambridge.

On the edge of Cambridge

45. Since 2011, 51 homes have been built at Trumpington Meadows and NIAB1. A further 11,310 new homes are already identified through the combined land released from the Green Belt in the Cambridge Local Plan 2006 and South Cambridgeshire LDF adopted between 2007 and 2010. This is a major part of the current development strategy and will remain so in the new Local Plans. After stalling at the beginning of the economic downturn, good progress in relation to the development of the fringe sites has been, and continues to be made. There is therefore a total existing supply of 11,361 homes on the edge of Cambridge.

New settlements

46. The new town of Northstowe is a key part of the current strategy. The town will comprise 9,500 dwellings in total, of which 5,965 are anticipated to come forward by 2031. Northstowe is located on the Guided Busway and will have good public transport links to Cambridge but at present the guided buses often get caught along with all other traffic on congested roads once they reach Cambridge. South Cambridgeshire District Council consulted on whether the reserve site at Northstowe should be allocated in the Local Plan but recognised that this would not increase the number of homes that could be built by 2031, but could provide flexibility in the way the town is built. It is not expected that the reserve land will increase the overall number of homes at Northstowe.

Development at larger villages

47. A total of 640 homes have been built in villages since 2011. There are outstanding commitments for 3,028 homes in the rural area as a whole as at end March 2012 and three site options that were subject to public consultation in the Issues and Options consultation of summer 2012 now have planning permission for a further 185 homes .

Total Existing Supply

48. Cambridge has an existing supply of 10,437, divided between the urban area, and sites on the fringe of the City.

CAMBRIDGE	Completions and Committed Dwellings (March 2013)	Percentage (%) of existing total supply
Cambridge Urban Area	2,978	29
Cambridge Fringe Sites	7,459	71
TOTAL	10,437	

49. The total existing supply for South Cambridgeshire accounts for 14,029 dwellings.

SOUTH CAMBS	Completions and Committed Dwellings (March 2013)	Percentage (%) of existing total supply
Cambridge Urban Area	309	2
Cambridge Fringe Sites	3,902	28
New Settlements	5,965	43
Villages	3,853	27
TOTAL	14,029	

50. The combined total of existing supply of the two districts is shown in the table below.

CAMBRIDGE AND SOUTH CAMBS	Completions and Committed Dwellings (March 2013)	Percentage (%) of existing total supply
Cambridge Urban Area	3,287	13
Cambridge Fringe Sites	11,361	46
New Settlements	5,965	24
Villages	3,853	16
TOTAL	24,466	

51. The current commitments retain the Cambridge focus of the strategy originated in the Structure Plan, with around 60% in or on the edge of the City.
52. The objectively assessed housing needs identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), which the two Councils have committed to meeting in full within their own areas under a country-wide Memorandum of Cooperation, are 14,000 homes for Cambridge and 19,000 homes for South Cambridgeshire for the plan period 2011-2031.
53. A housing requirement of 14,000 dwellings for Cambridge, means the new Local Plan needs to accommodate an additional 3,563 dwellings on top of current supply. A housing requirement of 19,000 for South Cambridgeshire, means the new Local Plan needs to identify sites to accommodate a further 4,971 dwellings.

54. Both individually and in combination, the new local plans of both districts will be determining the location of around 25% of the total development planned in the sub region 2011 to 2031. Whatever the outcome of the strategy a significant focus on Cambridge will remain.

Identifying New Site Options

55. Both Councils have explored a range of site options that could meet the additional development requirements to 2031 through their Issues and Options consultations.

Cambridge

56. Cambridge City Council has undertaken an extensive search for additional housing sites within the built-up area. This involved a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) whereby the Council issued a general 'call for sites' to identify all possible sites that could accommodate housing development in the city as well as undertaking an extensive search for sites. Sites that were put forward were subject to a rigorous assessment leading to a shortlist of sites which could deliver an additional 2,060 homes. These sites were subject to public consultation in January 2013, including initial sustainability appraisal by Cambridge City Council.

On the edge of Cambridge (Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire)

57. The Green Belt surrounding Cambridge has been in place since the 1950s. Green Belt policy has maintained the setting and special character of Cambridge, avoided coalescence with the ring of villages closest to the city, protected the countryside from development and prevented urban sprawl. The result is that Cambridge remains a compact historic city, surrounded by attractive countryside and a ring of attractive villages to which there is easy access by foot and bicycle. The city centre is unusually close to open countryside, particularly to the west and south-west.
58. These characteristics are valued assets and significantly contribute to the character and attractiveness of the historic city and the wider Cambridge area, and the quality of life enjoyed here. The Green Belt around Cambridge has an inextricable relationship with the preservation of the character of the city, which is derived from the interplay between the historic centre, the suburbs around it and the rural setting that encircles it.
59. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts, with the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy being to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. The NPPF continues the five long established national purposes of including land within Green Belts as being to:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
60. At the local level, the fourth bullet is of particular significance and the following purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt have been established in previous Local Plans:

- To preserve the unique character of Cambridge as a compact, dynamic city with a thriving historic centre;
 - To maintain and enhance the quality of its setting; and
 - To prevent communities in the environs of Cambridge from merging into one another and with the city.
61. Green Belt boundaries can only be established in Local Plans and according to the NPPF, once established they can only be altered in exceptional circumstances. The current inner Green Belt boundary has been established through the Cambridge Local Plan (2006) and South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (adopted between 2007 and 2010), including the Cambridge East Area Action Plan (2008) and North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (2009). The exceptional circumstances for establishing the Green Belt boundaries set out in existing plans came through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003), which sought to focus more growth close to Cambridge to increase the sustainability of development. The Structure Plan agreed broad locations where land should be released from the Green Belt.
62. In order to inform the current detailed Green Belt boundary, two important studies were undertaken. The first was the Inner Green Belt Boundary Study undertaken by Cambridge City Council in 2002 and the second was the Cambridge Green Belt Study by Landscape Design Associates for South Cambridgeshire District Council in September 2002.
63. The study for South Cambridgeshire District Council took a detailed look at the Green Belt around the east of Cambridge and a wider, more strategic look at the Green Belt elsewhere around the city, whilst the Inner Green Belt Boundary Study prepared by Cambridge City Council was carried out to specifically assist with identifying sites that could be released from the Green Belt for development close to Cambridge without significant harm to the purposes of the Green Belt including the setting of the city.
64. The City Council also commissioned a specific Green Belt study by Landscape Design Associates (2003) in relation to land West of Trumpington Road. This was a requirement of the Structure Plan (2003). This study concluded that there was no case for a Green Belt release concerning the land West of Trumpington Road, in that the land provides a rural setting of arable farmland and water meadows close to the historic core, which is not found elsewhere around Cambridge. A smaller area of land including school playing fields and the golf course was assessed for development within this broad location and it was concluded that these were attractive features in their own right which contribute positively to the quality of the landscape setting of Cambridge, and the quality of life for people within the city.
65. The current Green Belt boundary around the city was established with the expectation that its boundaries could endure to the end of the plan period of 2016 and beyond. However, circumstances have changed, and whilst good progress has been made towards achieving the current development strategy, with development of the fringes all underway with the exception of the Cambridge East airport site, the Councils do need to consider as part of preparing their new Local Plans whether there are exceptional circumstances for reviewing Green Belt boundaries again. In reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the NPPF requires local planning authorities to take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development, and with consideration given to the

consequences for sustainable development of channelling development outwards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary.

66. The Councils took a joined up approach in the Issues and Options consultations in Summer 2012 and asked whether there should be more development on the edge of Cambridge, if there should be more land released from the Green Belt, and if so, where should this be. Ten Broad Green Belt Locations around the edge of Cambridge were consulted on to explore whether any had potential to be released from the Green Belt for housing. A summary of the views received is contained in the Site Assessments for Edge of Cambridge Sites evidence document. The ten broad locations were also subject to sustainability appraisal in the Initial Sustainability Appraisal. Promoters of land on the edge of Cambridge through the Councils' respective SHLAA processes resubmitted their sites through the consultations.
67. To help inform the process in moving forward to identifying specific site options, the Councils carried out a joint review of the Inner Green Belt boundary. The purpose of the review was to provide an up to date evidence base for Councils' new Local Plans, and help the Councils reach a view on whether there are specific areas of land that could be considered for release from the Green Belt and allocated for development to meet their identified needs without significant harm to Green Belt purposes.
68. The Inner Green Belt Study Review 2012 builds on the studies that were undertaken in 2002 and 2003 as well as the broad updated appraisal of the Inner Green Belt boundary that the City Council undertook in March 2012 to sit alongside its Issues and Options consultation (Summer 2012). The appraisal of the inner Green Belt boundary areas was undertaken against the backdrop of the most recent land releases and how those releases have affected the revised inner Green Belt boundary. The appraisal specifically reconsidered zones of land immediately adjacent to the city in terms of the principles and function of the Green Belt.
69. In summary, both steps have found that releases of land on the edge of the city through the current Local Plans are sound. However, as a consequence of the releases, the adjacent rural land surrounding these sites now has increased value for Green Belt purposes and to the setting of the city. This increase in value for Green Belt purposes comes from three considerations:
 - New developed edges are being created on land released from the Green Belt by previous plans and these edges are moving the city further into its rural surroundings and therefore lessening the extent of the Green Belt;
 - The new edges are different from those previously seen on the edge of the city being more densely developed and usually higher and not so easily softened by vegetation; and
 - Views of the city will be foreshortened as the edge advances into the rural surroundings sometimes making the foreground noticeably more important for the setting of the city.
70. The work concluded that areas where the city is viewed from higher ground or generally has open aspects, or where the urban edge is close to the city centre are

more sensitive and cannot accommodate change¹ easily. Areas of the city that have level views and where the edge has mixed foreground can sometimes accommodate change more easily. On a comparative basis these areas have a lesser importance to the setting of the city and to the purposes of Green Belt.

71. Given that the inner Green Belt boundary was looked at very closely only a decade ago, and only concluded in the Site Specific Policies DPD in 2010, it should not be unexpected that the new review has found that most of the inner Green Belt continues to be important for Green Belt purposes and specifically important to protect the setting and special character of Cambridge as a historic city.
72. The work also confirmed that in areas where changes to the city edge are currently envisaged and they are adjacent to important view-points such as motorways or elevated vantage points, there needs to be an appropriately sized area of land retained as Green Belt between any future urban edge and the view/vantage point to still provide a green foreground setting to the city. This green foreground should be retained as Green Belt. This need is vital because development requires a minimum distance between it and the viewpoint to avoid a harmful effect on the setting of the city. This can be demonstrated on the northern edge of the city where development in places now abuts the A14 with no foreground between the viewpoint and the development. As a result, the development cannot be viewed in any sort of landscape context or setting making it appear severe and discordant.
73. Having thoroughly tested the inner Green Belt boundary, the Inner Green Belt Study Review 2012 found that there are a limited number of small sites, which are of lesser importance to Green Belt purposes. The review also concluded that the significant majority of the remaining Green Belt close to Cambridge is fundamentally important to the purpose of the Cambridge Green Belt and should not be developed. This is considered to be the tipping point, at which if you extend beyond this point for development, the Green Belt purposes and setting of the city are compromised. Any further significant development on the inner edge of the Green Belt would have significant implications for Green Belt purposes and fundamentally change Cambridge as a place. The 2012 study confirmed the conclusions of the Green Belt Study 2002 by Landscape Design Associates, that despite extensive development to the south-east, east and north of the historic core, the scale of the core relative to the whole is such that Cambridge still retains the character of a city focussed on its historic core. The findings of the study were incorporated into the technical assessments of potential site options.

Identifying site options on the Edge of Cambridge

74. Following the identification and testing of broad locations in the 2012 Issues and Options consultation, a long list of sites at the fringe of Cambridge was developed within these broad locations drawing on two sources: Developers' site boundaries received from the 'call for sites' for the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAAs) carried out by both authorities and also pursued through the 2012 Issues and Options consultations; and additional sites identified through the 2012

¹ 'Change' means the introduction of a different feature into the rural/agricultural landscape. This could be an electricity pylon, built development or even a bio-mass crop, but in this instance it is built development.

Inner Green Belt Review as fulfilling Green Belt purposes to a lesser degree. This resulted in an initial list of 41 sites.

75. These sites were assessed utilising a site assessment pro forma, which was developed jointly to take into account both authorities' Sustainability Appraisal objectives. The pro forma was specifically developed to fully integrate the sustainability appraisal process into site assessment. The criteria in the pro forma take into account the social, environmental and economic sustainability themes and objectives identified in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Reports of both Councils. Ensuring that the criteria take into account the SA is the most effective way of ensuring that the SA is central to the appraisal of sites. In this way, the potential effects of bringing forward alternative sites for development can be thoroughly tested and compared. Consultants URS, who are carrying out the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Cambridge Local Plan review, advised on the development of the joint pro forma to ensure that it meets the requirements of SA and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. The pro forma also includes planning and deliverability criteria which do not directly relate to the SA, but are important in order to ensure that the Local Plans are deliverable.
76. The Joint Green Belt Site Assessment Pro forma can be found at Appendix 1 of the Interim Sustainability Appraisal of Issues and Options 2 Part 1. For each criterion there is an explanation as to which of the Cambridge SA topics and South Cambridgeshire SA objectives it relates to. A traffic light system has been used to score the sites from 'red red' (a significant negative impact) to 'green green' (no impact or minor impact which can be mitigated). In most cases there were three potential scores (red, amber, green), but in some cases this was extended at either end to five categories to give a finer grained assessment. The grading range provides a means by which the relative sustainability of each site can be established in comparison with other sites.
77. The pro forma is split into two parts. The first part is a high level sieve (Level 1). It includes strategic considerations, including impact on the Green Belt, flood risk, national biodiversity and heritage designations. It also addresses key deliverability issues. This stage is effective for identifying issues that mean a site should be rejected.
78. Level 2 of the assessment considered a range of issues including accessibility to services and sustainable transport, pollution, historic environment and biodiversity. Although a number of sites were considered to merit rejection following the Level 1 assessment, they were also assessed by the Level 2 criteria in order to give the most comprehensive and robust assessment possible.
79. Map 2 and Appendix 1 in the Issues & Options 2, Part 1 - Joint Consultation of Development Strategy & Site Options on the Edge of Cambridge (November 2012) illustrate the site options tested. The completed pro formas for all of the sites assessed can be found in the 'Technical Background Document - Part 1' at the following link: www.cambridge.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/planning-and-buildingcontrol/planning-policy/background-documents/
80. The individual site pro formas show how each site performs against the criteria that relate to the sustainability objectives.
81. In order to draw information together in an accessible form, and reach an overall conclusion on the merits of the sites assessed, key elements from the pro formas were combined in a series of summaries by broad location which enable the most and least

sustainable sites to be identified. These can be found in Appendix 2 of the Issues and Options 2 (2013) Part 1 document.

82. Following the assessment, 6 sites in the Green Belt on the edge of Cambridge were identified as being sites with development potential, albeit with some constraints or adverse impacts (with an overall score of amber). These include two housing sites, two employment sites, one site which could be developed for either housing or employment and one which could be potentially developed for housing, employment or a community stadium. Five of these sites are located to the south of Cambridge and one is to the north of Cambridge. Four of the sites are within the Cambridge City Council boundary and two fall within South Cambridgeshire. These were subject to public consultation in the joint Issues and Options 2: Part 1 consultation in January 2013.
83. The other sites assessed have been rejected as options for development, due to either their significance to Green Belt purposes and/or for other reasons including planning constraints such as archaeological merit. Reasons for rejection are summarised in Appendix 3 of the Issues and Options 2: Part 1 document.

Identifying Site Options - The Rest of South Cambridgeshire

84. In order to identify reasonable site options, South Cambridgeshire District Council has drawn on its Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012) requires the preparation of Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA), by local planning authorities, to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability, and likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period. The SHLAA collated a significant level of technical evidence of the sites, including evidence from specialists and statutory bodies, which has been used in the sustainability appraisal. A 'Call for Sites' was issued in 2011, and nearly 300 site options with development potential were submitted and subject to testing. Appendix 7 of the SHLAA document includes detailed assessments of all sites tested during the plan making process, and can be viewed on South Cambridgeshire District Council's website: www.scambs.gov.uk/ldf/shlaa .
85. Each of the sites was also subject to Sustainability Appraisal. This tested the impact of development on the 23 South Cambridgeshire Sustainability Objectives, identified through the sustainability appraisal scoping process. To assist in making this assessment quantifiable, measurable and transparent, and for direct comparison between sites to be made, the Site Assessment Matrix developed through the Scoping process in appendix 2 of the Initial Sustainability Appraisal indicates how the impact of individual sites against each objective has been determined. For a number of objectives, quantifiable grading was identified to provide a means by which the relative sustainability of each site can be established in comparison with other sites.
86. In order to combine the results of the SHLAA and SA to assist plan making, a summary assessment that draws together the two assessments and reaches a view on the 'Sustainable Development Potential' of each site was prepared. Appendix 6 of the SHLAA document includes detailed assessments of all sites and can be viewed on South Cambridgeshire District Council's website: www.scambs.gov.uk/ldf/shlaa .

87. Annex 1 of the Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report 2012 includes detailed sustainability appraisals of all sites, and Annex 2 the summary assessment for each site.
88. The South Cambridgeshire SHLAA and Sustainability Assessments identify key constraints and considerations relating to potential development sites including suitability, availability and achievability. In order to draw information together in an accessible form, and reach an overall conclusion on the merits of the sites assessed, key elements from both assessments were combined in a series of settlement summaries which enable the most and least sustainable sites in each settlement to be identified. This was collated in Annex 2 of the Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report 2012. These assessments explore issues in two groups, providing an assessment of the impact and its significance, using a similar mechanism to the SA of identifying a range from significant positive to significant negative impacts. The first group of issues comprises:
- Strategic considerations identified in the SHLAA - Identifies if a site is subject to any strategic considerations that have the potential to make the site unsuitable for development e.g. flood risk, impact on SSSI or Listed Buildings (reflects tier 1 of the SHLAA site assessment. Green Belt impact was drawn out separately).
 - Green Belt - Sites in the Green Belt are identified by a negative score, sites outside as neutral. If it is in the Green Belt, impact on the function of the Green Belt was considered, and the scale of impact identified. The assessment included in the SHLAA utilised the LDA Green Belt Study 2002 to guide consideration. Green Belt as a matter of principle was NOT used as an exclusionary factor at this stage.
 - SHLAA significant local considerations - Identifies if a site is subject to heritage, environmental and physical considerations, from tier 2 of the SHLAA Assessment (note landscape and townscape impact drawn out separately)
 - Landscape and townscape impact - reflects the conclusions of the SHLAA and the Sustainability Appraisal.
 - SHLAA site specific factors - Considers the availability and achievability of the site. If a site is scored as a significant negative, it is rejected, as it cannot be delivered.(Reflects tier 3 of the SHLAA assessment).
 - Access to key local services, distance to key local services, accessibility by sustainable transport modes - draws on the Sustainability Appraisal to consider transport accessibility.
89. Each summary concludes with the 'Sustainable Development Potential'. This draws on the SHLAA Assessment and the Sustainability Appraisal. It categorises sites as follows:
- More Sustainable Sites with Development Potential (few constraints or adverse impacts) GREEN
 - Less sustainable but with development potential (some constraints or adverse impacts) AMBER
 - Least Sustainable, with no significant development potential (significant constraints or adverse impacts) RED
90. The entries in the summary assessment sometimes represent a judgement about a number of separate criteria from the SHLAA and Sustainability Appraisal assessments

and represent a balanced view of the overall performance of that site across a range of criteria.

91. The settlement summaries taken together with the full assessments allow for sites to be selected to meet a number of different options relating to the scale of growth and spatial development strategies. They have also helped to make the process and findings accessible for the public during the Issues and Options consultations.
92. Sites identified as 'Least Sustainable, with no significant development potential' have been rejected at this stage, because they are not considered reasonable options for development.
93. The approach to village sites has taken into account the village hierarchy, developed following a review of the sustainability of settlements (South Cambridgeshire Village Classification Report 2012), and included in the Spatial Strategy chapter of the Local Plan. This identifies Rural Centres as the most sustainable villages in the district, with the highest level of access to a combination of services, facilities, employment and public transport, providing services to a small rural hinterland. Minor Rural Centres are the next in the hierarchy, offering a lower level of services and facilities, but still more than smaller villages. The Number of Minor Rural Centres is proposed to be increased in the draft plan, by including a number of other villages which had a higher level of services and facilities than most villages in the district and perform similarly to other Minor Rural Centres. These were previously identified as Better Served Group Villages. At the bottom of the hierarchy, Group villages have a Primary school, but limited other services, and infill villages do not have a primary school, and are generally the smallest villages in the District.
94. After reviewing the potential development sites, it was clear that sufficient sites could be identified as higher levels of the hierarchy, without relying on allocations in the smallest villages, which would lead to a dispersed pattern of development where the fewest services and facilities are available. Therefore sites at Group and Infill villages were not considered reasonable alternatives and were not consulted on, even if they scored Amber in the assessments. Such sites may be capable of development as windfalls or as rural affordable housing exception sites depending on their location and scale, but they would not reflect a sustainable form of development in the context of a district wide strategy and so have not been considered as options for development site allocations in the Local Plan.

New settlements

95. A total of 14 sites which would either deliver new standalone settlements, or expand existing new settlements, were tested through the SHLAA and Sustainability Appraisal process.
96. Five options at three locations were subsequently identified for consultation in Issues and Options 2012. The Strategic Reserve at Northstowe, identified in the current Local Development Framework, was identified, but is unlikely to deliver additional dwellings at Northstowe during the plan period and may simply help provide the planned 9,500 homes in a high quality form of development. Potential new settlements were identified at Waterbeach Barracks, with three different scale options identified. A new village at Bourn Airfield was also identified as an option. Options at Six Mile Bottom, Hanley Grange, Heathfield, Duxford, north of Cambourne, north east of Northstowe, and Barrington Quarry were rejected at this stage.

97. New settlement options could deliver significant numbers of new homes but they have major infrastructure requirements, particularly in terms of transport measures. High quality, sustainable transport solutions would be essential to minimise commuting by private car.
98. New settlements also require long lead in times before they can deliver homes on the ground and therefore could only provide homes for the second half of the plan period, although they would continue to provide housing beyond the plan period. A new town at Waterbeach Barracks may only deliver 1,400 dwellings during the plan period. A new village at Bourn Airfield may have greater potential to deliver in the plan period if appropriate.

Larger, better served villages

99. South Cambridgeshire District Council consulted in Issues and Options 2012 on site options that could deliver a total of 5,850 new homes on village sites. This included a strategic scale development at Cambourne.
100. In response to Issues and Options 2012 consultation, 58 new sites were submitted to the Council for consideration. Those in Group and Infill villages were not assessed, because they are the villages with limited services and facilities and the least sustainable locations for development. The 30 sites in identified 'Better Served Group Villages' (now Minor Rural Centres) and above were assessed and 10 additional site options were identified for consultation in the through the Issues and Options 2013 Part 2 consultation. These sites could deliver an additional 1,245 new homes. This gives options for a total of 7,095 additional new homes at this lowest stage in the development sequence.

Public Consultation

101. Site options were subject to public consultation through the Issues and Options Consultations, including the joint consultation in January 2013.
102. Over 38,000 representations have been submitted to the councils in response to the two issues and options consultations that have taken place so far. Summaries of the representations, as well as the individual representations, are available to view on the Councils' websites.
103. The Councils have reviewed and considered the comments received, including Member Workshops and meetings of the Planning Policy and Localism Portfolio holder for South Cambridgeshire and the Environment Sub Committee and Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee for Cambridge City Council. The Councils have also considered a range of possible options that flow from the development strategy options and the site options consulted on and tested those through the SA process. They have also been tested through transport modelling and as the long list of site options has been narrowed down, key stakeholders have been asked again for their views on the emerging shortlist of sites to help further refine the preferred strategy and package of sites, such as the education authority.
104. As referred to earlier, the SA of the broad strategy options at Appendix 1 demonstrates that focusing development on Cambridge remains the most sustainable location for additional development and the Cambridge SHLAA has identified 6,302 new homes through windfall sites or allocations within the urban area in the new Local Plan.

105. The edge of Cambridge is the next most sustainable location against a range of objectives for growth in the development sequence, but the SA identifies the importance of balancing the accessibility aspects of sustainable development and the environmental and social benefits it brings, with the significant harm to the landscape and setting environmental aspects of sustainability that development on land in the Green Belt would have, with the resulting irreversible adverse impacts on the special character and setting of Cambridge as a compact historic city and the risks that could have to the economic success of the Cambridge area, which is in part built on its attractiveness as a place to live and work. The detrimental impacts of further major development on the edge of Cambridge beyond the substantial urban extensions already planned was demonstrated in the Inner Green Belt Study Review 2012 and major extensions to Cambridge were rejected as reasonable options and not consulted on in Issues and Options 2 in 2013. The assessment process identified six Green Belt sites as potential options for development and this limited refinement of the Green Belt together with sites within the urban area would mean that Cambridge is able to meet its full objectively assessed needs within its administrative area. Results of consultation on the appropriate balance between edge of Cambridge or new settlements and better served villages was strongest to protect the Green Belt.
106. The effect of decisions on reasonable site options on the edge of Cambridge is to require development away from Cambridge to meet the remaining development needs of the wider Cambridge area. The SA of broad locations at section 2 of this appendix confirms earlier findings from the Regional Spatial Strategy review and Structure Plan that new settlements are the next most sustainable location for growth and that development at villages should be limited for sustainability reasons.
107. South Cambridgeshire's SHLAA and Initial Sustainability Report demonstrate that there are 2 new settlement options that can be considered for development in the new Local Plan: a new town at Waterbeach and a new village at Bourn Airfield. The other new settlement options put to the Council were rejected in the SHLAA and initial SA process. The 2 sites identified scored as Amber in the assessment largely because it is inevitable that such a major development will have some adverse impact on some aspects of sustainability, but it was considered that they would be capable of mitigation through carefully designed development proposals. The results of consultation supported concentration on new settlements rather than focus on edge of Cambridge due to Green Belt impacts
108. At the more sustainable village stage of the sequence, South Cambridgeshire consulted on a range of housing site options across the district. The largest of these was a major extension to Cambourne, through a fourth linked village to the west of the existing village. The results of consultation offered some support to better served villages, although to a lesser extent than new settlements.

Consideration of alternative packages of sites

109. The Councils have followed an iterative process of developing the preferred strategy.
110. For Cambridge, the level of objectively assessed need is such that all reasonable options have needed to be included in the Local Plan and Cambridge City Council does not consider that any reasonable alternatives exist for meeting need beyond this, in view of the outcome of work to consider potential for Green Belt review.

111. For South Cambridgeshire, having jointly reached the view on the edge of Cambridge, the options available are around the number of new settlements identified in the new Local Plan, the possible timing and level of delivery that could be secured in the plan period from those sites, whether to include a major expansion of the previously established new village of Cambourne, and the implications for level of village provision that would need to be made and identifying the best available sites in the better served villages.
112. Important issues for shortlisting the preferred village sites included:
- providing homes close to the jobs in and around Cambridge,
 - providing homes close to the jobs south of Cambridge in view of the predominance of new housing in villages to the north over many years and substantial jobs growth in the south,
 - focus on more sustainable villages with high quality public transport links to Cambridge
 - making best use of brownfield land
 - Avoid green spaces, and areas of flood risk
 - sites with parish council and local support
113. A range of options around the new settlement options, major expansion of Cambourne and the best available sites at villages have been identified and tested through SA, to consider the relative impact of different development packages. This included looking at different levels of growth at some of the site options to minimise adverse impacts and secure the most sustainable form of development. For comparison the impacts were compared with package options which would have developed sites on the edge of Cambridge. Details are included in appendix 4 of the Sustainability Report.

The Revised Strategy

114. The Councils are now at the stage of identifying the preferred package of housing sites to include in their Local Plans to meet their identified objectively assessed needs. Given the significant level of supply from each Council's current plans of 10,400 for Cambridge and 14,000 for South Cambridgeshire, the Councils need to allocate land for a further 3,600 and 5,000 homes respectively.
115. Cambridge City Council has identified sites for 3,324 new homes through new allocations and windfall development in the urban area of Cambridge. In addition, land north and south of Worts Causeway is proposed to be removed from the Green Belt and allocated for housing to deliver 430 dwellings. This would enable the City Council to meet its full identified housing needs within its administrative area.
116. It is also proposed to allocate the 3 sites on Fulbourn Road close to ARM for employment, 2 in Cambridge City Council's area and 1 in South Cambridgeshire.
117. A small expansion of the existing NIAB2 housing site in South Cambridgeshire between Huntingdon and Histon roads is also proposed, although this would not increase the overall number of homes currently planned but instead provide more room to ensure a high quality development. It is not proposed to include employment on the site so that there is sufficient room for the supporting infrastructure necessary for the housing development to retain a green foreground to Cambridge Road.

118. Strategic options for new development in South Cambridgeshire focus on new settlements and previously established new settlements, with new allocations for:
- New town at Waterbeach Barracks - 8,000 to 9000 homes, 1,400 of which by 2031.
 - New village at Bourn Airfield - 3,500 homes, 1,700 of which by 2031.
 - Cambourne West - 1,200 homes, all by 2031.
119. The preference to allocate all three strategic sites has been influenced by the long lead in times for new settlements which will therefore come forward later in the plan period and continue developing beyond 2031. Without also including major expansion of Cambourne, a significant amount of development would be required at villages and would result in the sort of dispersed development strategy previously having been found to be unsustainable. Bourn Airfield new village would be delayed by a year to come forward slightly later in the plan period than it otherwise might, so that the remainder of Cambourne is well progressed before any development starts at Bourn Airfield. This will also help provide additional flexibility. The strategic sites will provide 4,300 homes in the plan period. Starting Waterbeach towards the end of the plan period has the benefit of ensuring that Northstowe will be well established before another new town development begins.
120. The major sites will be supported by limited development at the more sustainable villages in the order of 900 homes to provide flexibility and help ensure a continuous supply of housing land over the plan period, including if there is any delay in progress on any of the major sites.
121. The table below shows the level of development proposed at each stage of the development sequence:

CAMBRIDGE AND SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE HOUSING 2011 TO 2031	Existing Completions and Commitments (both areas)	New Sites Cambridge	New Sites South Cambs	TOTAL	Percentage
Cambridge Urban Area	3,287	3,324	0	6,611	20
Edge of Cambridge	11,361	430	100	11,891	35
New Settlements	5,965	0	4,300	10,265	31
Villages	3,853	0	860	4,713	14
TOTAL	24,466	3,754	5,260	33,480	100

122. The development strategy identified includes development at a number of levels in the sequence taking account of the opportunities and constraints identified.
123. Cambridge remains the focus of the development strategy comprising 55% of the housing requirement 2011 to 2031. This is comparable with and slightly higher than the 52% in the Structure Plan strategy.
124. Only minor additional Green Belt development potential was identified on the edge of Cambridge in addition to the extensive existing commitments because of the significant harm this would cause to the purposes of the Green Belt. The additional dwellings,

added to those already committed, mean that 35% of all new development is planned on the edge of Cambridge, compared with 25% in the Structure Plan.

125. In addition to the new settlement at Northstowe, the strategy proposes additional new settlements in the medium term at Bourn Airfield, and in the longer term Waterbeach Barracks. This will enable infrastructure investment to be focused to maximise benefits, maximise travel by non-car modes, support the re-use of significant previously developed sites, and reduce the need for further development at villages as the final and least sustainable stage in the development sequence, although some village development is proposed to provide flexibility.
126. At the village level, development will be focused on the more sustainable villages with the best range of services and facilities, including taking account of opportunities to utilise previously developed land.
127. A comparison with the Structure Plan 2003 strategy is provided below.

	Structure Plan 1999 to 2016	Percentage (%)	New Strategy 2011 to 2031	Percentage (%)
Edge of Cambridge	8,000	25	11,891	35
New Settlements	6,000	18	10,265	31
Villages	9,600	30	4,713	14

2 Appraisal of the Development Strategy Options

The sustainability implications of focusing development at different spatial locations

The following builds on the assessment of South Cambridgeshire Issues and Options 2012 Issue 9: Development Strategy, which considered the broad implications of focusing development at different locations in the development sequence. It additionally includes a comparison with development within the Cambridge urban area to cover the whole of the development sequence. It has also been reviewed by Environ, who are completed the Final Sustainability Appraisal of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

The appraisal is structured around the South Cambridgeshire sustainability objectives, established through the South Cambridgeshire Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. The linkages to the Cambridge City Sustainability Appraisal Framework and its Objectives have been considered, and the relationship between the sustainability objectives is detailed at the end of this note.

Assessment Key	
Symbol	Likely effect against the SA Objective
+++	Potentially significant beneficial impact, option supports the objective
+	Option supports this objective although it may have only a minor beneficial impact
~	Option has no impact or effect is neutral insofar as the benefits and drawbacks appear equal and neither is considered significant
?	Uncertain or insufficient information on which to determine the assessment at this stage
-	Option appears to conflict with the objective and may result in adverse impacts
---	Potentially significant adverse impact, conflict with the objective

	1. Land	2. Waste	3. Air quality and environmental pollution	4. Designated sites and protected species	5. Habitats and species	6. Access to wildlife and green spaces	7. Landscape and townscape character	8. Historic Environment	9. Good Spaces	10. Climate Change Mitigation	11. Climate Change Adaptation	12. Human health	13. Crime	14. Public OpenSpace	15. Housing	16. Inequalities	17. Services and Facilities	18. Involvement	19. Economy	20. Access to Work	21. Infrastructure	22. Sustainable Travel	23. Transport Infrastructure
Cambridge Urban Area	+++	~	?	~	?	~	+	~	~	~	~	?	~	~	~	~	+++	~	~	+++	+++	+++	+++
Edge of Cambridge	-	~	?	?	?	+++	--	-	~	~	~	?	~	~	~	~	+/ ++	~	~	+++	+++	+++	+++
New settlements	+	~	~	?	?	+++	-- /?	~	~	+++ /?	~	~	~	~	~	~	+/ ++	~	~	+++ /?	+++	+/ ++	+++
More sustainable villages	-	~	~	?	?	+	-/?	~	~	~	-	~	~	~	~	~	+	~	~	+	+	-	-
Smaller less sustainable villages	-	~	~	?	?	+	-/?	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	--	~	~	--	-	--	--

Cambridge

Development in Cambridge offers opportunities to re-use previously developed land, making use of the existing urban area, reducing the need to develop greenfield / agricultural land. Cambridge provides the highest concentration of jobs, and high order services and facilities in the Cambridge area, placing residential development in the urban area would enable the closest access to these. With regard to air quality, the central area of the city is identified as an AQMA, and therefore further development could include placing further population in this area. However, development in the urban area has best opportunity to support non-car modes of transport, and the compact nature of the city makes it particularly suitable for cycling in addition to walking.

Edge of Cambridge

An edge of Cambridge focus would involve Green Belt development, and loss of significant amounts of high grade agricultural land. The review of the Green Belt identified that it would not be possible to deliver significant additional development on the edge of Cambridge without significant detriment to the specific purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt. These purposes highlight the importance to the historic City of Cambridge of the quality of its setting as well as the usual role of Green Belts in preventing communities from merging with one another. The recent review of the Green Belt released large areas of less significance to Green Belt purposes, and the land that remains on the inner edge becomes increasingly important.

Development on the edge of Cambridge would be the next closest development option to the urban area of the city, supporting access opportunities by alternative modes, although access to public transport services is better close to radial routes with good services, and some areas around the City currently have more limited access to high quality public transport. Larger developments could include their own local centres, and be accessed by new public transport routes.

Development on the edge of Cambridge could bring dwellings closer to the M11 or A14, areas of relatively poor air quality (with an AQMA on the A14). Major development has the potential to worsen air quality, although it would support greater use of non-car modes than more distributed patterns of development. Development near to busy routes would still add to congestion at peak times.

Green Infrastructure opportunities would vary by site, but larger scale development could support delivery of significant green infrastructure. A number of larger site proposals specifically reference the potential to deliver significant open space or Green Infrastructure beyond the minimum required by policy.

New Settlements

A focus on new settlements could utilise previously developed land opportunities, such as former airfields or military barracks, although they would also be likely to still utilise significant areas of greenfield land. New settlements could incorporate significant public transport routes to Cambridge, and new town and local centres as appropriate, to ensure that residents have convenient access to local services and facilities by walking, cycling and public transport. They have the potential to enable focussed investment in public transport and cycling infrastructure, delivering high quality services to provide a significantly higher modal share of travel by non-car modes than village based growth options. The greater distance from Cambridge would mean higher levels of car use (although significantly better than dispersed villages based strategies), and it would result in focused pressure on specific routes. This could have local air quality implications.

New settlements could be developed with a mix of uses with employment delivering jobs locally and their own services and facilities of higher order than smaller scale growth at existing villages. This could provide a degree of self-containment, by providing opportunities to live and work in the same place, however, the greatest concentration of jobs will remain in and close to Cambridge.

The scale and mixed use nature of new settlements offer specific opportunities for renewable energy based upon potential for combined heat and power.

Impact on landscape would depend on the site, but the scale of a new settlement means that impacts could be significant. Some sites were tested with more limited wider landscape impacts. Located outside the green belt they would have a lesser impact on townscape, and the setting of Cambridge. Sites tested were all outside the Green Belt. New settlements could provide opportunity to deliver significant green infrastructure.

More Sustainable Villages

A focus on the more sustainable villages would focus development on villages where there is the best access to local services and facilities and best public transport to access higher order services and facilities in Cambridge, but comparatively villages offer a reduced range of opportunities, and the need to travel would be greater than in other options.

There are likely to be significantly less opportunities to deliver sustainable transport than a Cambridge focused or new settlement option, as spreading development around villages would be likely to deliver incremental improvements at best, rather than focused investment. Traffic impacts would be spread more around the district, but there would be a higher modal share for car use. Outside the Rural Centres public transport services are generally limited in terms of frequency and journey time. Cycling opportunities would also be lower than other strategy approaches, as distances to Cambridge or market towns would be greater, and would often rely on rural roads rather than dedicated routes.

A distribution to smaller sites would have a more incremental impact on the landscape and townscape, but village expansions could negatively impact on village character. The most sustainable villages are inset into the Green Belt close to Cambridge. A village based option would require incremental improvement to village infrastructure. This could put pressure on existing village services and facilities, such as schools, doctors and utilities. A more distributed pattern of village development would provide no direct opportunities to deliver significant scale green infrastructure. In order to identify the quantity of sites required to deliver required levels of development through a village focus, it could require the use of some sites in flood zone 2.

Other Villages

Focusing more development into less sustainable villages (group and infill villages) would have significant adverse impacts on access to services and facilities, employment, and sustainable transport. A village based strategy requiring development at lower levels of the village hierarchy would increase the proportion of growth at greater distances from major employment areas than other strategic approaches. In many cases public transport in smaller villages is extremely limited, and most lack any significant services and facilities, therefore increasing the journey length to access these.

Key to Sustainability Objectives

Further information on the objectives can be found in the individual districts sustainability appraisal scoping reports.

South Cambridgeshire Sustainability Objectives		Cambridge City Sustainability Objectives
LAND	1. Minimise the irreversible loss of undeveloped land, economic mineral reserves, productive agricultural holdings, and the degradation / loss of soils	1. Communities and Wellbeing
	2. Minimise waste production and support the reuse and recycling of waste products	
POLLUTION	3. Improve air quality and minimise or mitigate against sources of environmental pollution	4. Water 1. Communities and Wellbeing
BIODIVERSITY	4. Avoid damage to designated sites and protected species	8. Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure
	5. Maintain and enhance the range and viability of characteristic habitats and species	
	6. Improve opportunities for people to access and appreciate wildlife and green spaces	
LANDSCAPE, TOWNSCAPE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE	7. Maintain and enhance the diversity and local distinctiveness of landscape and townscape character	7. Landscape, Townscape and Cultural Heritage
	8. Avoid damage to areas and sites designated for their historic interest, and protect their settings.	
	9. Create places, spaces and buildings that work well, wear well and look good	
CLIMATE CHANGE	10. Minimise impacts on climate change (including greenhouse gas emissions)	6. Climate change mitigation and renewable energy

South Cambridgeshire Sustainability Objectives		Cambridge City Sustainability Objectives
	11. Reduce vulnerability to future climate change effects	5. Flood risk including climate change adaptation
HEALTH	12. Maintain and enhance human health	1. Communities and Wellbeing
	13. Reduce and prevent crime and reduce fear of crime	
	14. Improve the quantity and quality of publically accessible open space.	
HOUSING	15. Ensure everyone has access to decent, appropriate and affordable housing	
INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES	16. Redress inequalities related to age, disability, gender, race, faith, location and income	
	17. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (e.g. health, transport, education, training, leisure opportunities)	
	18. Encourage and enable the active involvement of local people in community activities	
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	19. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy.	2. Economy
	20. Help people gain access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	
	21. Support appropriate investment in people, places, communications and other infrastructure	
TRANSPORT	22. Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices.	3. Transport.

South Cambridgeshire Sustainability Objectives		Cambridge City Sustainability Objectives
	23. Secure appropriate investment and development in transport infrastructure, and ensure the safety of the transport network.	