



South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Submission

Non-Technical Summary of the Sustainability Appraisal Report

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South Cambridgeshire District Council

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| Author (signature): | V Tanner-Tremaine  |
| Project Manager/Director (signature): | J Curran  |
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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This is the Non-Technical Summary of the Sustainability Appraisal Report (SA Report) which is being submitted alongside the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Submission. This report provides a summary in non-technical language of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) undertaken during the preparation of the Local Plan up to and including the Submission Stage.

The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan will set out the strategic spatial planning policies for the area in the period up to 2031. In order to test its effects on the environment and other important social and economic objectives the preparation of the Local Plan has been subject to an integrated Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process in line with the requirements of international and national regulations (hereafter in this report referred to as an SA). The early stages of the SA (including the scoping stage and most of the assessment of issues and options, including alternatives for sites) were carried out by South Cambridgeshire District Council. Independent consultants ENVIRON took over the SA process at the Submission Draft stage of the Local Plan.

The law requires that at some point in the drafting of the Local Plan an assessment of its sustainability (including environmental) effects is carried out and an SA Report is written and consulted on. The SA Report should set out the results of the SA process, outline why alternatives were selected, report on the assessment of the Local Plan and outline a programme for monitoring the environmental and sustainability effects of the plan. The full SA Report and its accompanying Appendices are available from the following website www.scambs.gov.uk/localplan.

The main SA Report consists of three parts and an Addendum as follows:

- **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan – SA Report - Part 1: Introduction**, setting the context for the SA, providing an outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan and identifying where the requirements of the SEA Regulations¹ have been met in the SA Report;
- **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan – SA Report - Part 2: Scoping Report**, setting out the scope of the SA, baseline data, the sustainability objectives and targets of relevant other documents, key sustainability issues and the assessment framework to be used to assess the Local Plan; and
- **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan – SA Report - Part 3: Results of the SA and Proposed Monitoring Strategy**, setting out the assessment methodology, the findings of the SA of the Local Plan Submission Draft and reasonable alternatives, identifying the significant environmental effects of the Local Plan and proposing a strategy for monitoring significant effects. This includes an addendum, setting out the assessment of the major changes to the Local Plan between the submission draft and this stage of submission. This includes the SA of a new section to policy H/1, under Chapter 7 Delivering High Quality Homes, covering Parish Council Led Allocations for Residential Development in Villages, and four new site specific allocations made under this policy.

¹ Statutory Instrument 2004 No. 1633: The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

This report is the separate Non-Technical Summary which summarises the information provided in the three Parts above.

1.2 Habitat Regulations Assessment

In addition a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been carried out on the plan in order to meet European and national laws which protect important wildlife (habitats and species) and this assessment has informed the SA.

The HRA assesses the plan in terms of its likely significant effects on the ecological integrity of the most valued nature conservation sites. These sites are called Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), (collectively called European sites), and Ramsar Sites. There is one European site within the district called Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC, which is important for a population of Barbastelle bat. Five other European sites are nearby but outside the district. All these sites were considered in the screening assessment to find out if the Local Plan could affect them.

An HRA has been carried out at various stages of the Local Plan preparation from the Issues and Options stage through to the Submission stage (this stage). At all stages of plan making the HRA has been able to conclude that there is not likely to be significant effects, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, on any of the European sites identified. The latest HRA assessed whether the proposed modifications to the Local Plan Submission Draft would be likely to have a significant effect and was able to conclude that there is not likely to be significant effects, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, on any of the European sites identified. The latest HRA Report is available to view and download from the Council's website here: www.scambs.gov.uk/localplan.

2 The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan

2.1 The Current Position

The Council is undertaking a review of its existing Local Development Framework, in the form of a new district wide Local Plan, which will establish growth requirements for the district up to 2031, identify land and areas where growth can take place, and policies to guide its implementation.

2.2 The Content, Vision and Objectives of the Local Plan

The purpose of the Local Plan is to set the long term spatial vision for the South Cambridgeshire district and it contains both strategic objectives and policies to help deliver that vision. The Local Plan has 10 Chapter:

Chapter 1 is the introduction which describes the overall purpose of the document.

Chapter 2 sets out the vision and objectives and development needs for South Cambridgeshire to 2031 together with the spatial strategy which focuses development on the edge of Cambridge, at new towns/new villages; and in selected villages. It also has policies for small scale development in villages. It includes a policy about phasing, delivering and monitoring of the plan to ensure that it continues to meet its objectives.

Chapter 3 contains the strategic sites which will contribute most to the delivery of sustainable development in South Cambridgeshire.

Chapter 4 is concerned with sustainable development, climate change, water resources and flooding.

Chapter 5 is concerned with design, landscape, and public realm.

Chapter 6 contains proposals to protect and enhance the historic built and the natural environment.

Chapter 7 is concerned with delivering high quality housing and includes village housing sites.

Chapter 8 deals with building a strong and competitive economy, including sections on employment, retail and tourism and development sites.

Chapter 9 is concerned with creating successful communities, including the provision of open space, leisure facilities and community facilities.

Chapter 10 deals with promoting and delivering sustainable transport and other kinds of infrastructure.

The Local Plan establishes a Vision for the district, that:

‘South Cambridgeshire will continue to be the best place to live, work and study in the country. Our district will demonstrate impressive and sustainable economic growth. Our residents will have a superb quality of life in an exceptionally beautiful, rural and green environment.’

The Objectives of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan are:

- A. To support economic growth by supporting South Cambridgeshire's position as a world leader in research and technology based industries, research, and education; and supporting the rural economy.
- B. To protect the character of South Cambridgeshire, including its built and natural heritage, as well as protecting the Cambridge Green Belt. New development should enhance the area, and protect and enhance biodiversity.
- C. To provide land for housing in sustainable locations that meets local needs and aspirations, and gives choice about type, size, tenure and cost.
- D. To deliver new developments that are high quality and well-designed with distinctive character that reflects their location, and which responds robustly to the challenges of climate change.
- E. To ensure that all new development provides or has access to a range of services and facilities that support healthy lifestyles and well-being for everyone, including shops, schools, doctors, community buildings, cultural facilities, local open space, and green infrastructure.
- F. To maximise potential for journeys to be undertaken by sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling, bus and train.

3 Sustainability Appraisal Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of the SA is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the plan. This section of the NTS outlines the work that was undertaken at each of the stages of the SA. Prior to the publication of this SA Report, the following reports have been produced:

| Stage of the plan | A summary of the results is available... | Full results are available... |
|--|---|--|
| Scoping | | Scoping Report (February 2012) |
| Local Plan Issues and Options Report | Initial Sustainability Appraisal (July 2012) Non-Technical Summary | Initial Sustainability Appraisal (July 2012) |
| Issue and Options 2 Part 1 - Development Strategy and Site Options on the Edge of Cambridge (January 2013) | | Issues and Options Appraisal of Development Strategy and Site Options on the Edge of Cambridge |
| Issue and Options 2 Part 2 - South Cambridgeshire Further Site Options | | Local Plan Initial SA Supplementary Report to accompany Issues and Options Part 2 January 2013 |
| Single Issue Consultation on a Football Stadium at Sawston | | The consultation document included a Sustainability Appraisal of the single site option. |
| Appraisal of the Submission Draft Local Plan document | In section (Section 4) of the SA Report of the Local Plan Submission Draft | The SA Report of the Local Plan Submission Draft (Parts 1-3 and accompanying Appendices, and a Non-Technical Summary) |
| Appraisal of the Submission Local Plan document | The summary of this latest stage of the plan is presented Section 4 of Part 3 of the main SA Report accompanying the Local Plan Submission. Non-Technical Summary with this report | The full assessment matrices are shown in Appendix 5 of Part 3 of the Submission Local Plan SA Report, and the SA Addendum to Part 3 which is presented in Appendix 6. |

The work completed to date and the publication of the SA Report aim to complete the following:

- Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope (scoping);
- Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects;
- Stage C: Preparing the SA Report; and
- Stage D: Consulting on the Local Plan and the accompanying SA Report.

Table 3.2 below outlines the work that should be carried out at each of these stages in order to meet the legal requirements of the SEA Regulations.² The work undertaken to date for these stages is then described in following sections.

| | | |
|---------|---|---|
| Stage A | Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the baseline situation. • Establish the key issues. • Develop the Sustainability Appraisal methodology. • Define objectives to assess the sustainability performance of the Plan. |
| Stage B | Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine what the situation would be with the plan. • Determine if any sustainability effects are significant. • Examine alternative ways of delivering the Plan. |
| Stage C | Preparing the SA Report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document the appraisal findings. |
| Stage D | Consulting on the draft plan or programme and the SA Report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make information available to stakeholders and the public. • Provide early and effective consultation. |
| Stage E | Monitoring implementation of the plan or programme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring whether predictions were accurate and that mitigation is effective. • Statement regarding the difference the process has made (adoption statement, prepared after the plan has been adopted). |

The methodology of each of these steps is outlined below. For more information you can refer to the main SA Report Parts 1, 2 and 3.

² The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 Statutory Instrument No.2004/1633 (commonly known as the 'SEA Regulations').

3.2 Stage A: Scoping

The collection of baseline information and information on other plans and programmes has been used to inform the SA process and the Local Plan. This has been done by identifying the sustainability issues in these other document, in particular any environmental protection objectives or environmental, social and economic problems in or facing the district. A Scoping Report was written in 2012 and this was consulted on with the statutory bodies with environmental responsibilities in February 2012. These were: Natural England, Environment Agency, and English Heritage. The purpose of the scoping report is to set out how the SA will be done, and what issues it should address and focus on.

Evidence in the Scoping Report was framed around ten themes, which taken together address the full range of sustainability issues.

| Environmental | Social | Economic |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Land | Health | Economic Activity |
| Pollution | Housing | Transport |
| Biodiversity | Inclusive Communities | |
| Landscape And Townscape | | |
| Climate Change | | |

Using this information the council has developed an SA Framework for assessing the plan objectives, plan options and plan policies for the Local Plan. This framework is shown in Table 3.3.

| Theme | Sustainability Objective |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Land | Minimise the irreversible loss of undeveloped land, economic mineral reserves, and productive agricultural holdings and the degradation / loss of soils |
| | Minimise waste production and support the reuse and recycling of waste products |
| Pollution | Improve air quality and minimise or mitigate against sources of environmental pollution |
| Biodiversity | Avoid damage to designated sites and protected species |
| | Maintain and enhance the range and viability of characteristic habitats and species |
| | Improve opportunities for people to access and appreciate wildlife and green spaces |
| Landscape and townscape | Maintain and enhance the diversity and local distinctiveness of landscape and townscape character |
| | Avoid damage to areas and sites designated for their historic interest, and protect their settings. |
| | Create places, spaces and buildings that work well, wear well and look |

| Table 3.3 SA Framework | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Theme | Sustainability Objective |
| | good |
| Climate change | Minimise impacts on climate change (including greenhouse gas emissions) |
| | Reduce vulnerability to future climate change effects |
| Health | Maintain and enhance human health |
| | Reduce and prevent crime and reduce fear of crime |
| | Improve the quantity and quality of publically accessible open space. |
| Housing | Ensure everyone has access to decent, appropriate and affordable housing |
| Inclusive communities | Redress inequalities related to age, disability, gender, race, faith, location and income |
| | Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (e.g. health, transport, education, training, leisure opportunities) |
| | Encourage and enable the active involvement of local people in community activities |
| Economic activity | Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy. |
| | Help people gain access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence |
| | Support appropriate investment in people, places, communications and other infrastructure |
| Transport | Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices. |
| | Secure appropriate investment and development in transport infrastructure, and ensure the safety of the transport network. |

A review of the Scoping Report was undertaken in February 2013, by independent consultants ENVIRON, to check that the report met the requirements of the relevant legislation and followed best practice. This review found that the Scoping Report was clear and included comprehensive baseline data.

3.3 Stage B: Assessing the elements of the plan

The SA has guided the development of the plan from the beginning of the Local Plan process. During Stage B reasonable alternative options to the selected plan have been tested and their sustainability effects identified and evaluated. Section 7 of this report and Appendix 3 of the main SA Report present information on the alternatives that have been assessed as part of the SA process at different stages of plan making.

A combination of expert judgement and analysis of baseline data has been used to judge the potential effects of the plan and the results have been entered into tables of results called matrices. A methodology is required in order to identify whether effects that are identified would be considered significant. This methodology is outlined in Table 3.4. Effects have been scored according to the scheme outlined below.

| Table 3.4: SA scoring | | |
|--|--|---------------|
| Score | Description | Symbol |
| Significant positive/beneficial impact | The policy/site fully achieves the SA objective and will have a positive effect with relation to characteristics of the effect and the sensitivity of the receptors (where known) | +++ |
| Minor positive/beneficial impact | The policy/site partly achieves the SA objective and has a positive effect with relation to characteristics of the effect and the sensitivity of the receptors (where known) | + |
| Neutral | The policy/site does not have an effect on the achievement of the SA objective | 0 |
| Minor negative impact | The policy/site will partially conflict with the SA objective and have a negative effect with relation to the characteristics of the effect and the sensitivity of the receptors (where known) | - |
| Significant negative impact | The policy/site will actively work against the SA objective and have a negative effect with relation to characteristics of the effect and the sensitivity of the receptors (where known) | --- |
| Uncertain | It is unclear whether there is the potential for a negative or positive effect on the SA objectives | ? |

3.4 Stage C: Preparing the SA Report

This document is the Non-Technical Summary of the Submission SA Report. It summarises the significant effects of the Submission Local Plan on the environment, social and economic factors.

3.5 Stage D: Consulting on the SA Report

This version of the SA Report has been produced for submission alongside the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Submission document.

4 Review of Other Objectives, Plans and Programmes

4.1 Relationship with other plans and programmes

Regulations on SA require the relationship that other plans and programmes could have with the Local Plan to be considered. A review of other relevant plans, policies and programmes (PPP) has been undertaken at the scoping stage, and this was then updated in March 2013. The updated PPP review can be found in Appendices 1-13 which were prepared by the Council. These accompany the SA Report Part 2: Scoping Report. The Local Plan has the following relationship with different types of plan and programme:

- International legislation and policy which sets a number of targets, objectives and obligations which planning documents must seek to achieve;
- National legislation and policy which outlines measures to achieve many of these obligations through setting regional and local targets for public bodies to achieve and by outlining principles which planning policies and decisions needs to adhere to; and
- Local and regional policy sets out more specific local targets and local actions needed to achieve them.

4.2 How environmental/sustainability objectives have been taken into account

Environmental and sustainability objectives presented within the plans and programmes reviewed have been used to develop a set of SA objectives relevant to the existing sustainability issues in the plan area. The SA objectives have been informed by the baseline data review as well as the review of other relevant plans and programmes. This set of SA objectives has formed the SA framework and this has been used to assess the sustainability of the Local Plan.

5 The Sustainability Baseline

Baseline data and information has been collected on the current state of the environment (including any problems, issues and characteristics of the plan area) and how it is likely to change in the absence of the plan. This enables the SA team to have an accurate view of what changes the plan could give rise to within the plan area. This baseline was collated in 2012 for the Scoping Report and then updated in 2013. For sources of data and more detailed baseline information see Appendices 1-13 which accompany the SA Report Part 2: Scoping Report. These can be viewed and downloaded from the Council's website here: www.scambs.gov.uk/localplan. The following sections present a broad summary of this information.

5.1.1 Summary of Situation without the Local Plan (for full information see Scoping Report Themes)

The SA process requires consideration of the 'business-as-usual' scenario, what the situation would be like if the Local Plan was not prepared. This is not as straight forward as considering a 'no development' situation. Without the Local Plan, development proposals would still be considered through planning applications, guided by national planning policy (the National Planning Policy Framework), and other legislation. Proposals would be considered on an ad hoc basis, without the development plan to take a strategic overview of development needs, and opportunities for enhancement. The topic theme chapters in the Scoping Report explore the business as usual scenario in relation to the individual issues identified.

Land - Opportunities may be lost to make best use of previously developed land, and support recycling.

Air Quality and pollution - would be addressed by national requirements and other regulations, but opportunities to address issues, strategically steer development, or seek higher levels of improvement may be lost.

Biodiversity - Designated sites will still be subject to protection and national planning policies will apply, but opportunities to promote improvement or guide development to the best areas at a strategic level would be lost.

Landscape, Townscape and Heritage – National policy would still apply, opportunities to establish local guidance would be lost.

Climate Change mitigation and adaption - national planning policies and national building regulations standards would apply. Opportunities would be missed to consider mitigation and adaptation opportunities through local policies and development planning.

Healthy Communities - Exact impacts are difficult to quantify, but without locally developed policies the opportunity to ensure health issues are properly addressed in planned growth and through redevelopment in existing areas may be missed. Response to the aging population profile could be less comprehensive.

Housing - Planning for the future provision of an appropriate level of housing is essential to support the local economy and without a plan it could be that housing is not delivered to meet the local housing needs and this could impact on the local economy. A high level of affordable housing need exists in the district, and without a plan lower levels of affordable housing may be achieved.

Inclusive Communities - Without the Local Plan, national planning policy, and the Council would still be bound by its duties under the Equality Act. However, without locally developed plans the Council would not be able to take into account the varied needs of the community as effectively. It would be able to provide less protection to village services, which could impact on rurality inequalities.

Economic Activity – The Council would be less able to respond to needs generated by the economy. There would be fewer opportunities to respond to issues identified in the Cambridge Cluster at 50 study, regarding evolution of the high technology clusters. This could impact on the achievement of economic growth.

Transport – There are high volumes of traffic on some major routes in the district. Whilst development would increase the local population, delivery of homes near to jobs and infrastructure could reduce the need to travel and support sustainable modes. Opportunities could be lost without a strategic approach to development.

5.1.2 Summary of the Sustainability Issues and Problems Identified

The Scoping Report identified a wide range of issues. For each, the report summarises the key sustainability issues and problems. A summary of the issues identified under each theme is set out below:

Land & Soil

- Limited supply of available previously developed land;
- Significant areas of high-grade agricultural land;
- High recycling rates, but targets seek greater improvements; and
- A variety of important minerals, including Sand and Gravel, worked extensively in the north of the district, and Chalk and Lower Greensand areas in the south.

Air Quality and Pollution

- Areas around A14 north of Cambridge, and the centre of Cambridge, are designated as Air Quality Management Areas;
- EU Water Framework Directive requires all inland and coastal waters to achieve 'good ecological status' by 2015 or, where this is not possible, by 2021 or 2027. 25 out of 30 river water bodies in the district are currently below this standard;
- Large area in the south of District designated as groundwater Source Protection Zone;
- Limited existing capacity at Sewage Treatment Works in some areas;
- Some parcels of land in the district are subject to land contamination, from varying sources;
- Existing noise sources in the district, including major roads network; and
- Existing sources of light and odour pollution, including Sewage Treatment Works, roads etc.

Biodiversity

- Range of important biodiversity habitats and species, but high level of fragmentation;
- European Protected sites within the district (Eversden and Wimpole Woods Special Area of Conservation) and nearby (including Ouse Washes to the north);

- SSSI, County Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodland, and wildlife corridors all present in the district; and
- Large parts of the district are deficient in accessible natural green space (according to Natural England's ANGSt analysis).

Landscape and Townscape

- Varied landscape comprising five distinct National Character Areas, erosion of landscape character has occurred in some areas;
- Around 25% of the district is designated as Green Belt;
- Settlements of varied and distinct local character, ranging from compact hamlets to larger villages with linear street patterns;
- Varied historic environment, including historic landscapes with archaeological features such as Fleam Dyke, Schedules Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas, and Listed Buildings; and
- Need for good design to reflect local character.

Climate Change

- Need to consider climate change mitigation and adaption;
- Carbon emissions per capita higher than UK average, primarily as a result of road transport;
- Lower levels of renewable energy capacity than other districts in Cambridgeshire (excluding Cambridge)
- The District is in an area of Serious Water Stress as designated by the Environment Agency; and
- Areas of the district are subject to flood risk from rivers and watercourses, or other sources such as surface water or groundwater.

Healthy Communities

- The "health" of people living in the district is generally significantly better than the average for England;
- Nationally, the District is one of the least deprived areas in the country;
- Gypsy and Traveller community, the District's largest ethnic group, identified as having relatively poor health;
- South Cambridgeshire has an ageing population. The highest growth is expected to occur in the 65+ age group;
- Health services concentrated in larger settlements. Only 21 settlements within the district have a doctor's surgery or health centre within their boundaries;
- Many villages do not meet the Council's existing sports and play space standards; and
- Levels of crime are lower than the county average, but the fear of crime is disproportionately high when compared to the actual rate of crime, particularly in the younger and older populations.

Inclusive Communities - Housing

- High level of housing need in the district, some to support natural growth but mainly to support the successful economy;

- Need to plan housing in sustainable locations. Adopted plans shifted development patterns towards edge of Cambridge, the new town of Northstowe and larger villages;
- High house prices, and high house price for earnings ratio (7.4);
- High level of need for affordable housing (total net annual need for 1,372 affordable homes over the next 5 years);
- Prior to recent policies, delivery was primarily of larger homes, not reflecting needs analysis;
- Around 1% of housing stock in the Cambridge Sub-Region is vacant; and
- Need for housing to meet specialist needs of elderly and disabled people, and for additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches.

Inclusive Communities – Redressing Inequalities and Involving the Community

- The Council's Single Equality Scheme 2011 provides useful information about different groups for which the Council has a duty to protect from discrimination, promote equality of opportunities and encourage good community relations;
- Rurality identified as particular issue, due to difficulties in accessing local services and facilities experienced by some rural communities. 56% of population live in villages without a Doctors surgery, primary school and food store; and
- The percentage of people that feel they can influence local decisions is higher in South Cambs than the national average.

Economic Activity

- A diverse high value economy, with national strengths in Research and Development, high value manufacturing, and software consultancy;
- Unemployment Rate lower than national average, and median pay levels higher;
- The Cambridge area has proved relatively resilient of the impacts of the downturn;
- High tech clusters are evolving, and the area may not be getting the most out of the sector;
- Shortage of skilled workers in some sectors;
- Primary retail centres that serve the area are outside the district (Cambridge and Market towns);
- The district's (and sub-region's) growing economy and population will make substantial demands on infrastructure requiring investment; and
- Despite policies protecting employment land in villages, evidence suggests that there continues to be a gradual loss of employment land in villages.

Transport

- High levels of congestion on radial routes into Cambridge at peak times;
- Increasing average commuting distances (10.2 miles in 2010 compared to 8.1 miles in 2009), 62% of journeys by car or van;
- Traffic density on Cambridgeshire's rural trunk 'A' roads (A14, A428, A11) is twice the national average, and is 40% above average on other rural 'A' roads. Traffic flow is 94% above the national average on rural trunk 'A' roads in Cambridgeshire and 40% on other rural main roads in the county;

- Good public transport services in larger villages, but limited services in many smaller villages away from transport corridors;
- Rate of death and serious injury per head of population in Cambridgeshire is 29% above the national average, although this is primarily a result of volume of traffic travelling though on the major road network (casualties per km travelled is less than the national average) (Road Safety Monitoring Report 2010); and
- Cycling levels are higher than the national average.

6 Assessment of Alternatives

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this stage of the SA is to test reasonable alternative options for the plan and in doing so, identify and evaluate their sustainability effects.

6.2 Approach to Alternatives Assessment

The Council has presented a wide range of 'Options/Alternatives' in the consultation papers it has produced, setting out alternatives for all relevant parts of the Local Plan document produced at each stage. The main stages of alternative testing were as follows:

- Alternatives to the plan approach were selected and tested through an SA of the issues and options in 2012. This included options for the levels of housing and jobs growth, policies to control the types and standards of development allowed, assets which must be protected;
- Strategic alternative approaches to the development strategy were tested in January 2013 in the Issues and Options 2 Part 1;
- Site options on the edge of Cambridge were tested in January 2013 in the Issues and Options 2 Part 1;
- Further reasonable site options in South Cambridgeshire were tested in January 2013 in the Issues and Options 2 Part 2;
- Alternative packages of sites to meet the further housing needs. Eight reasonable alternatives were assessed in the main SA Report Part 3 and in detail in Appendix 5 of that report.
- The proposed major modifications to the Local Plan (February 2014) included the allocation of four sites for small scale Parish led residential development. The reasonable alternatives considered by the Parishes and South Cambridgeshire District Council are set out and assessed in the SA Addendum to Part 3.

6.3 The reasons for selecting alternatives

The reasons for choosing the options, and reasons for rejecting the other reasonable alternative options presented throughout the plan-making process, including site and policy options are summarised in Appendix 3 Summary of Alternatives Tested and Preferred Approach, to the Part 3 of the main SA Report. Further and more detailed reasons are set out for each chapter in the audit tables in the separate Annex A, produced by the Council.

A summary of some of the reasons options were selected/rejected is given below:

- Housing and Jobs: Options were identified for the level of housing and jobs growth, guided by objectively produced forecasting. The chosen options represent the

objectively assessed needs, identified through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment;

- The Development Strategy: Approaches to the development strategy for the Cambridge area were considered jointly with Cambridge City Council. The implications of development at different strategic locations were considered. The chosen development strategy allocates development in the following order of preference:
 - on the edge of Cambridge;
 - at new settlements;
 - in the rural areas at better served villages.

Significant additional development on the edge of Cambridge was rejected on the basis of significant environmental impacts (in particular landscape, townscape impacts and the consequent historic environment impacts on the city of Cambridge). A number of new settlement options were selected, which would avoid these impacts but still provide opportunities for significant transport improvements. A limited amount of development was selected in the rural area, focusing on Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres.

- Site Allocations: Over 300 site options were tested, including through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment process. They ranged from new settlements to smaller village sites. A significant number were rejected early in the process as they were not considered reasonable alternatives. Over 60 options were subject to consultation through the issues and options process. Reasons for selection and rejection of individual sites can be found in the main report;
- Topic based policies: A range of alternatives for topic based policies were considered. In some cases the choice was between having a policy, or having no policy and leaving an issue to national planning guidance. Many of these policies provide positive impacts on sustainability objectives, and will assist in mitigating impacts from the plan or through the planning application process;
- Alternatives around the approach to climate change mitigation and adaption, focused on the standards that should be sought for renewable energy, sustainable construction, and water efficiency. The standards were selected to balance the benefits with costs and impact on viability;
- The plan includes policies seeking to deliver high quality places, and alternatives were considered regarding the best way this could be achieved;
- Built and Natural Environment policies have been included to protect and enhance the landscape character, biodiversity, and to seek the delivery and enhancement of Green Infrastructure. Alternative ways of protecting village character were considered, and the alternative of including Local Green Spaces to identify the most special areas was selected. The focus of alternatives on protecting the historic environment was around how policies should be structured, and a single policy was selected as the preferred approach. A policy was also included on adapting to climate change, to provide guidance on the appropriate balance between protecting heritage and adapting to climate change;
- Alternatives were considered regarding housing density and mix. It was decided that that the plan should include guidance on both, to better match the housing developed with needs, and to provide guidance on density but also flexibility to reflect local circumstances. The level of affordable housing that should be sought was considered, with 40% selected as it remains a viable target. A number of issues and alternatives were considered regarding housing in the rural area. It was decided to include policies

which guide the location and design of Gypsy and Traveller sites, to provide clear guidance on how proposals would be considered;

- A key issue regarding the economy was whether to continue with a policy on the selective management of the economy in some form, or whether the policy should be removed. On balance the evidence suggests the benefits of removing the policy currently outweigh the costs, and evidence suggests benefits of greater flexibility. Alternatives around employment development in the rural area centred around where to maintain policies with strict thresholds, or provide a greater degree of flexibility. Alternatives selected provide greater flexibility, responding to evidence that previous policies were proving unduly restrictive;
- Alternatives considered how best to support development of new communities, and policies have been included setting out specific requirements to meet the needs generated. Policies provide standards for open space provision, in order to ensure the needs of new communities are met. Alternatives regarding sub regional facilities, including a community stadium, were considered jointly with Cambridge City Council. It was determined not to include a policy or allocation in the plan, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council recognise that delivering such facilities within the sub-region is desirable, but are not satisfied that a compelling case exists for the need for a community stadium or other facilities in a Green Belt location. A separate proposal was considered for a stadium at Sawston. There is not currently sufficient certainty that environmental impacts of the site can be satisfactorily addressed. In addition it is not considered that the need is sufficient to warrant its removal from the Green Belt;
- Policies seek to ensure development is located in the most appropriate locations, minimising, wherever possible, the need to travel to meet day to day needs. A range of alternative approaches to car parking were considered, and the plan raises standards for residential development slightly from previous plans, responding to problems caused by insufficient parking;
- Alternatives for Parish led residential allocations within villages to meet locally identified housing needs were identified by the relevant Parish Councils and consulted upon with the local community. Alternatives were selected or rejected by the Parish Councils based on the level of community support for the development of each site.

7 Results of the SA

7.1 Introduction

Table 7.1 sets out the SA topic areas where potential significant positive and significant negative, and also uncertain effects were identified from action proposed within the Local Plan, and from the plan in combination with other plans, for each of the sustainability topics. Table 7.2 list the Local Plan policies which could lead to potential significant and uncertain effects on the SA topics. (Please refer to the Local Plan Submission for the text of the policies).

Mitigation measures are measures suggested to prevent, reduce or offset negative or uncertain effects. Enhancement measures are measures that can enhance any positive or neutral effects identified. Mitigation and enhancement measures have been outlined in Appendix 5 to Part 3 of the main SA Report.

Readers are advised to read the main SA Report for a comprehensive list of all the significant and uncertain effects identified.

| Topics for which potential significant positive/beneficial effects were identified | Topics for which potential significant negative effects were identified | Topics for which potential uncertain effects were identified |
|--|--|---|
| Land/ soil Characteristic Habitats and Species Pollution Green spaces Landscape and Townscape Heritage Places Climate change mitigation Climate change adaptation Health Crime Open space Housing Inequalities Services Economy Work Investment Travel | Land/ soil Waste Pollution Landscape and Townscape Health | Land/ soil Waste Pollution Designated sites and Protected Species Characteristic Habitats and Species Landscape and Townscape Heritage Places Climate change mitigation Housing Inequalities Community Travel |

| Table 7.2: Summary of the potential significant effects and uncertain identified within the SA | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| SA Objective | Significant beneficial effects | Significant negative effects | Uncertain effects | Mitigation and enhancement measures |
| 1. Land / soil | S/12 SS/4 NH/3 H2, H3, H4, H15, H16, H17, H1:a E/1, E/3, E/4, E/5, E/7 E/8, E/11, E/15, E/16, E/18 | S/5, S/6, SS/3, SS/7 and SS/8 | S/8, S/9, S/10 NH/6 H18, H19, H20, H21 E/1 SC/4, SC/5, SC/6, SC/7, SC/8 TI/9 | The impacts of Policy S/5 are mitigated through the individual site allocation policies and the application of general protection policies within the Local Plan. |
| 2. Waste | SS/5, SS/6 and SS/8 CC/6 HQ/1 NH/4 NH/5 NH/6 NH/7 H22 TI/8 | | SS/4 TI/3, TI/9 | |
| 3. Pollution | CC/7 TI/2 | Policy S/5 | S/6, S/11 SS/1, SS/2, SS/3, SS/5 CC/5 H20 E/1, E/8, E/7 | Mitigation measure: Monitoring of car parking standards should be set up to ensure standards are helping to meet the objectives of the Local Plan. |
| 4. Designated Sites and Protected Species | | | S/4, S/6, S/6 SS/2, SS/4 H14, H16, H17 H/1:k E/5 SC/1, SC/5 | Mitigation for Policy H/1:k - The policy should require a protected species survey in particular for bats, barn owl. A general ecological survey should be required, in particular to assess the use of buildings as nest sites for birds such as |

| Table 7.2: Summary of the potential significant effects and uncertain identified within the SA | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| SA Objective | Significant beneficial effects | Significant negative effects | Uncertain effects | Mitigation and enhancement measures |
| | | | TI/1, TI/9 | swallow, swift and house martin. Local Plan policy NH/4 provides policy for protected species in relation to development and for enhancement opportunities in general. |
| 5. Characteristic Habitats and Species | SS/5, SS/6, SS/7 HQ/1 NH/4 NH/5 NH/6 NH/7 E/7 TI/8 | | S/4, S/5, S/6, S/8, S/9 H6, H14, H16 SC/1, SC/5, TI/1, TI/9 | |
| 6. Green spaces | S/6 SS/5, SS/6, SS/7, SS/8 HQ/1 NH/6 E/8 SC/7, SC/8 TI/8 | | S/11 | |
| 7. Landscape and Townscape | S/4 HQ/1 NH/2 NH/8, NH/9 NH/10 NH/11 H2 E/1, E/17 | | S/5 SS/2, SS/7 CC/2, CC/3 H4, H6, H10, H14, H17 E/7, E/18 SC/1, SC/5, TI/9 | |

| Table 7.2: Summary of the potential significant effects and uncertain identified within the SA | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| SA Objective | Significant beneficial effects | Significant negative effects | Uncertain effects | Mitigation and enhancement measures |
| 8. Heritage | S/4 HQ/1 NH/8 NH/14, NH/15 | | S/5 H2, H6, H14, H17 E/7, E/18 SC/1, SC/5 TI/9 | |
| 9. Places | H2 E/1 | | CC/3 E/18 | |
| 10. Climate change mitigation | S/6 CC/1 CC/2 CC/3 HQ/1 NH/6 NH/15 TI/4 | | S/6 SS/7 CC/2, CC/3 H2 TI/3 | |
| 11. Climate change adaptation | CC/1, CC/9 HQ/1 | | | |
| 12. Health | H4, H22 SC/5, SC/14 TI/6, TI/8 | | SS/3 | |
| 13. Crime | HQ/1 | | | |
| 14. Open Space | SS/5, SS/7 HQ/1 SC/7, SC/8 | | S/4, S/7, S/11 | |
| 15. Housing | S/5, S/6 | | H2 | |

| Table 7.2: Summary of the potential significant effects and uncertain identified within the SA | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| SA Objective | Significant beneficial effects | Significant negative effects | Uncertain effects | Mitigation and enhancement measures |
| | S/8, S/9 S/10, S/11, S/12 H9, H10, H11, H12, H13, H14, H15, H16 | | | |
| 16. Inequalities | HQ/1, H8, H9 TI/9 | | H18 | |
| 17. Access to Services | S/6 S/8 S/12 SS/2, SS/2, SS/3, SS/6, SS/7, SS/8 H7 TI/8 | | | |
| 18. Community activities | | | E2 | |
| 19. Economy | S/5 E/1, E/2, E21 TI/4 | | | |
| 20. Work | S/5, S/6 S/8 S/9 E/1, E/2, E8 | | | |
| 21. Investment | S/6 S/7 Policies S/8 and S/9 SS/5, SS/6, SS/7, SS/8 H1 E/1 | | | |
| 22. Travel | S/6 | | H4 | |

| Table 7.2: Summary of the potential significant effects and uncertain identified within the SA | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| SA Objective | Significant beneficial effects | Significant negative effects | Uncertain effects | Mitigation and enhancement measures |
| | SS/1, SS/2, SS/3, SS/4, SS/5, SS/6, SS/7, SS/8 H7 E/1, E/2, E/8, E/16, E17, E19 TI/1 | | E/7, E/15, E/18, E20 TI/3 | |
| 23. Transport Infrastructure | S/6 S/7 S/8 S/12 SS/2, SS/3, SS/4, SS/5, SS/6, SS/8 H1 TI/1, TI/8 | | H/1:i, H/1:j | As mitigation for policies H/1:i, H/1:j suitable policy guidance is already included in the Local Plan by policy TI/2: Planning for Sustainable Travel. |

7.2 Cumulative effects assessment

Regulations governing SA require an assessment of cumulative effects. Cumulative effects arise, where several developments each have insignificant effects but together have a significant effect; or where the effects of different elements of the plan will have a combined significant effect. The term can also be used to describe synergistic effects, which interact to produce a total effect greater than the sum of the individual effects. The cumulative effects assessment examined the potential for cumulative, including synergistic and antagonistic effects, from action within the plan for each of the sustainability topics.

Separate cumulative effects assessments have been undertaken following the assessment of the Local Plan, as follows:

- An assessment of the cumulative effects of the plan as a whole;
- An assessment of the potential for cumulative effects of the Local Plan as a whole with other programmes, plans, policies and projects.

Some of the *potential* cumulative significant effects identified were:

- Potential **negative cumulative effect** from unavoidable permanent loss of high grade agricultural land;
- Potential **negative cumulative effect** from the levels of development proposed in the plan period, on air quality;
- Potential **negative cumulative effects on access to services**, in particular secondary education, from development at Bourn Airfield and Cambourne West;
- Potential **negative cumulative effects on landscape** from the urbanising effects of ribbon development south of the A428.
- Potential **negative cumulative effects on landscape**
- Potential for **cumulative negative effects** on waste generation and resource use from increased built development within the Plan Area and also potential for an increase in minerals traffic which could combine with construction traffic relating to development;
- Potential **positive cumulative and synergistic effects** in terms of the provision of new development across the Plan Area contributing towards decent homes for everyone; reducing poverty and social exclusion, and creating vibrant communities; and
- Potential **positive cumulative and synergistic effects** in terms of the provision of new strategic green infrastructure and biodiversity across the Plan Area.

How the Local Plan has sought to address the potential cumulative **negative** effects:

- The Local Plan proposes mitigation measures including secondary school provision at Bourn Airfield to mitigate for any negative effects on access to education from Bourne Airfield or Cambourne West. If these mitigation measures are successful the residual cumulative effects on access to services (secondary education) will be **neutral**;
- Local Plan policies require landscape strategies to address the impacts on landscape from development along the A428 corridor. If the landscaping mitigating measures and Landscape Strategy are successful the residual negative cumulative effects on landscape character are likely to be **minor**; and
- The other identified cumulative effects relate to the amount of development proposed in the Local Plan, and the Local Plan has sought to minimise the effects as far as is

possible within the powers of the plan. However, there will inevitably be some residual negative effects which cannot be further mitigated for.

Potential **residual negative cumulative effects** have been identified in relation to use of agricultural land, minerals reserves (sand and gravel), air quality, energy, water and waste generation as potentially resulting from the Local Plan and these plans:

- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals and Waste LDF (Core Strategy 2011, Site Specific Proposals 2012)
- Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026;
- Cambridge Local Plan 2006;
- Huntingdonshire Core Strategy DPD and Development Management DPD;
- East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy DPD;
- Area Action Plan for Cambridge East;
- Northstowe Area Action Plan;
- Cambridge East Area Action Plan;
- Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan; and
- North West Cambridge Area Action Plan DPD.

At this time it is difficult to predict the level of significance of these effects with a great level of certainty as some of these plans which contribute to these effects are currently under review.

Potential **residual positive cumulative effects** have been identified in relation to biodiversity and green infrastructure as a result of the Local Plan and the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy.

7.3 Difficulties encountered in the assessment

The purpose of this work is to assess the likelihood of significant sustainability effects. SA relies on expert judgement, which is guided by knowledge of the likely effects of the plan, the baseline data available and responses and information provided by consultees and other stakeholders. The assessment has been carried out and reported using an expert, judgement-led qualitative assessment. A 'precautionary approach' was taken, especially with qualitative judgements. Regulation 12 (3)(a) of the SEA Regulations (The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) states that the Environmental Report shall include information taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment. We have met the requirements of Regulation 12 (3)(a) through the description of the baseline environment. This information is contained in Appendices 1-13 which accompany Part 2 of the SA Report.

Every effort has been made to provide an accurate baseline review which has been effective at providing an understanding of current issues and to there has been sufficient information available to enable an informed and detailed appraisal. However, some difficulties and data limitations were encountered:

- Some data is reliant on the Census, which is only updated every 10 years;
- Monitoring of some indicators regarding quality of life is only undertaken periodically through surveys. The Quality of Life survey, and Places Survey have previously provided information for significant effect indicators regarding: residents satisfaction

with the quality of the built environment; residents who feel their local area is harmonious; people who felt they can influence decisions in their local area; people who have participated in volunteering. The last survey was in 2008, and no follow up surveys are currently scheduled;

- Monitoring of the Code for Sustainable Homes by CLG currently is not disaggregated by code level. This means information on the amount of development achieving different levels of the code is not currently available;
- Percentage of Rights of Way that are easy to use is no longer a national performance indicator, meaning that there is no national comparator data; and
- The Economic downturn has been longer and deeper than anticipated. This means that economic modelling even only 2 or 3 years old does not reflect the current situation. Additional modelling is being prepared to assist the plan making process.

Difficulties encountered during the sustainability appraisal include:

- At the Issues and Options stages the full policy wording had not yet been developed which meant a broad approach to assessment had to be undertaken. The identification of absolute impacts was more difficult and therefore a comparative approach was often taken; and.
- The appraisal of the different broad development strategies / options available for growth was necessarily a high level appraisal of strategic options and therefore the absolute sustainability impacts for many of the SA objectives would depend on the specific site options identified for development, and as such these are more appropriately explored elsewhere.

The SEA Regulations state that effects assessment should include assessment of secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects. At this strategic level the information is often not available to assess to this level of detail. However, where information is available on the likelihood of different types of effects this has been included in the matrices.

8 Monitoring

The SEA Regulations require the significant environmental effects of plans and programmes to be monitored, in order to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects, and to be able to take appropriate remedial action. The monitoring undertaken on the Local Plan will help to:

- Monitor the significant effects of the plan;
- Track whether the plan has had any unforeseen effects; and
- Ensure that action can be taken to reduce / offset the significant effects of the plan.

The Local Plan process will itself include a comprehensive monitoring programme which is focused on the achievement of the plan's objectives. This monitoring programme will enable the council to track the success of individual policies and also to monitor the baseline environmental, economic and social conditions of the plan area.

The requirements of the SEA Regulations focus on monitoring the significant and unforeseen effects of the plan. Therefore, the SA monitoring framework will focus only on monitoring those effects that are significant or uncertain. The monitoring framework is included within Part 3 of the main SA Report w. The monitoring framework relates to the residual effects of the Local Plan..

The final agreed SA monitoring programme will be included in the SA adoption statement (once the Local Plan is adopted) and this will reflect any changes made during the Public Examination and prior to adoption.

In summary the monitoring framework seeks to monitor the issues outlined in Table 8.1 below. Those in bold relate to the likely significant effects of implementing the Local Plan.

| Potential issue or SA Topic | Proposed indicators | Frequency of reporting |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Land | Percentage of new and Converted Dwellings on Previously Developed Land Amount and Type of Completed Employment on Previously Developed Land Average Density of New Residential Development Completed | Annual |
| Pollution (air quality) | Annual average concentration of Nitrogen Dioxide ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) (at monitoring points) Annual mean number of days when PM_{10} levels exceeded a daily mean of $50\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ No of declared Air Quality Management Areas and locations within 10% of threshold | Annual |
| Pollution (Water Quality) | % of surface waters meet the Water Framework Directive 'good' status or better for water quality | Annual |
| Waste reduction and recycling | Amount of municipal waste arising, and managed by management type and the percentage each management type represents of the waste managed | Annual |

Table 8.1: Proposed Monitoring Programme – Significant Effects Indicators

| Potential issue or SA Topic | Proposed indicators | Frequency of reporting |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Construction waste | Tonnage of construction and demolition waste produced and proportion that is recycled / reused. | Annual |
| Biodiversity loss from development | Number of development schemes completing relevant biodiversity avoidance or mitigation measures. Amount of new development within, or likely to adversely affect internationally or nationally important nature conservation areas. | |
| Biodiversity - Protected sites | Change in area of sites of biodiversity importance (SPA, SAC, RAMSAR, SSSI, NNR, LNR, CWS) | Annual for SPA, SAC, Ramsar and SSSI, NNR Ad hoc LNR and CWS |
| Biodiversity - Protected sites | Change in area of sites of biodiversity importance (SPA, SAC, RAMSAR, SSSI, NNR, LNR, CWS) % SSSIs in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition | Annual |
| Landscape | % planning permission granted which are inconsistent with local landscape character | Annual |
| | Areas inconsistent with landscape character | Annual |
| Townscape | % of total built-up areas falling within Conservation Areas | Annual |
| Heritage assets | Number of Listed Buildings and number that are at risk | Annual |
| | Number of other historic assets, and historic assets at risk | Annual |
| Places | Satisfaction rating for Quality of the built environment Buildings for Life Assessments – Number of Developments achieving each standard | Annual |
| Climate Change | Residential Development assessed for Code For Sustainable Homes Carbon Dioxide emissions by sector and per capita Renewable energy capacity installed by type (in MegaWatts) Kilowatt hours of gas consumed per household per year, Kilowatt hours of electricity consumed per household per year Water consumption per head per day (Cambridge Water Company area) Amount of new development completed on previously undeveloped functional floodplain land, and in flood risk | Annual |

Table 8.1: Proposed Monitoring Programme – Significant Effects Indicators

| Potential issue or SA Topic | Proposed indicators | Frequency of reporting |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------|
| | areas, without agreed flood defence measures | |
| Health | Life expectancy at birth % of residents with a long-term illness (Census data) | Annual |
| Crime | Number of recorded crimes per 1000 people Percentage of people feeling safe after dark | Annual |
| Housing | Total and percentage of Dwellings completed that are affordable House price to earnings ratio Delivery of Extracare Housing Number of new Gypsies and Travellers pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots | Annual |
| Inclusive Communities | % of residents who feel their local area is harmonious % of residents that definitely agree or tend to agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together Index of multiple deprivation | Annual |
| | Amount of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport journey time of key services | Annual |
| | % of adults who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area % of residents that 'definitely agree' and 'tend to agree' that they can influence decisions affecting their local area | Annual |
| Economic Activity | Number of People in Employment Annual net change in VAT registered firms Industrial composition of employee jobs | Annual |
| Work Opportunities | Percentage of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance % of Residents aged 16-64 in employment and working within 5km of home or at home (Census data) Economic Activity Rate Median Gross Household income | Annual |
| Investment | Investment Secured for Infrastructure and Community Facilities through developer contributions Percentage of 15/16 year olds achieving 5 or more GCSE/GNVQ passes at A* to C grade | Annual |
| Transport | Vehicle flows across the South Cambridgeshire – Cambridge City boundary over 12 hour period | Annual |
| | Cycling trips index | Annual |
| | Congestion – average journey time per mile during the am peak environment | Annual |

Table 8.1: Proposed Monitoring Programme – Significant Effects Indicators

| Potential issue or SA Topic | Proposed indicators | Frequency of reporting |
|---|--|-------------------------------|
| | Investment secured for transport infrastructure through developer contributions | Annual |
| | People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents | Annual |
| Sustainable transport Car Parking Standards (to ensure standards are helping to meet the objectives of the Local Plan with regards to generating a modal shift towards more sustainable modes of transport) | Number of development schemes implementing minimum or greater provision of cycle parking | Annual |
| Reducing journeys made by car | Amount of development within 15 minutes walking distance (1000 meters) and 10 minutes cycling distance (2km) of rural centres | Annual |

9 Next steps

The independent Examination in Public will test the “soundness” of the Local Plan and consider representations on that basis. The Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State to conduct the Examination will either recommend that the Local Plan is adopted as it is (or with minor modifications), or will recommend non-adoption. If then asked to do so by the council, the Inspector will recommend modifications to the document that would make it sound. South Cambridgeshire District Council may then only adopt the document with those modifications.

An SA adoption statement will need to be published in accordance with the SEA Regulations. These regulations state that as soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of the plan a statement should be produced and published setting out how environmental considerations and opinions expressed through consultation have been taken into account in the plan-making process.

The SEA Regulations set out the particulars that should be covered by the statement as follows:

- How environmental (sustainability) considerations have been integrated into the Local Plan;
- How the Environmental (SA) Report has been taken into account;
- How opinions expressed in response to consultation have been taken into account;
- The reasons for choosing the Local Plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
- The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental (sustainability) effects of the implementation of the Local Plan.