

**SPECIAL ENVIRONMENT  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**15 May 2007  
9.30am –11.50am

**PRESENT:** Councillors Ward (Chair), Bailey, Baker, Durrant, Herbert, Holland, Holness and Kightley.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Executive Councillor Reid (Planning and Transport)

**FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL****07/ENV/30 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Newbold and Shah.

**07/ENV/31 Declarations of Interest**

Councillors declared the following personal interests:

In relation to minute number 07/ENV/33:

Councillor Holness as a member of the University of Cambridge;

Councillor Kightley as an employee of NIAB.

**07/ENV/32 Public Questions**

None.

**07/ENV/33 Cambridge Development Strategy: Issues and Options Report**

*(see also record of decision 07/ENV/16)*

Before the Committee considered the report, the Chair ruled that under 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Cambridge Development Strategy, Appendix B: Sustainability Appraisal despatched to members and placed on deposit on 10 May be considered despite not being made publicly available five clear days prior to the meeting.

The reason was that the information was not available at the time of agenda despatch. His view was that, despite only being available at very short notice, the appendix should be considered by the Committee.

The Chair also reminded the committee of the other two smaller documents contained in the third circulation – amendments to the draft Issues and Options Report resulting from the Development Plan Steering Group on 24 April and the List of Consultees.

The officer explained that the Sustainability Appraisal in Appendix B was an independent assessment of the Cambridge Development Strategy carried out by consultants commissioned by the Council for that purpose. It would be included in the public consultation. Sustainability assessment was part of the process for all documents which formed the Local Development Framework.

---

During the meeting, members referred to paragraphs in the Appraisal with which they did not agree. As a result, it was agreed that a disclaimer would be added and that the officers would also ask the consultants to reconsider the paragraphs mentioned to see if they were willing to reconsider the wording and the opinions expressed.

The Executive Councillor said that dealing with the possible impact of climate change was a primary objective of the council and so all policy documents were to include references to this.

Councillors made the following general comments about the Report:

1. Concern that the final strategy would not be adopted until December 2009 and that many pertinent factors could change in the interim. Could the document be used before its full adoption?

The officers explained that the timescale followed government guidelines and that the process was very bureaucratic. The process could be speeded up but there were two factors to consider. There would be resource implications and any appeals against planning decisions based on the Core Strategy before its adoption could go against the council because of that fact.

2. That Cambridge give a lead by adopting higher targets than those set by national government for CO2 reduction;

Agreed to include text to reflect that.

3. A wish to see more reference to renewable energy on a large scale as well as a small scale with options about what might be done, to enable the public to give feedback. What could the Council do in this regard?
4. There might be a place for use of renewable energy sources on the city outskirts. However, renewable energy sources such as biomass were still on a knife-edge with regard to viability. Any possible use required a long lead in time (3 years?). So a request to look at options and possible inducements that could be used to encourage renewable energy.
5. Cities had to look more at energy saving because of the lack of available land for energy production. A wish to see the target for energy saving set above that currently required under building regulations. It would also be good to include in the consultation the possibility of a strategy to renew existing housing (both public and private) that currently was most energy inefficient to gauge how the market might respond.
6. To tap into collective community action about dealing with the inefficiencies of the existing built environment, feedback was required from the public, so it would be good to ask the public specific questions.
7. A concern that the public might not appreciate what was meant by social housing and affordable housing and could the definitions be improved.

Officers said that the LDF encouraged energy saving as did the existing Local Plan. Use of biomass for energy generation had not been ruled out and the University was exploring whether they could use that on their site in the North West Fringe.

**Agreed** that revised text would be drafted and agreed by the Executive Councillor following consultation with the Chair and Spokes.

The Planning Policy Manager agreed with a member regarding the various categories of housing, that the matter was complicated. He explained that a report on the

---

Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing was due to come to the July meeting of Environment Scrutiny Committee and that report would explain the distinctions in more detail than was possible in the Core Strategy.

The following detailed amendments to the report were proposed and would be agreed by the Executive Councillor following consultation with the Chair and Spokes:

### Chapter 2: Policy Context

- Re paragraph 2.2: To be reworded to include reference to the relationship between local and national standards and strategies.

### Chapter 4: Cambridge 2021

- Clarification required of the meaning of Options 2b (To ensure that new development is in sustainable locations) and 2i (To protect the landscape setting of Cambridge).

The Executive Councillor explained that in 2b she had wanted to indicate that new development was accessible by sustainable modes of transport. With regard to 2i there were different views amongst the local authority partners about what the city edge should look like (= landscape setting).

The officers explained that 2b also needed to include land at risk of flooding.

Landscape setting in 2i referred to the green belt and the reasons for having a green belt. In the case of Cambridge this was because it was an historic city and this needed to be protected.

- Option 2n had been amended following the Development Plan Steering Group but it was agreed to amend that as follows:

To ensure that the local ~~tourism industry~~ visitor economy takes into account the needs of residents, the environment, business and visitors. An additional entry would be put in the glossary to explain the link with tourism.

- Option 3 which relates to a thriving City Centre, needed to include reference to the protection and enhancement of the City Centre as a residential area

After considerable discussion, **agreed** that the final sentence of Option 3 about Cambridge as a Sub-Regional shopping destination be deleted.

The officers referred to feedback from the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) received since the report was published. The LSP wanted to see more emphasis on community feel.

**Agreed** that an additional paragraph about this and a question relating to it be added. In relation to this point, the committee asked that the issue of gated developments which seemed to mitigate against a community feel be borne in mind for consideration in documents where more detail was required.

### Chapter 5: Key Issues and Options

- Paragraph 5.7: Include a reference to the changing pattern of rainfall and the possible reduction in ground water as it was important to be sure there would be enough water to supply all the new developments.
  - Paragraph 5.10: Clarification required of the “us” and “to build”.
-

**Agreed** that this paragraph be redrafted.

- Accessibility section: A point in relation to Issue A3 but one that applied more generally also, namely that a specific question be asked about transport infrastructure and the environmental limits to include meadows and commons.

Officers explained that the Area Action Plan and the development documents for each of the new growth areas was where the detailed policy would be laid down; the Core Strategy was more over-arching. In addition, Option 20 was intended to cover meadows and commons under the general term open spaces.

- Nevertheless there was an inconsistency in mentioning land belonging to the university but not land belonging to the council such as commons and meadows eg paragraph 5.20.

**Agreed** that officers would address this and it be part of the consultation with Chair and Spokes before agreement by the Executive Councillor.

**Agreed** that paragraph 5.18 would be redrafted to indicate that the County Council had responsibility for transport strategy rather than management and that the City Council recognised the need for joint working.

- Option 13a “Urban intensification: delivering extra homes by increasing densities on existing housing sites” needed more explicit reference to the height of dwellings.

**Agreed.**

**Agreed** that paragraph 1.5.32 of the sustainability document (which referred to the importance of ensuring that university and sixth form college expansion was of benefit to the whole community) be included in the main document.

**Agreed** that reference to provision of public art and of civic pride in the built environment be included in the environment and design section.

The Committee suggested the following additions to the List of Consultees in the General Consultees section:

More organisations with technical knowledge about renewable sources of energy such as the Energy Saving Trust; the Green Group of the Home Builders Federation; Cambridge University Student Union; Anglia Ruskin Students’ Union; key faculties in both universities such as Architecture and Engineering; other key political parties not represented on the Council; the Conservation & Design Panel; all organisations responding to the consultation on the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 6 votes to 0) the recommendations for the Executive Councillor:

- 2.1 That the amended content of the Issues and Options Report be agreed by the Executive Councillor following consultation with the Chair and Spokes of the Scrutiny Committee and that the amended Report and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal set out in Appendices A (as amended) and B (of the officer report) be circulated for consultation.
  - 2.2 The list of consultees set out in Appendix C of the
-

officer report with the additions agreed at the meeting

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

**07/ENV/34 Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document and the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report (Planning and Transport)**  
*(see also record of decision 07/ENV/17)*

The Committee suggested the following amendments:

- In paragraph 9.1.2 of the draft document that figures for the combined total of waste being recycled and composted for 2006/07 be included if they are available;
- That paragraph 10.2 on biodiversity be reworded.

In response to a question about the few references to energy saving technology such as natural ventilation systems, the officer explained that these were included under the section on passive solar design. It was a difficult area because of the need to avoid duplication with current building regulations.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the recommendation by votes 6 to 0:

To approve the draft SPD (with some minor wording amendments) and its accompanying Sustainability Assessment for adoption having had regard to responses to public consultation and the appropriate assessment.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendation.

The meeting ended at 11.50am.

**CHAIR**

---