



**Mill Road Depot Site, Draft Planning and Development Brief
Supplementary Planning Document**

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL SCREENING REPORT

May 2016

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Cambridge City Council as landowner appointed Allies and Morrison to lead on the redevelopment of the Mill Road Depot site. The City Council as the Local Planning Authority has been working in partnership with Allies and Morrison to produce a Draft Planning and Development Brief for the Mill Road Depot site, which is intended to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The purpose of this SPD is to ensure that any future redevelopment respects the surrounding area and takes full advantage of the opportunity for housing, public open space and new routes through the site.
- 1.2 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of a plan, and alternatives, in terms of sustainability issues, with a view to avoiding and mitigating adverse effects and maximising the positives. The purpose of SA is to ensure that the potential sustainability effects of a plan are addressed through an assessment of the sustainability impacts of objectives, actions, policies, allocations and their alternatives at an early stage in plan preparation. It is a requirement that SA is undertaken in line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, which were prepared in order to transpose into national law the requirements of the EU Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) Directive¹.
- 1.3 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required that all Local Development Documents, including development plan documents (now local plans) and SPDs be subject to SA prior to publication. Alterations to Section 19(5) of the 2004 Act under the Planning Act 2008 removed the requirements for local planning authorities to produce an SA for SPDs. The rationale behind this is that SPDs do not provide any new policies or site allocations, but provide supplementary guidance relating to policies set out in overarching local plans that will have been subject to an SA incorporating the requirements of the SEA Directive. See section 2 below for the policy context for the Mill Road Depot Site, Draft Planning and Development Brief.
- 1.4 However, an SPD may occasionally be found likely to give rise to significant effects which have not been formally assessed in the context of a higher-level planning document. Therefore, local planning authorities need to screen their SPDs to ensure that the legal requirements for SA are met where there are impacts that have not been covered in the appraisal of the parent plan or where an assessment is required by the SEA Directive.
- 1.4 Cambridge City Council does not consider that an SA/SEA is likely to be required for the purpose of the Mill Road Depot Site, Draft Planning and Development Brief as outlined in this report, which sets out the assessment on which the Council's screening opinion is based.

¹ Directive 2001/42/EC

2. MILL ROAD DEPOT SITE, DRAFT PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

2.1 The Mill Road Depot site fronts onto Mill Road, as shown in Figure 1 below, and is situated between the Cambridge to Ely railway line, Kingston Street and Hooper Street. The site is primarily in the ownership of Cambridge City Council and includes Cambridge City Council office space, commercial lettings, two community facilities (which will be retained) and leased garages (which will be retained in the interim). The City Council has determined to relocate its functions to free up this site for redevelopment for new housing.

Figure 1: Location of the Mill Road Depot Site



2.2 The Mill Road Depot Site, draft Planning and Development Brief sets out the aspirations of Cambridge City Council as landowner and Local Planning Authority for the redevelopment of this site. The aspiration is to create a well designed housing

development, which incorporates market and affordable housing, public open space, pedestrian and cycle routes through the site and which responds to the character of the surrounding area.

2.3 The draft SPD is structured in four chapters:

- Chapter 1 provides the background to the draft SPD including the planning policy context, the process of preparing the draft SPD and the status of the document;
- Chapter 2 illustrates and provides an analysis of the Mill Road Depot site and its surrounding area giving consideration to the sites history, transport, open space, land uses, building and character, and summarises the key constraints opportunities for future redevelopment;
- Chapter 3 presents the vision statement and outlines the strategic design principles;
- Chapter 4 sets out the parameters for future development of the Mill Road Depot site, and gives guidance as to how these should be implemented.

2.4 The draft SPD provides guidance in relation to Policy 23 on the Mill Road Opportunity Area, in so far as it relates to the Mill Road Depot site, and the following site allocation contained within the Cambridge Local Plan 2014:

- Site allocation R10, Appendix B: Proposals Schedule, which allocates the site for residential development, with an approximate capacity of 167 homes, which equates to a density of 62 homes per hectare.

3. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

3.1 Firstly, the screening process must ascertain whether the draft SPD for the Mill Road Depot site gives rise to significant environmental effects, using the criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive and Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

3.2 Paragraph 10 of the SEA Directive only requires SEA for plans which ‘determine the use of small areas at a local level’ or which are ‘minor modifications’ to plans, when these are determined to be likely to cause significant environmental effects. Therefore, the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects as listed in Annex II of the SEA Directive and Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 have been reviewed to determine whether the exception applies to the draft SPD.

3.3 Appendix 1 sets out the findings of this assessment, which clearly demonstrate that the draft SPD for the Mill Road Depot site does not require an SEA, beyond that already undertaken for the draft SPD’s parent site allocation and Policy 23: Mill Road Opportunity Area contained within the appraisal of the Cambridge Local Plan 2014.

4. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

- 4.1 Government guidance² suggests that where an authority has made a determination that a plan is unlikely to have any significant environmental effect, and is therefore exempt from the SEA Directive, it must consider whether there are likely to be any significant economic or social effects. As such, the second stage in the screening process considers whether the draft SPD for the Mill Road Depot site gives rise to significant economic or social effects. If these have been formally assessed in the context of higher level policies or allocations in local plans, then it is unlikely that significant social and economic effects will arise as a result of the draft SPD.
- 4.2 The parent site allocation (Site R10) and policy 23 (Mill Road Opportunity Area) of relevance to this SPD are contained in the Cambridge Local Plan 2014, which was appraised during its preparation and the appraisal results reported on³. The SA assessed the site allocation and parent policy against a range of social, economic and environmental 'sustainability objectives' using a range of indicators to consider the contribution they made towards the achievement of various sustainability objectives.
- 4.3 The appraisal of site R10 is set out in table 1 below. For the majority of sustainability objectives the allocation was considered to have positive effects, and any negative effects related to issues such as air quality could be mitigated by other policies contained within the plan.
- 4.4 With regards to Policy 23, the SA of the Cambridge Local Plan 2014 noted that this policy would have a range of significant positive effects on a range of SA Objectives, including:
- Sustainability theme: Economy - Protection of the vitality and viability of the Mill Road area into the future;
 - Sustainability theme: Community and Wellbeing – Through the promotion of the development and arts and cultural facilities;
 - Functional Area: East Cambridge – significant positive effects were identified as a result of the role that policies for Opportunity Areas have to play in maintaining the character of particular neighbourhoods in the city. The appraisal also noted that in seeking to create low speed traffic environments, policy 23 would have positive effects in terms of increasing safety for cyclists and pedestrians and further encourage modal shift.

² ODPM, Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents, 2005.

³ Sustainability Appraisal of the Cambridge Local Plan 2014. Volume 1: Final Appraisal for Submission to the Secretary of State. March 2014

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| Health Fac. | Noise & Vib. | Light Pollution | Odour | Contamination | PDL | Comm. Facilities | Protected Space | Replace Space | Space Standards | Outdoor Sports | Play Space | Green Space | Secondary Sch. | Primary Sch. | AQMA | Air Quality | Emp. Centre | Deprived Area | Loss Emp. Land | Cycle Routes | Public Transport | Train Station | City Edge | Dist/local centre | Source PZ | Fluvial Flooding | Surface Flooding | SAM | Listed buildings | Historic Park | Cons. Area | Local Interest | Green Belt Loss | SSSI | Local Wildlife | Green Infra. | Imp. Biodiversity | TPOs | Sustainability Appraisal |
|-------------|--------------|-----------------|-------|---------------|-----|------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|------|-------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|------------------|---------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|------------------|------------------|-----|------------------|---------------|------------|----------------|-----------------|------|----------------|--------------|-------------------|------|--------------------------|

Cumulative effects and possible mitigation measures

- 4.4.42 The proposed site allocations in the east functional area could result in significant levels of residential development in this part of Cambridge. Should all ten residential sites be built out the result will be the development of more than 800 new houses in the eastern part of the city (this would rise to more than 1,840 following changes to sites and additional site allocations following Issues and Options 2 consultation, see table 4.15 below). This is likely to result in significant impacts on the transport network to the east of the city.
- 4.4.43 When considered collectively against the issues set out for the East area of Cambridge, these sites perform well in a number of respects. In terms of maintaining and enhancing open and green spaces, and the Green Belt setting the sites perform particularly well. The sites considered result in no loss of Green Belt, this is in large part due to the location of the proposed denser residential sites which are located in areas that are already surrounded by housing and are some distance away from the Green Belt. In addition, all sites make use of previously developed land, so ensuring minimal impact on green areas. The majority of the sites are regarded as having no obvious constraints that prevent the site providing minimum onsite provision of public open space and most sites have convenient access to natural green space. One site consulted on as part of the Issues and Options 2 would have resulted in the loss of protected open space which is of recreational importance (SiteR20). This could not be incorporated into any new development and so new open space would have to be provided elsewhere in an appropriate manner if significant negative effects are to be avoided. However, since the Issues and Options 2 consultation, this site has been removed from the Local Plan due to the difficulties in finding a replacement open space.
- 4.4.44 In relation to addressing deprivation, half of the sites are in areas considered to be deprived. Whilst the number of sites in such areas would ideally be greater, those that may be brought forward are spread across the Abbey and Romsey wards, with two sites in Romsey and three in Abbey. As such, these allocations may help to address deprivation across East Cambridge through the development and associated economic activity they bring.
- 4.4.45 The sites mostly perform well in preserving the character of neighbourhoods. However, there is the potential for adverse effects should

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| Health Fac. | Noise & Vib. | Light Pollution | Odour | Contamination | PDL | Comm. Facilities | Protected Space | Replace Space | Space Standards | Outdoor Sports | Play Space | Green Space | Secondary Sch. | Primary Sch. | AQMA | Air Quality | Emp. Centre | Deprived Area | Loss Emp. Land | Cycle Routes | Public Transport | Train Station | City Edge | Dist/local centre | Source PZ | Fluvial Flooding | Surface Flooding | SAM | Listed buildings | Historic Park | Cons. Area | Local Interest | Green Belt Loss | SSSI | Local Wildlife | Green Infra. | Imp. Biodiversity | TPOs | Sustainability Appraisal | | |
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mitigation measures not be put in place appropriately. Potential effects are numerous and include four sites which could impact upon historic parks and gardens unless development height is restricted; one site adjacent to a Grade 2 listed library, plus one site that is within a Conservation Area, with two others adjacent. None of the developments proposed appear to be of a size that would affect the character of the neighbourhoods they would become a part of.

4.4.46 With the exception of one site, which is distant from key bus services, the sites score moderately well to good in relation to public transport access. Scoring for access to rail transport and good quality cycle routes is generally moderate to poor. However, the sites are mostly in close proximity to open space, outdoor sports facilities, play spaces and employment centres, which may itself help to encourage walking and cycling.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The allocation of land at the Mill Road Depot site, took place as part of the process of developing the Cambridge Local Plan 2014, and as such has been subject to SA as part of the Local Plan process. The conclusion of this screening process is that as the draft SPD for the Mill Road Depot site does not make any changes to this allocation, it will not give rise to significant environmental effects.
- 5.2 The draft SPD for the Mill Road Depot site does not give rise to significant social and economic effects beyond those already identified as part of the appraisal of the parent policy and site allocation contained within the Cambridge Local Plan 2014. As such it is not considered necessary to undertake a separate SA for this SPD.

Appendix 1: Screening in relation to Schedule 1 Criteria of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive

| The characteristics of the Draft Mill Road Depot Site, Draft Planning and Development Brief SPD having regard to: | |
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| (1a) The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources. | Allocation of the Mill Road Depot site, including assessment of indicative capacity and density, forms part of the Local Plan process, which has been subject to SA incorporating the requirements of the SEA Directive. The draft provides a Vision and Objectives for future redevelopment of the site, identifying the constraints and opportunities that will shape this development. The draft SPD does not seek the make changes to the site capacity and density identified in the Local Plan allocation. |
| (1b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy. | The draft SPD for the Mill Road Depot site sits at the bottom of the plan hierarchy and as such is influenced by plans higher up the hierarchy (i.e. the Cambridge Local Plan 2014), for which it provides additional guidance. While it will influence the development of planning applications, policies higher up in the plan hierarchy are the key determining factor for the development of the site. |
| (1c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development. | The draft SPD has relevance to the promotion of sustainable development as part of the development of the Mill Road Depot site. Sitting alongside policies contained in the Cambridge Local Plan 2014, the SPD, once adopted, will help to ensure that any future development meets the aspirations of the Council as landowner and Local Planning Authority for a high quality development that respects the surrounding area. Development of the site presents the opportunity to enhance environmental sustainability including energy efficiency and carbon reduction, increased ecology and biodiversity, improved sustainable transport linkages and site drainage. Overall, the draft SPD therefore contributes positively to the integration of environmental considerations. |
| (1d) Environmental problems relevant to the | The Mill Road Depot site is located within an |

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| <p>plan or programme; and</p> | <p>AQMA. The appraisal of the parent site allocation noted that the promotion of sustainable modes of transport, and the proximity of the site to local services and facilities could help to tackle issues related to air quality and other environmental considerations. Other policies in the Cambridge Local Plan 2014, which have also been subject to SA, give consideration to Air Quality and the need to ensure that developments do not lead to significant adverse effects on health, the environment or amenity from polluting or malodorous emissions, and that there will not be any significant adverse effects from existing sources of poor air quality. The objectives of the draft SPD promote environmental sustainability through seeking to secure environmental enhancements to meet the Vision for the site and those enhancements necessary to make future development proposals acceptable in planning terms.</p> |
| <p>(1e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).</p> | <p>The draft SPD is not relevant to the implementation of Community legislation on the environment. Policies contained within the Cambridge Local Plan 2014 have more relevance in relation to issues such as air quality, and these policies will be taken into consideration as part of any future development proposals for the site.</p> |
| <p>Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regards, in particular to</p> | |
| <p>(2a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.</p> | <p>The appraisal of the parent site allocation for which the draft SPD for the Mill Road Depot site provides guidance, considered that any adverse effects could be appropriately mitigated. For example, while it was noted that the site lies within an AQMA, the promotion of sustainable modes of transport, and the proximity of the site to local services and facilities could help to tackle issues related to air quality and other environmental considerations.</p> |
| <p>(2b) The cumulative nature of the effects.</p> | <p>The appraisal of the parent site allocations for which the draft SPD for the Mill Road Depot site provides guidance, did not consider that there would be any significant</p> |

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| | cumulative effects as a result of the proposed development. |
| (2c) The trans-boundary nature of the effects. | The draft SPD for the Mill Road Depot site is focussed on a discrete site, located entirely within the administrative boundary of Cambridge. As such there will be no trans-boundary effects as a result of the draft SPD. |
| (2d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents) | The appraisal of the parent policy and site allocation for which the draft SPD provides guidance did raise concerns surrounding the location of the site within an AQMA, and the impact that this could have on human health. Development of the site will need to take full account of the sites location and could also present opportunities to reduce air pollution, for example through the promotion of sustainable modes of transport. Development of the site also presents the opportunity to enhance environmental sustainability including energy efficiency, increased ecology and biodiversity and improved drainage conditions. |
| (2e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of population likely to be affected); | The draft SPD is applicable to a small site within Cambridge, the area of the site being 2.7 hectares. The site is located within the wider context of Cambridge, which has a population of 128,000 within an area of approximately 4,070 hectares. |
| (2f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage (ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) Intensive land-use | <p>The area covered by the draft SPD for the Mill Road Depot site is within the Central Conservation Area. This part is now generally referred to as the Mill Road Conservation Area and was the subject of conservation area appraisal in 2011. The Mill Road Depot site includes the Bharat Bhavan (Old Library) which is a listed building which is to be retained. Both the Conservation Area and listed building will need to be respected in the redevelopment of the site.</p> <p>The appraisal of the site allocation for which the draft SPD for the Mill Road Depot site provides guidance did raise concerns surrounding the location of the site within an AQMA, and the impact that this could have on human health. Development of the</p> |

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| | <p>site will need to take full account of the sites location and could also present opportunities to reduce air pollution, for example through the promotion of sustainable modes of transport. Development of the site also presents the opportunity to enhance environmental sustainability including energy efficiency, increased ecology and biodiversity and improved drainage conditions. Other policies in the plan, which have also been subject to SA, give consideration to Air Quality and the need to ensure that developments do not lead to significant adverse effects on health, the environment or amenity from polluting or malodorous emissions, and that there will not be any significant adverse effects from existing sources of poor air quality.</p> |
| <p>(2g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or protection status.</p> | <p>There are no areas or landscapes within the boundaries of the Mill Road Depot Site that have such status. The Cambridge Local Plan 2014, which contains the parent site allocation of relevance to the draft SPD, has been subject to a Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment, which concludes that there are not likely to be any significant effects on Natura 2000 or Ramsar sites as a result of the policies and proposals contained within the plan.</p> |