

**CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTYWIDE FLOOD & WATER SUPPLEMENTARY
PLANNING DOCUMENT**

To: **Economy and Environment Committee**

Meeting Date: **14th July 2015**

From: **Executive Director – Economy, Transport and
Environment**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **N/A** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To consider the draft countywide Flood & Water
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and approve the
draft for public consultation.**

Recommendation: **The Committee is requested to:**

- a) Consider and approve the draft SPD for public
consultation;**
- b) Delegate to the Executive Director (Economy,
Transport and Environment), in consultation with the
Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, the
authority to make minor textual changes to the draft
SPD prior to publication for public consultation; and**
- c) Request Officers to bring the final SPD back to a future
meeting of the Committee for approval with a
recommendation to the Cambridgeshire local planning
authorities to adopt the SPD.**

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A significant amount of new development will occur in Cambridgeshire in the next 20 years and probably beyond. In order to reduce the impact upon the water environment, development must be appropriately located, well designed, managed and take account of climate change. This includes site drainage networks and proposed local water bodies.
- 1.2 With this background -coupled with recent legislative changes made under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, which made the County Council a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), and Local Planning Authorities within Cambridgeshire (LPAs) drafting or adopting their Local Plans – it was jointly agreed between the LPAs within the County Council that a Countywide Flood & Water Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) should be produced.
- 1.3 The SPD has been produced to ensure that Cambridgeshire has a consistent, locally appropriate approach to flood risk and water management.
- 1.4 The draft Flood and WaterSPD has been produced by Cambridgeshire County Council (as the Lead Local Flood Authority) in conjunction with South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Fenland District Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, the Environment Agency, and the Internal Drainage Boards (including the Middle Level Commissioners).
- 1.5 The draft SPD has been developed to support the implementation of flooding and water related policies in each local planning authority's respective adopted or emerging LDF or Local Plan. At present, both East Cambridgeshire District Council and Fenland District Council have up to date adopted Local Plans and are looking for the SPD to support their flood risk and water management planning policies. Once the SPD is adopted, the document will be a material consideration when considering planning applications.
- 1.6 A copy of the Draft document can be found at Appendix 1.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 Each of the chapters contained within the SPD details guidance for developers and applicants on managing flood risk and the water environment in and around new developments within Cambridgeshire.
- 2.2 The chapters within the SPD focus on the following areas:
 - Chapter 3 – Working with Water Management Authorities
This Chapter provides details of the key water management authorities which an applicant may consult during the pre-application and planning application stages.
 - Chapter 4 - Guidance on managing flood risk to developments and site selection
This Chapter provides specific advice on how to address flood risk issues within the planning process, particularly the application of the 'sequential approach' to flood risk and producing site specific flood risk assessments.
 - Chapter 5 – Managing and Mitigating Risk
An integral part of managing and mitigating risk associated with flooding is good site design. This chapter covers ways in which those risks can be

appropriately addressed through master planning, engineering and building design.

- Chapter 6 – Surface Water and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

This chapter specifically looks at a number of different design methods and how they can be incorporated into SuDS that form part of a proposed development. In addition, further guidance is given on the adoption and maintenance of SuDS.

- Chapter 7 – Water Environment

Under the Water Framework Directive (EU Directive 2000/60/EC, dated 23 October 2000) water environments must also be protected and improved with regards to water quality, water habitats, geomorphology and biodiversity. Chapter 7 of the document discusses this in more detail.

2.3 The SPD provides detailed guidance for applicants on developing proposals that:

- Are not at risk of flooding and that do not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere, including providing guidance on the sequential and exception tests, how to produce a site specific Flood Risk Assessment, and measures that can be taken to manage flood risk;
- Include the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) that effectively manage water, are well designed to conserve, accommodate and enhance biodiversity, and provide amenity for local residents; and
- Enhance the quality of the water environment and mitigate the adverse impact of development on the quality of water bodies including rivers, lakes and groundwater.

2.4 Against this background, the main purposes of the SPD are:

- To provide guidance to developers on the approach that should be taken to manage flood risk and the water environment as part of new development proposals;
- To provide a step by step guide to address flood risk matters as part of a development proposal, including clear guidance on the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS);
- To support existing and emerging flood risk and water management related planning policies contained within the relevant Local Planning Authorities adopted or draft Local Plans; and
- For Cambridgeshire County Council, the SPD will support the relevant policies contained within the 'Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Development Plan' Core Strategy (adopted July 2011).

2.5 The draft SPD also includes checklists to be completed and submitted by applicants at different stages in the planning application process (see Appendix 5 of the draft SPD), and also checklists to ensure that any Flood Risk Assessment includes all the necessary information (see Appendix 3 of the draft SPD).

2.6 In drafting the SPD a number of supporting documents have been produced which will be made available during the public consultation, which are as follows:

- *Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report*

Local authorities are not required to produce a Sustainability Appraisal of an SPD as they do not contain new policy. Instead SPDs provide more detailed guidance relating to policies that have already been subject to Sustainability Appraisal. Occasionally, however, an SPD can give rise to significant environmental effects and therefore local authorities need to screen their SPDs to ensure that the legal requirements for Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations are met. The screening report prepared by the County Council demonstrates that the draft SPD does not give rise to significant environmental effects.

- *Equality Impact Assessment*

Local authorities have a legal responsibility to ensure that their policies do not adversely affect the different sections of their communities. The County Council has completed an Equality Impact Assessment of the draft SPD which shows that the SPD will have a neutral and / or positive impact on equality and diversity.

- *Statement of Consultation*

Local planning authorities are required to prepare a statement setting out who has been consulted while preparing the SPD; a summary of the main issues raised; and how these issues have been addressed in the SPD. The County Council has prepared a statement that records the consultation undertaken already.

- 2.7 The draft SPD is currently going through all the Cambridgeshire LPAs relevant political processes to approve the document for public consultation. Any suggested amendments as part of this process will be collated and considered. Any changes to the document will be made before the public consultation commences.
- 2.8 After carrying out the public consultation, Cambridgeshire County Council, in conjunction with the local planning authorities, will consider the representations received on the draft SPD and will make any relevant changes to the SPD. These will be reported to a further meeting of the Economy and Environment Committee summarising the representations received and the changes that have been made and seeking agreement to adopt the SPD.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

Ensuring a countywide approach on flood risk and drainage matters will assist developers and LPAs to make well considered planning applications, which in turn will benefit the local economy.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

The consequence of flood risk impacts on everyone, particularly the most vulnerable in society. Inappropriate or poorly designed surface drainage infrastructure increases flood risk locally. Therefore, the SPD will assist developers and LPAs in guiding them to make informed decisions with

regards to managing development in relation flood risk and well-designed SuDS.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

Several officers from the County Council have produced the document in conjunction with the other steering group members, since its inception over a year ago. Officer time will still be required to carry the SPD through to its adoption. This will include the public consultation period, including consideration of representations made, and formal adoption. Other LPAs within Cambridgeshire, such as Huntingdonshire District Council are providing assistance with the public consultation, including providing officer time. Beyond that, the SPD may need reviewing subject to any changes in national planning policy or to any Cambridgeshire LPAs Local Plans.

4.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

Local authorities have a legal responsibility to ensure that their policies do not adversely affect the different sections of their communities. The County Council has completed an Equality Impact Assessment of the draft SPD which shows that the SPD will have a neutral and / or positive impact on equality and diversity.

4.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

As referred to within paragraph 4.1 the public consultation process will be assisted by LPAs within Cambridgeshire, with Huntingdonshire District Council providing technical assistance with the consultation running on their 'objective' online planning system. The public consultation will be available for statutory consultees (including Local members and Parish and City Councils), non-statutory consultees and the general public to comment upon the SPD

4.5 Localism and Local Member Involvement

See comments referred to within paragraph 4.4. As well as the draft SPD being presented to this Committee, the SPD will also be brought back to the E&E Committee to consider the document for adoption. This will be undertaken following the representations made at the public consultation stage.

4.6 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

Source Documents	Location
Countywide Flood & Water Supplementary Planning Document: consultation draft (May 2015)	Room 305, Shire Hall, Cambridge

