

Councillor Peter McDonald Duxford Division & Ward:
District Councillor for Parishes of Duxford, Hinxton, Ickleton, Babraham, Pampisford.
County Councillor also for Foxton, Fowlmere, Shepreth, Thriplow, Heathfield, Heydon, Chishills,
Whittlesford

Report for Parish Councils – Jan 2023.

South Cambs District Council

Updated Local Plan

Plans for more homes and jobs under the new Local Plan for Greater Cambridge can only go forward if there is certainty on water supplies, and evidence they will not cause unacceptable environmental damage. This follows the publication of an update about the development strategy of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan (Wednesday 4 January).

<https://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s129785/230206-CabinetReport-GCLP-FINAL.pdf>

The report from the Joint Director of Planning for the city of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire says:

- The environment and water supply must be protected alongside a need for new homes – including addressing the shortage of affordable homes.
- Greater Cambridge is one of the most important research and innovation employment locations in the UK and is growing fast as new jobs are created.
- National planning policy says significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth – but Councils say the environment must be protected at the same time.
- The Councils' latest evidence points to an expected need for more homes and jobs than previously envisaged due to the success of the economy and expected increase in job numbers.

South Cambridgeshire District and Cambridge City Councils however say that before plans can be finalised, greater clarity is needed about where water will come from in future, and assurances are required that providing the necessary water will not cause unacceptable environmental harm. The report also notes that getting developers to increase the number of new homes built, including affordable homes, may not be straightforward.

Both Councils' existing Local Plans already provide for around 37,200 additional homes for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire between now and 2041.

Because the latest economic forecasts from planners point to a likely increase of around 66,000 jobs across Greater Cambridge area by 2041, these additional new jobs, some 8,200 more than previously expected, result in a need to also plan for additional homes, over and above the earlier plan proposals.

This would result in a need for a further 19,900 new homes, on top of those contained in the adopted 2018 Local Plans for the area, by 2041. During the 2021 First Proposals consultation, as part of the work to create a joint Local Plan, the Councils set out an ambitious vision for minimising carbon emissions alongside improving the quality of life for residents, with all new homes to be carbon neutral. These elements remain central to the developing Local Plan.

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The earlier proposals included 19 new sites for homes and business space, with the majority of extra development proposed for North East Cambridge, the Cambridge Airport site and at Cambourne.

Water Resources East has recently published a high-level draft Water Resources Management Plan for the whole of the East of England. This proposes additional water supply to the area through routes such as a new reservoir in the Fens and transferring water from elsewhere, to come forward over the next decade and beyond. These large-scale projects, which alongside measures to manage current demand will go a long way towards addressing the existing environmental concerns, will not however be available until much later in the Local Plan process.

Local water provider Cambridge Water's plans for supplying the area's water needs have not yet been published. Until their draft Water Resource Management Plan is available, it is not clear whether there is enough water to supply the new homes and jobs required to meet future needs for the area, without causing environmental harm.

Before it can be adopted by Councils, a Local Plan must be reviewed by a Government Inspector, who will decide whether it is 'sound'. A key consideration for the Inspector will be looking at the strength of the Greater Cambridge economy, and whether the number of new homes being planned matches with the pace of economic development in the area, and if not whether there are good planning reasons for the mismatch.

The update published today also re-affirms the long-term vision of the Councils to bring forward new homes and jobs on sites that support low-carbon living, including at North East Cambridge, at Cambridge East and on the allocated area at the Cambridge Biomedical Campus, with a possible extension of the site. These significant sites are seen as the most sustainable for future development but because of their characteristics, they would also not see significant new development come forward until the next decade – when indications are that water supply concerns should have been addressed.

Residents who would like more information about the Greater Cambridge Local Plan Development Strategy Update are invited to join a Zoom webinar on Wednesday 18 January at 12pm. Visit our Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Local Plan page for details and the Zoom link. The webinar will be recorded and made available online, so those not able to attend can watch it back at their convenience.

<https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/localplan>

EV Charging Grants

Electric vehicle charging will become easier across the district thanks to a new grant for public charging points for village halls and community buildings.

Grants of up to £5,000 each are available from South Cambridgeshire District Council towards the cost of installing an EV charger at community buildings.

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Once installed, people can use the EV chargers by downloading an app and buying their charging time on their mobile phone. The first EV charger point expected to be installed in the new year thanks to the grant boost, is at Steeple Morden Village Hall.

Grant applications will be assessed on deliverability and positive impact. Chargers must be publicly accessible and funding will be allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis. Projects must demonstrate there is a demand for an EV charger.

Initial funding of up to £20,000 is available to be awarded before the end of March 2023. If the initial fund proves successful, South Cambridgeshire District Council will seek to continue funding support for community charging points after that date.

More information, guidance, and the application form can be found at the grant's webpage. Any questions, please contact evcp.grant@scambs.gov.uk

Shared Prosperity Fund

Eight projects that will benefit communities and businesses and increase job opportunities in South Cambridgeshire have been awarded around £1.76 million in Government funding.

The money has been secured from the Government's Shared Prosperity Fund. During the summer, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, working with the local city and district councils, submitted to Government an investment plan detailing how a range of projects across the area could be funded under the scheme.

It has now been confirmed that 40 projects across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will receive a total of around £10 million in funding. The funding is now due to start being received this financial year, ending by March 2025.

In South Cambridgeshire the projects funded include:

- £600,000 support towards creating amenities within Northstowe, through the Community Centre and Local Centre, including space for people working from home, room for business start-ups and space for community groups.
- £300,000 towards improving South Cambridgeshire's High Streets, with the District Council planning to consult with parish councils and residents of larger High Streets, along with community building and village hall committees, to implement changes that are agreed following those discussions.
- Around £270,000 towards skills training for small and medium sized businesses.
- £150,000 towards a scheme to improve community gardens and greenspaces in communities, improving quality of life and health. This project will allow communities in areas of identified need to acquire, design, build and maintain community parks and growing spaces with professional support coordinated community action.
- £100,000 funding for a scheme based in libraries to support business start-ups, including a focus on females and ethnic minorities looking to establish and grow their own enterprises.
- £100,000 to support new business start-ups with grant funding.

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South Cambridgeshire District Council will also be working in partnership with neighbouring councils on some other schemes that have been funded. These include:

A programme of green business grants to help small businesses reduce carbon emissions and energy costs, in partnership with Cambridge City and Huntingdonshire District Councils. Under this programme, £170,000 will go to South Cambridgeshire businesses.

Funding towards enhancing the area's visitor economy and local markets, including by encouraging people to shop and visit local and a youth enterprise programme for disadvantaged and future traders, in partnership with Cambridge City Council. £70,000 of this funding will be spent in South Cambridgeshire.

Wellcome Genome Campus

A second round of meetings included Hinxton, Ickleton Parish Councils. The Community Forum will meet again soon especially as the proposed new bridges are submitted for approval.

Cambridgeshire County Report

The new 20 mph scheme will launch in February as outlined in the Committee paper from December.

<https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/ccclive/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1923/Committee/62/Default.aspx>

Furniture Re Cycling

All nine household waste recycling centres in Cambridgeshire will accept upholstered household seating again from Saturday 7th January, the County Council has confirmed

An interim solution for accepting waste items such as sofas, upholstered chairs, cushions, and beanbags at all the recycling centres, will also allow bulky waste collections offered by all of the county's City and District Councils to resume. Please check their websites for further details.

Staff will be available at each of the recycling centre sites to advise and show residents where they can dispose of upholstered household seating

Residents are also reminded that there are alternatives to taking upholstered household seating to recycling centres.

Please consider asking the retailer to take your old furniture away when new items are delivered, (companies like John Lewis, Marks and Spencer, DFS etc all operate take-back schemes). Or give it a new lease of life by donating it to a charity, sell it or giving it away on social media or online auction sites.

Bus Service Update

Discussions continue of funding of services beyond March 2023 so we have a breathing space at least for now.

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Great Chesterford Hardcore Site : ESS/109/22/UTT

The deadline for comments on the new planning application is end January.

<https://publicaccess.uttlesford.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=RMXOZAQN01000&activeTab=summary>

Planning Appeal:

<https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?CaseID=3306988&CoID=0>

Foxton Hub

Im still waiting for an update from GCP and draft papers for the hub.

Peter McDonald

Jan 5th 2023