



South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council

North East Cambridge Area Action Plan

Sustainability Appraisal: Non-Technical Summary

Final Report

Prepared by LUC

July 2020

South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council
North East Cambridge Area Action Plan
 Sustainability Appraisal: Non-Technical Summary

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Introduction

This Non-Technical Summary relates to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Draft North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (AAP) and should be read in conjunction with that document as well as the Draft AAP itself.

This Non-Technical Summary and the SA Report were prepared by LUC on behalf of Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council (the Councils) as part of the Sustainability Appraisal of the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan.

The Area Action Plan

Policy 15 of the adopted Cambridge City Council Local Plan and Policy SS/4 of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan allocate the 'Cambridge Northern Fringe East' for redevelopment, to be established through the AAP.

The AAP area is located between the A14, Chesterton and Kings Hedges wards and is bounded by the Cambridge – Kings Lynn Railway line. It also incorporates the Cambridge Science Park to the west of Milton Road as the intensification of uses in this area is supported by the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. The area is one of the last substantial brownfield sites in the City.

The area currently houses Cambridge Science Park, St John's Innovation Centre, Cambridge Business Park, a gold driving range, a wastewater treatment work, industrial uses and railway sidings. The AAP seeks to retain and intensify most of the employment land, whilst taking advantage of the anticipated relocation of the wastewater treatment works to create a new community. This includes provision for 8,000 new homes and 20,000 new jobs, as well as new physical, social and environmental infrastructure.

The Councils have previously prepared Issues and Options consultation documents in 2014 and 2019, which formed an important early stage in developing the AAP and set out the blueprint for a comprehensive and co-ordinated regeneration of the area. Both of these documents were accompanied by SA Reports, prepared by Environ and then Ramboll, who were the consultants working on the SA at the time.

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are required by law to carry out both Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment of the AAP. The Councils have appointed LUC to do this on their behalf.

Strategic Environmental Assessment is the process of assessing the likely environmental effects of a plan or programme (such as the Local Plan) and the requirements for this are set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations). The Government recommends that the requirements for both Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment are met through one integrated process, referred to as Sustainability Appraisal.

The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal is to promote sustainable development through by better integrating sustainability considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans. It should be viewed as an integral part of good plan making and an ongoing process, involving ongoing iterations to identify and report on the potential social, economic and environmental

effects of the Local Plan and alternatives to the Local Plan to consider how well sustainable development will be achieved.

The SA also incorporates Health Impact Assessment which aims to determine the impacts of the Local Plan on people’s health and well-being.

An overview of the stages of Sustainability Appraisal is set out below.

SA Stage A: Scoping

The SA process began in 2014 with the production of a Scoping Report for the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (AAP) which was, at this stage called the Cambridge Northern Fringe East Area Action Plan. The SA scoping report was prepared by Environ on behalf of Cambridge City Council and South Cambridge District Council.

The Scoping stage of the SA involves understanding the social, economic and environmental baseline for the plan area as well as the sustainability policy context and key sustainability issues. The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report also sets out information about the methodology for this and later stages of the Sustainability Appraisal, including the ‘Sustainability Appraisal Framework’ - the sustainability objectives against which Local Plan options and policies have been appraised. The sustainability objectives making up the Sustainability Appraisal framework are presented in **Error! Reference source not found.** The Scoping Report was consulted on from August to September 2014 and updates were made to it in response to comments received.

Table 1: SA Framework for the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan

SA Objectives	Sub - questions
1 Minimise the irreversible loss of undeveloped land, protect soils and economic mineral reserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it use land that has been previously developed? • Will it use land efficiently? • Will it minimise the degradation / loss of soils due to new development? • Will it avoid the sterilisation of economic mineral reserves? • Will it promote resource efficiency and recycling?
2 Improve air quality and minimise or mitigate against sources of environmental pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it maintain and improve air quality around the AAP and along the routes to the City including the A14? • Will it ensure that dust pollution does not affect sensitive receptors? • Will it minimise and where possible improve on unacceptable levels of noise pollution and vibration? • Will it minimise odour impacts? • Will it remediate contaminated land?
3 Protect and where possible enhance the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it ensure that groundwater is protected?

SA Objectives	Sub - questions
quality of the water environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it enhance surface water features including the quality of water entering the first public drain and the River Cam?
4 Avoid adverse effects on designated sites and protected species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it conserve protected species (including Jersey Cudweed) and protect sites designated for nature conservation interest (including Local Nature Reserves and Wildlife Sites), and geodiversity?
5 Maintain and enhance the range and viability of characteristic habitats and species and improve opportunities for people to access and appreciate wildlife and green spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it deliver net gains in biodiversity? • Will it reduce habitat fragmentation, maintain and enhance connectivity between existing green and blue infrastructure and enhance key native habitats? • Will it help deliver habitat restoration (helping to achieve Biodiversity Action Plan targets)? • Will it improve access to wildlife and Green Spaces through delivery of, and access to green infrastructure?
6 Maintain and enhance the diversity and local distinctiveness of landscape and townscape character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it maintain and enhance the distinctiveness of landscape character, and the character of the Cambridge Green Belt? • Will it maintain and enhance the diversity and distinctiveness of townscape character? • Will it ensure the scale of development is sensitive to the existing key landmark buildings and low lying topography of the City? • Will it conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings through appropriate design and scale of development? • Will it lead to developments built to a high standard of design and good place making that reflects local character?
7 Minimise impacts on climate change (including greenhouse gas emissions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it ensure deployment of energy efficient and renewable energy technologies? • Will it minimise contributions to climate change through sustainable construction practices?
8 Reduce vulnerability to future climate change effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it protect and enhance existing natural flood risk management infrastructure? • Will it ensure that suitable sustainable drainage measures are incorporated into development in order to manage surface water run-off?

SA Objectives	Sub - questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it provide green and blue infrastructure which will help reduce climate change impact locally? • Does it include measures to adapt to climate change in ways that do not increase greenhouse gas emissions including giving consideration to the layout and massing of new development?
9 Maintain and enhance human health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it promote good health and encourage healthy lifestyles? • Will it help address levels of deprivation in north and east Cambridge? • Will it reduce inequalities in health in the north and east of Cambridge?
10 Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it increase the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space? • Will it protect and enhance community, leisure and open space provision, particularly in East Chesterton Ward? • Will it maintain and enhance open spaces and green space within the urban area and the Green Belt setting?
11 Ensure everyone has access to decent, appropriate and affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it support the provision of a range of housing types to meet identified needs?
12 Redress inequalities related to age, disability, gender, race, faith, location and income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it improve relations between people from different backgrounds or social groups and contribute to community diversity? • Will it ensure equal access for all?
13 Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (e.g. health, transport, education, training, leisure opportunities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it provide accessibility to and improve quality of key local services and facilities including health, education and leisure (shops, post offices, pubs etc.)? • Will it improve access to jobs and training for all? • Will it encourage and enable engagement in community activities?
14 Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it maintain and enhance competitiveness, and capitalise on Cambridge's position as one of the UK's most competitive cities?

SA Objectives	Sub - questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it provide high quality employment land in appropriate, accessible locations to meet the needs of businesses and the workforce? • Will it protect the shopping hierarchy, supporting the vitality and viability of Cambridge, district and local centres? • Will it provide appropriate office space? • Will it minimise the loss of industrial floorspace?
15 Support appropriate investment in people, places, communities and other infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it improve the level of investment in key community services and infrastructure, including communications, infrastructure and broadband? • Will it improve access to education and training for all, and support provision of skilled employees to the economy?
16 Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable travel choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it enable shorter journeys, improve modal choice and integration of transport modes to encourage or facilitate the use of modes such as walking, cycling and public transport? • Will it encourage cycling for journeys over one mile? • Will it discourage and reduce the use of the private car and ensure greater access to frequent public transport? • Will it support movement of freight by means other than road? • Will it promote infrastructure for zero emissions vehicles? • Will it make the transport network safer for all users, both motorised and non-motorised?

SA Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects

Developing options for a plan is an iterative process, usually involving a number of consultations with the public and stakeholders. Consultation responses and the SA can help to identify where there may be other 'reasonable alternatives' to the options being considered for a plan.

The Sustainability Appraisal can help decision makers by identifying the potential positive and negative sustainability effects of each Local Plan option being considered, and therefore where there are opportunities to enhance positive effects and avoid or reduce negative ones.

The Sustainability Appraisal findings are not the only factors taken into account when determining a preferred option to take forward in a plan. Factors such as public opinion,

deliverability, conformity with national policy will also be taken into account by plan-makers when selecting preferred options for their plan.

The first North East Cambridge Area Action Plan Issues and Options Report (at this stage it was called the Cambridge Northern Fringe East Area Action Plan) was produced for consultation between December 2014 and February 2015 and set out four potential options for the redevelopment of the area. An Interim SA Report was produced, which accompanied this. Following the consultation Cambridge City Council members considered the cost and challenge of relocating the Water Recycling Centre as unfeasible and therefore work on the AAP was paused to consider the way forward. Between then and the beginning of 2019 there was a significant number of developments that both affected and informed the preparation of the AAP. In light of the developments the Councils felt it necessary to assess a new set of development options, as well as including the Science Park to the west and updating the name of the AAP to North East Cambridge. Therefore a second Issues and Options document was prepared and was consulted on accompanied by another Interim SA report.

Both the Interim SA Report 2014 and 2019 included an appraisal of:

- The AAP Vision, Development principles and Development Objectives.
- The Spatial Redevelopment Options (plus a do nothing committed development option which was based on existing site users and committed developments).
- Proposed policy approaches.

The Interim SA Report (2019) included an appraisal of:

- The AAP vision and objectives.
- The spatial approach (in this case the indicative concept plan) and where options have been provided.
- Policy approaches.

The options considered and assessed at the Issues and Options stages, along with the consultation responses received have evolved and fed into the proposed policies and reasonable alternatives that are set out in the Draft AAP, to which this SA relates.

SA Stage C: preparing the Sustainability Appraisal report

This Non-Technical Summary summarises the process that has been undertaken to date in carrying out the SA of the AAP. It summarises the findings of the appraisal of the policies and reasonable alternatives, highlighting any likely significant effects (both positive and negative, and taking into account the likely secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long term and permanent and temporary effects).

Stage D: Consultation on the Area Action Plan and this SA report

Cambridge City Council and South Cambridge District Council are inviting comments on the Draft AAP and this SA report. Both documents are being published on the Councils' websites for consultation. Comments received will be taken on board and addressed at the next stage of the Sustainability Appraisal process.

SA Stage E: Monitoring implementation of the Area Action Plan

Recommendations for monitoring the likely significant social, environmental and economic effects of implementing the AAP are set out in Chapter 6 of the main report.

Appraisal methodology

The findings of the Sustainability Appraisal are presented as colour coded symbols showing a score for each option against each of the Sustainability Appraisal objectives. The main report presents these scores along with a concise justification for the score given, where appropriate. The use of colour coding and symbols allows for likely significant effects (both positive and negative) to be easily identified, as shown in Error! Reference source not found. below.

Figure 1: Key to symbols and colour coding used in the Sustainability Appraisal of the Area Action Plan

++	The option or policy is likely to have a significant positive effect on the SA objectives.
++/-	The option or policy is likely to have a mixture of significant positive and minor negative effects on the SA objectives.
+	The option or policy is likely to have a minor positive effect on the SA objectives.
0	The option or policy is likely to have negligible or no effect on the SA objectives.
?	It is uncertain what effect the option or policy will have on the SA objectives.
-	The option or policy is likely to have a minor negative effect on the SA objectives.
-/+	The option or policy is likely to have a mixture of minor positive and significant negative effects on the SA objectives.
--	The option or policy is likely to have a significant negative effect on the SA objectives.
+/-	The option or policy is likely to have a mixture of positive and negative effects on the SA objectives.

Where a potential positive or negative effect is uncertain, a question mark was added to the relevant score (e.g. +? or -?) and the score has been colour coded as per the potential positive, negligible or negative effect (e.g. green, yellow, red etc.).

Sustainability Appraisal Findings

Table 2 shows a summary of SA scores for the Draft AAP. Note that this is a high-level overview only and should be read alongside the appraisals set out in the main report. The alternative options generally performed worse than the preferred policy, as most reasonable alternatives identified by the Council consist of removing or replacing one element of the policy. For example, alternatives for sub-area policies included providing for a single use in the area, which would not bring the benefits that mixed use development and provision of services and facilities in proximity to housing and workplaces will bring.

For most policies, a 'do nothing' option was identified, which consists either of relying on existing Local Plan policies or the Government's National Planning Policy Framework. Assessment of these options highlighted that existing Local Plan policies address many of the same issues as

the AAP, but the AAP tends to go further and sets a stronger and more specific policy framework for the area, resulting in more positive, or more significant positive, effects.

Table 2: Summary of SA Scores for the policies in the Draft North East Cambridge Area Action Plan

Policy	SA1: Land, soils and mineral resources	SA2: Air Quality and pollution	SA3: Water	SA4: Protected habitats and species	SA5: Biodiversity	SA6: Landscape and townscape	SA7: Greenhouse gas emissions	SA8: Climate Change resilience	SA9: Health and well-being	SA10: Open space	SA11: Housing	SA12: Equality	SA13: Services and facilities	SA14: Economy	SA15: Infrastructure	SA16: Sustainable Travel
Vision	0	+	0	0	0	0	++	0	+	0	+	++	++	++	++	++
Strategic Objective 1	0	+	0	+	++	+?	++	+	+	+?	0	+	++	+	+	++
Strategic Objective 2	++	0	0	0	0	++	+	0	0?	0?	++	+?	+	++	+	+
Strategic Objective 3	0	+/-	0	0	0	0	+/-	0	0	0	++	++	+	++	+	+/-
Strategic Objective 4	0	+	0	++	++	0	+	0	++	++	0	0	+	+	+	++
Strategic Objective 5	0	+	0	+	+	0	++	0	++	++	0	+	++	++	+	++
Spatial Framework	++	--/+	+	-?	+/-?	++	+/-	+	++	+	++	+	++	+++?	++	++/-
1: A comprehensive approach at NEC	+	++/-?	0	+	++	+?	++	+?	++	0	++	+	+	++	++	++
2: Designing for the Climate Emergency	0	+	++	0	+	+?	++	++	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+
3: Energy and Associated Infrastructure	0	+	0	0	0	0	+++?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4a: Water Efficiency	0	0	++	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Policy	SA1: Land, soils and mineral resources	SA2: Air Quality and pollution	SA3: Water	SA4: Protected habitats and species	SA5: Biodiversity	SA6: Landscape and townscape	SA7: Greenhouse gas emissions	SA8: Climate Change resilience	SA9: Health and well-being	SA10: Open space	SA11: Housing	SA12: Equality	SA13: Services and facilities	SA14: Economy	SA15: Infrastructure	SA16: Sustainable Travel
4b: Water Quality and Ensuring Supply	0	+	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4c: Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	++	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
5: Biodiversity and Net Gain	0	+?	++?	++?	++?	+	+	+	+	+?	0	0	0	+	0	0
6a: Distinctive Design for North East Cambridge	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	0
6b: Design of Mixed-Use Buildings	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
7: Legible Streets and Spaces	0	+	+	0	++	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	+
8: Open Spaces for Recreation and Sport	+/-?	+?	+	+/-	+?	+?	+?	+?	++	++	0	0	0	+?	0	+?
9: Density, Heights, Scale and Massing	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Policy	SA1: Land, soils and mineral resources	SA2: Air Quality and pollution	SA3: Water	SA4: Protected habitats and species	SA5: Biodiversity	SA6: Landscape and townscape	SA7: Greenhouse gas emissions	SA8: Climate Change resilience	SA9: Health and well-being	SA10: Open space	SA11: Housing	SA12: Equality	SA13: Services and facilities	SA14: Economy	SA15: Infrastructure	SA16: Sustainable Travel
10a: North East Cambridge Centres	+	0	+	0	++	+	0	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	++	0
10b: District Centre	+/-?	+	+	0	+	+/-	+	0	++	++	++	+	++	++	++	+
10c: Science Park Local Centre	--?	+	0	0	+	+	+	+/-	+	++	+	+	++	++	+	++
10d: Station Approach	+++?	+	+	-	++/-	+	+	0	+	++	++	+	+	++	+	++
10e: Cowley Road Neighbourhood Centre	+	+/-?	0	+	+	++	+	0	+	++	+	+	++	++	+	+
11: Housing design standards	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
12a: Business	++	+/-	0	-?	0	+	+	0	+	0	++	+	++	++	+	++
12b: Industry, storage and distribution	++	+/-	0	0	-	-?	+/-	0	+	0	+	+	+	++	+	+
13a: Housing	+	+/-?	0	-?	-	+	+	0	+	0	++	++	0	0	0	+
13b: Affordable Housing	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	++	++	0	0	0	0
13c: Build to Rent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	++	0	0	0	0

Policy	SA1: Land, soils and mineral resources	SA2: Air Quality and pollution	SA3: Water	SA4: Protected habitats and species	SA5: Biodiversity	SA6: Landscape and townscape	SA7: Greenhouse gas emissions	SA8: Climate Change resilience	SA9: Health and well-being	SA10: Open space	SA11: Housing	SA12: Equality	SA13: Services and facilities	SA14: Economy	SA15: Infrastructure	SA16: Sustainable Travel
13d: Housing for Local Workers	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	++	++	0	0	0	+
13e: Custom Finish	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0
13f: Short Term & Corporate Lets/ Visitor Accommodation	?	+/-	0	0	0	?	+/-	0	0	0	0	+	0	++	0	++
14: Social and Community Infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	+	0	++	++	0	++	0
15: Shops and Local Services	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	++	++	+	+
16: Sustainable Connectivity	0	+	0	0	+	+	++	0	++	0	0	+	+	+	+	++
17: Connecting to the Wider Network	+	+	0	0	+?	+	++	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	++
18: Cycle Parking	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	++
19: Safeguarding for Cambridge Autonomous	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	++	++

Policy	SA1: Land, soils and mineral resources	SA2: Air Quality and pollution	SA3: Water	SA4: Protected habitats and species	SA5: Biodiversity	SA6: Landscape and townscape	SA7: Greenhouse gas emissions	SA8: Climate Change resilience	SA9: Health and well-being	SA10: Open space	SA11: Housing	SA12: Equality	SA13: Services and facilities	SA14: Economy	SA15: Infrastructure	SA16: Sustainable Travel
Metro and Public Transport																
20: Last Mile Deliveries	0	++	0	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+
21: Street Hierarchy	0	++	0	0	0	+	++	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	0	++
22: Managing Motorised Vehicles	0	++/-	0	0	0	+	++/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	++/-
23: Comprehensive and Co-ordinated Development	0	+	0?	0?	+	+	+	+	+	++	0	0	0	0	+	+
24a: Land Assembly	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	??	0	??	??	??	??
24b: Relocation	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	??	0	??	+/-?	??	??
25: Environmental Protection	0	++	0	0	??	??	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
26: Aggregates and Waste Sites	?	?	0	0	?	?	0	0	??	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
27: Planning Contributions	0	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	+	+

Policy	SA1: Land, soils and mineral resources	SA2: Air Quality and pollution	SA3: Water	SA4: Protected habitats and species	SA5: Biodiversity	SA6: Landscape and townscape	SA7: Greenhouse gas emissions	SA8: Climate Change resilience	SA9: Health and well-being	SA10: Open space	SA11: Housing	SA12: Equality	SA13: Services and facilities	SA14: Economy	SA15: Infrastructure	SA16: Sustainable Travel
28: Meanwhile Uses	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+?	0	0	0	+	+	+	0
29: Employment and Training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	++	++	++	0
30: Digital Infrastructure and Open Innovation	+	+	0	0	0	+	++	+	+	0	0	+	+	++	++	++

Table 2 presents an overview of the assessment results for each of the individual policies in the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan, as well as the Draft Spatial Framework, vision and objectives. The SA also includes an assessment of the cumulative effects of the plan as a whole, with consideration of effects in combination with other development in the surrounding area, where relevant. The results of this cumulative effects assessment are presented below, by SA objective.

SA Objective 1: Minimise the irreversible loss of undeveloped land, protect soils and economic mineral reserves

The majority of NEC consists of previously developed land and AAP seeks to make efficient use of land in this area. As such, cumulative significant positive effects (++) are expected for this SA objective.

SA Objective 2: Improve air quality and minimise or mitigate against sources of environmental pollution

The AAP has a strong focus on reducing the need to travel, promoting sustainable modes of transport, including walking and cycling connectivity, particularly via Policy 16: Sustainable Connectivity, Policy 18: Cycle Parking, Policy 19: Safeguarding for Cambridge Autonomous Metro and Public Transport and Policy 121: Street Hierarchy. The AAP also seeks to reduce traffic movements to and from NEC through the use of a trip budget and parking restraints, through Policy 22: Managing Motorised Vehicles.

In addition, the AAP promotes energy-efficient development, particularly through Policy 2: Designing for the Climate Emergency. These measures are expected to reduce emissions of air pollutants from vehicle traffic and the burning of fossil fuels. The AAP also seeks to avoid, reduce and mitigate environmental pollution, particularly through Policy 25: Environmental Protection, including potential land contamination in the area.

Nevertheless, the AAP proposes a substantial increase in development through the densification of employment uses and development of a substantial amount of residential development. This will result in an increase in energy use and car use, including through the AQMA on the A14 corridor. The proposed model of car barns on the periphery of NEC is likely to reduce traffic movements within the site, but vehicle movements may still increase air pollution in the area beyond, particularly in combination with the increase in development set out in the existing Cambridge Local Plan and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Overall, cumulative significant positive and minor negative effects (+/-?) are expected for this SA objective. There is considerable uncertainty regarding the minor negative effect. The AAP aims to reduce vehicle trip generation below current levels, which could be very challenging to achieve given the scale of development in the AAP. If it is achieved, then the minor negative effect would not arise. If it is not achieved, the minor negative effect could become a significant negative effect, given the potential effects on the A14 Corridor AQMA. At this stage, the SA has taken an approach that recognises what the AAP is seeking to achieve in terms of trip reductions, whilst flagging up that this could be a potential issue when trying to implement the AAP in practice.

SA Objective 3: Protect and where possible enhance the quality of the water environment

The AAP seeks to limit water use and improve water quality through Policies 4a: Water Efficiency and 4b: Water Quality and Ensuring Supply. The AAP also seeks to protect the water environment through preventing environmental pollution through Policy 25: Environmental Protection, as well as minimising the risk of flooding, through various policies. Overall, cumulative minor positive effects (+) are expected for this SA objective.

SA Objective 4: Avoid adverse effects on designated sites and protected species

Whilst the AAP will result in development within proximity to designated sites, including Bramblefields Local Nature Reserve and Milton Road Hedgerows County Wildlife Site, these are expected to be protected by Policy 5: Biodiversity and Net Gain. However, there is potential for increased disturbance at these sites in combination with an increase in development in the wider area.

The Draft Habitats Regulations Assessment Report¹ concludes that adverse effects on the integrity of some European sites, including Devil's Dyke Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Wicken Fen Ramsar and Fenland SAC cannot be ruled out at this stage as a result of the NEC AAP either alone or in-combination with other plans and programmes.

Taking into account the findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment at this stage of plan-making, cumulative mixed minor positive and significant negative uncertain effects (+/- -?) are expected for this SA objective. It will be a priority to address the issues identified by the Habitats Regulations Assessment in order to resolve the potential significant negative effects identified.

SA Objective 5: Maintain and enhance the range and viability of characteristic habitats and species and improve opportunities for people to access and appreciate wildlife and green spaces

The AAP promotes biodiversity gain through Policy 5: Biodiversity and Net Gain and Policy 7: Legible Streets and Spaces, part of which seeks to increase tree coverage in NEC. In addition, Policy 8: Open Spaces for Recreation and Sport may lead to creation of green space with biodiversity value. Overall, cumulative minor positive effects (+) are expected for this SA objective.

SA Objective 6: Maintain and enhance the diversity and local distinctiveness of landscape and townscape character

The AAP seeks to create a distinctive, attractive city district, through the policies set out in Chapter 5 – Design and Built Character. In particular, Policy 6a: Distinctive Design for North East Cambridge is expected to ensure development is integrated into and enhances the existing landscape and townscape. A number of other policies also require street level uses to have active frontages, which will help ensure a vibrant townscape. Overall, a cumulative significant positive effect (++) is expected for this SA objective.

SA Objective 7: Minimise impacts on climate change (including greenhouse gas emissions)

The AAP has a strong focus on reducing the need to travel, promoting sustainable modes of transport, including walking and cycling connectivity, particularly via Policy 16: Sustainable Connectivity, Policy 18: Cycle Parking, Policy 19: Safeguarding for Cambridge Autonomous Metro and Public Transport and Policy 21: Street Hierarchy. In addition, the AAP seeks to reduce traffic movements to and from NEC through the use of a trip budget and parking restraints, through Policy 22: Managing Motorised Vehicles.

Policy 2: Designing for the Climate Emergency requires development to contribute towards achieving net zero carbon emissions and to have the flexibility to incorporate new technologies to achieve this in future. These measures are expected to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases both within the site itself and in terms of energy use of buildings. Nevertheless, the AAP proposes a substantial increase in development through the densification of employment uses and development of a substantial amount of residential

¹ LUC (2020) North East Cambridge Area Action Plan, HRA Report (Draft Report)

development. This will result in an increase in energy use and car use, particularly in combination with the increase in development set out in the existing Cambridge Local Plan and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Overall, cumulative significant positive and minor negative effects (++/-) are expected for this SA objective.

SA Objective 8: Reduce vulnerability to future climate change effects

Policy 2: Designing for the Climate Emergency sets out a number of measures to help adapt to climate change, including designing buildings to minimise and manage increases in temperature and, along with Policy 4a: Water Efficiency, to make efficient use of water resources. Policy 4c: Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage should also help ensure the increased risk of flooding as a result of climate change is minimised. Overall, the AAP includes a number of measures to help development adapt to climate change, therefore cumulative significant positive effects (++) are expected for this SA objective.

SA Objective 9: Maintain and enhance human health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities

In providing a substantial new number of homes and jobs, the AAP will contribute to improving human health and wellbeing by helping to ensure that everyone has access to suitable housing and can access employment opportunities. In addition, the AAP strongly supports active travel, particularly through policies Policy 16: Sustainable Connectivity, Policy 21: Street Hierarchy and the 'centres' policies (10a to e), which will both help reduce vehicles on the road (therefore improving road safety) and encourage active lifestyles.

Physical, mental and social wellbeing will also benefit from the provision of local services, facilities and infrastructure, particularly those that encourage community cohesion and recreation, such as through Policy 14: Social, Community and Cultural Infrastructure and Policy 8: Open Spaces for Recreation and Sport.

Overall, cumulative significant positive effects (++) are expected for this SA objective.

SA Objective 10: Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space

Policy 8: Open Spaces for Recreation and Sport protects against loss of sport, open space, recreation and play facilities and requires these to be provided to serve new development and surrounding communities. The 'centres' policies (10a to e) also include provision of open/civic space. Overall, cumulative significant positive effects (++) are expected for this SA objective.

SA Objective 11: Ensure everyone has access to decent, appropriate and affordable housing

The AAP provides for 8,000 additional dwellings to be delivered in NEC. Policy 13a: Housing requires homes to be high quality, mixed in type and tenure, accessible and adaptable and a minimum 40% new homes to be affordable. Policies 13b to 13f give further details on the variety of housing to be provided, which together are expected to provide a suitably diverse range of housing stock. As such, cumulative significant positive effects (++) are expected for this SA objective.

SA Objective 12: Redress inequalities related to age, disability, gender, race, faith, location and income

The AAP will help provide homes and jobs for those who need them in the area, and includes provision of specialist, affordable and accessible and adaptable housing. In addition, Policies 11: Housing Design Standards, 13e: Short Term/Corporate Lets and

Visitor Accommodation and 16: Sustainable Connectivity include provision for wheelchair users. Promoting sustainable modes of transport, including through the policies Chapter 7: Connectivity, and the ambition for a walkable neighbourhood may help ensure that those with mobility issues or who cannot afford a car can access employment, services and facilities. Overall, a cumulative minor positive effect (+) is expected for this SA objective.

SA Objective 13: Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (e.g. health, transport, education, training, leisure opportunities)

The AAP provides for new services and facilities to serve new development and the surrounding community. This includes provision of a new district centre through Policy 10b: District Centre, a local centre at the Science Park (Policy 10c), a neighbourhood centre at Cowley Road (Policy 10e) as well as some retail and community uses in around Station Approach (Policy 10d).

In addition, Policy 14 seeks to provide new social and community infrastructure, Policy 8 provides for new open space, sport and recreation facilities and a number of policies promote improved sustainable transport infrastructure.

Overall, cumulative significant positive effects (++) are expected for this SA objective.

SA Objective 14: Improve the efficiency, competitiveness and adaptability of the local economy

The AAP provides for 20,000 new jobs, particularly through the policies set out in Chapter 6 – Jobs, Homes and Services, which is a substantial increase in employment delivery at the site and for the city as a whole. These policies seek to intensify employment use at the site and make efficient use of existing employment land. In addition, the AAP promotes active frontages and an attractive and readable public realm, which is likely to help attract employers and workers to the area. Overall, cumulative significant positive effects (++) are expected in relation to this SA objective, as the AAP will help provide jobs for NEC and the wider area, as well as boosting the local economy.

SA Objective 15: Support appropriate investment in people, places, communities and other infrastructure

The AAP provides for new housing and employment, as well as services and facilities to serve new development and the surrounding community. This includes provision of a new centres through Policies 10a to e, Policy 14: Social, Community and Cultural Infrastructure, which seeks to provide new social and community infrastructure, Policy 8: Open Spaces for Recreation and Sport, which provides for new open space, sport and recreation facilities and a number of policies that promote improved sustainable transport infrastructure.

In addition, Policy 30: Digital Infrastructure and Open Innovation should ensure investment in digital infrastructure and neighbourhoods ready to take advantage of future technologies.

Overall, cumulative significant positive effects (++) are expected for this SA objective.

SA Objective 16: Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable travel choices

The AAP has a strong focus on reducing the need to travel and promoting sustainable modes of transport, including walking and cycling connectivity, particularly via Policy 16: Sustainable Connectivity, Policy 18: Cycle Parking, Policy 19: Safeguarding for Cambridge Autonomous Metro and Public Transport and Policy 20: Street Hierarchy. These policies

will work together to achieve this objective, therefore cumulative significant positive effects (++) are expected for this SA objective.

In-combination effects with other plans and programmes

The SA has considered potential in-combination effects of the AAP with other relevant plans and programmes. The key other plans relevant to the AAP are the Cambridge Local Plan and the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. The cumulative effects of these two Local Plans were considered in their respective SAs prior to adoption, and both plans contain a policy allocating NEC for redevelopment. However, the AAP adds considerable detail to the policies allocating NEC and specific cumulative effects need to be taken into account when preparing and implementing the AAP.

The Local Plans propose a substantial amount of development in the wider area; at least 12 ha of employment land to accommodate around 22,100 new jobs and at least 14,000 additional dwellings in Cambridge City and 22,000 additional jobs and 19,500 additional homes in South Cambridge. This is likely to lead to further positive effects for SA objectives 11 (housing) and 14 (economy). There are also likely to be further, indirect effects for SA objectives 9 (health and wellbeing) and 12 (equality), due to increased employment and training opportunities, and access to decent housing, giving more people an increased quality of life.

The Local Plans identify a large amount of development in and near to the northern part of Cambridge. This includes Land between Huntington Road and Histon Road Area of Major Change, West Cambridge Area of Major Change and Cambridge East. In addition, the area covered by the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan continues to be developed. The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan includes a new settlement at Bourn Airfield and major growth at Cambourne West, which are connected to NEC via the A428, which leads into the A14 corridor AQMA. These developments, along with development of Waterbeach new town and a substantial extension to Northstowe could generate movements between these developments and the AAP area, particularly in terms of people commuting to work. This is likely to increase traffic in the area, including along the A14 corridor, therefore adding to the negative effects identified for SA objectives 2 (air quality and pollution) and 7 (greenhouse gas emissions). The large amount of development proposed in these plans could also have negative in-combination effects for SA objective 3 (water), as there will be a substantial increase in water demand in one of the driest parts of the country.

There may be in-combination effects of the AAP with relocation of the wastewater treatment works, but as it is not known where this will be relocated too, effects cannot be known at this stage.

Monitoring

The SEA Regulations require that monitoring is undertaken in relation to the significant effects of implementing the Plan in question. Since effects which the SA expects to be minor may become significant and vice versa, monitoring measures have been proposed in relation to all of the SA objectives in the SA framework. Suggested monitoring measures are presented in Table 6.1 of the main report.

Recommendations

The SA assessments identified a number of recommendations in order to minimise potential negative effects of the AAP and maximise the number, magnitude and likelihood of positive effects of the AAP. These recommendations are set out in Table 6.2 of the main report. These include ensuring the active travel network and green infrastructure networks are interlinked and requiring mitigation of any negative effects that may arise from relocating various uses.

Next Steps

This Non-Technical Summary and the Sustainability Appraisal Report to which this Non-Technical Summary refers will be available for consultation alongside the Draft AAP. Following this consultation, the responses received and the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal will be considered and incorporated into the next iteration of the AAP and accompanying SA.

LUC

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