

South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Cottenham Village Design Statement Supplementary Planning Document

Screening Statement on the need for an environmental assessment in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and European Directive 2001/42/EC

Introduction

Under the requirements of the European Union Directive 2001/42/EC (Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive) and The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004) specific types of plans that set the framework for future development consent of projects must be subject to an environmental assessment.

There are exemptions to this requirement for plans that determine the use of a small area at a local level and for minor modifications if it has been determined that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.

In accordance with the provisions of the SEA Directive and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004) (regulation 9(1)), South Cambridgeshire District Council must determine if the plan requires an environmental assessment. To do this, it is necessary to determine if a plan will have significant environmental effects using the criteria set out in Annex II of the Directive and Schedule I of the Regulations. A determination cannot be made until the three statutory consultation bodies have been consulted: English Heritage, Environment Agency and Natural England (the latter formed from English Nature and the Countryside Agency). Following consultation, the results of the screening process are detailed in a Screening Statement and made available to the public.

This is the Screening Statement on the need for an environmental assessment for the Cottenham Village Design Statement Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Cottenham Village Design Statement SPD

Village Design Statements are part of a nation-wide initiative by the former Countryside Commission. The original version of the Cottenham Village Design Statement was prepared by the Cottenham Village Design Group (CVDG) and approved as Supplementary Planning Guidance in 1994 by South Cambridgeshire District Council. It describes Cottenham as it was at the time that the document was written, and highlights the qualities valued by its residents. The statement was written by Cottenham residents so that local knowledge, views and ideas might contribute to the growth and prosperity of the village, and to the high quality of its environment.

The statement is now being updated by the CVDG based on local experience gained with the current version and reflecting changes within the village over the intervening decade. Additional modifications are being incorporated to support its adoption as an SPD within the Local Development Framework (LDF) for South Cambridgeshire.

The Screening Process

The criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive and Schedule I of the Regulations are used below to determine whether the SPD is likely to have any significant environmental effects.

Table 1: The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular to:

Criteria	Response
1. 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.	The SPD will not set a new framework; rather it will supplement existing planning policy in the LDF for South Cambridgeshire. The SPD elaborates and adds further detail to Core Strategy and Development Plan Policies. The additional guidance provided by the SPD will provide a mechanism through which to shape future development, reinforce local distinctiveness and provide a framework for future physical changes in the village.
2. The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The SPD does not influence other plans or programmes.
3. The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	The SPD will provide guidance on the integration of environmental considerations in new developments in Cottenham village helping to promote sustainable development.
4. Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	Not relevant.
5. The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).	Not relevant.

Table 2: Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular to:

Criteria	Response
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Criteria	Response
1. The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	The principal aim of the SPD is to shape future development, reinforce local distinctiveness and provide a framework for future physical changes in the village. The SPD is intended to be implemented through new developments and therefore the probability of effects occurring depends upon the level of new development. Any effects are likely to be positive and ongoing. There may be some negative effects associated with construction.
2. The cumulative nature of the effects.	The more new development the greater the effects of the SPD.
3. The transboundary nature of the effects.	Not relevant.
4. The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	No risks.
5. The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	The area of land and size of population potentially affected is relatively small.
6. The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; b. Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; c. Intensive land use. 	Not relevant.
7. The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	No effect.

Statement of Reasons for Determination

The SPD will not set a new framework, but rather supplement and provide additional guidance to existing policy contained within the Local Development Framework for South Cambridgeshire. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that the Cottenham Village Design Statement SPD will not have significant environmental effects. It can therefore be determined that an environmental assessment under the SEA Directive and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004) is not required for the Cottenham Village Design Statement SPD.

In addition, each of the three statutory consultation bodies has been consulted on the Screening Statement. The responses received were:

- Environment Agency – No comments received

- English Heritage – No comments received
- Natural England – No comments received pertaining to SEA
(but recommendations were provided regarding the content of the SPD itself).