



Document Reference
PS.EVR.SWP

East Cambridgeshire
District Council

Policies for Swaffham Prior

November 2017

Contents

1.	Introduction and Policy Context.....	1
2.	Swaffham Prior in context.....	2
3.	Local Plan Policy: Further Draft.....	2
4.	Local Plan Policy: Proposed Submission.....	3
5.	Alternative Reasonable Options.....	4
6.	Conclusion	4

1. Introduction and Policy Context

Introduction

- 1.1 East Cambridgeshire District Council is reviewing its Local Plan, which was last adopted in April 2015. The new Local Plan, which is hoped to be adopted in 2018, will provide a framework for development in the district until 2036 and beyond.
- 1.2 This Evidence Report (which is one of a collection) provides background information and justification for policies relating specifically to the village of Swaffham Prior, including:
- Swaffham Prior1: Swaffham Prior's Local Character and Facilities
 - Swaffham Prior2: Infrastructure and Community Facilities
 - Swaffham Prior3: Preferred allocation sites
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to provide justification for the inclusion of specific policies relating to an individual settlement, and should be read alongside other Local Plan evidence documents. For example, a detailed reasoning of the settlement's position in the Settlement Hierarchy is contained in the Settlement Hierarchy report. For the findings of the assessment of individual sites, please refer to the Site Assessment Evidence Report Update 2017.
- 1.4 Collectively, the policies attempt to provide a coherent strategy for the settlement, over the plan period, which meets the area's needs and reflects the views of the community.

National policy

- 1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was introduced in 2014 which offers 'live' government guidance.
- 1.6 Through its Core Planning Principles, the NPPF indicates that planning should:

"...take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it..."

- 1.7 The emerging Local Plan recognises the differing roles and characters of different areas through providing a suite of bespoke policies, specific to each settlement in the district. These policies are set out in individual settlement chapters, in Section 7: Policies for Places.
- 1.8 In paragraph 157, the NPPF sets out a series of requirements which Local Plans should fulfil. The following requirements are considered relevant to the settlement chapters contained within Section 7:

"...Crucially, Local Plans should:

...be genuinely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings, with succinct local and neighbourhood plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area...

...not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives...

...plan positively for the development and infrastructure required in the area to meet the objectives, principles and policies of this Framework...

...be drawn up over an appropriate time scale, preferably a 15-year time horizon, take account of longer term requirements, and be kept up to date...

...allocate sites to promote development and flexible use of land, bringing forward new land where necessary, and provide detail on form, scale, access and quantum of development where appropriate...”

- 1.9 In response to these requirements, Section 7 proposes the inclusion of policies relating to each settlement’s local character, infrastructure and facilities. Site allocations for a range of land uses are proposed for many settlements.

2 Swaffham Prior in context

- 2.1 Swaffham Prior is located 5 miles west of Newmarket and 10 miles north-east of Cambridge. Due to its population size and good range of services, the Settlement Hierarchy identifies Swaffham Prior as a ‘medium’ village.
- 2.2 As a medium village, it is considered that Swaffham Prior offers the potential to accommodate growth, thereby contributing to meeting the development needs of the area. The overall scale of growth is influenced by the village’s position in the Settlement Hierarchy, the availability of suitable sites, and the presence of environmental and/or infrastructure constraints.

3 Local Plan Policy: Further Draft

- 3.1 A Call for Sites exercise was held as part of the Preliminary Draft Local Plan consultation, during which a number of site submissions were received for Swaffham Prior. The site submissions were assessed and sites considered suitable for development were proposed for allocation.
- 3.2 The Swaffham Prior chapter of the Further Draft Local Plan proposed five draft policies:
- 3.3 Policy *Swaffham Prior1: Swaffham Prior’s Local Character and Facilities* seeks to ensure development proposals maintain Swaffham Prior’s built character and maintain the village’s facilities expanding on them where possible.
- 3.4 Policy *Swaffham Prior2: Infrastructure and Community Facilities* sets out the settlement’s priorities in terms of infrastructure and facilities.

- 3.5 The content of the policies was informed by the Local Plan 2015, engagement with the Parish Council (in 2016), and responses to the Preliminary Draft Local Plan consultation (where applicable).
- 3.6 Policy *Swaffham Prior3: Preferred Allocation Sites* identified three site allocations:
- SWP.E1 – East of Goodwin Farm, Heath Road;
 - SWP.LGS1 – Playing fields; High Street;
 - SWP.LGS2 – Coopers Green, Green Head Road;
- 3.7 A number of other site submissions were assessed, but each was found to be not suitable for allocation. The results of the site assessment are presented in the *Site Assessment Report Update 2017*.
- 3.8 Swaffham Prior has a Development Envelope to define the boundary of the built up area and extent of the countryside. A number of changes to Swaffham Prior's Development Envelope were proposed during the Preliminary Draft Local Plan consultation. Following assessment, each was rejected. The reasons for rejection are set out in the Development Envelopes Assessment Report.
- 3.9 In summary, the following comments were received during the Further Draft Local Plan consultation (January – February 2017) in response Swaffham Prior draft policies:

Overarching Issues/Concerns

- None

Infrastructure and Other constraints

- No comments were made in respect of infrastructure or other constraints.

Site Specific Comments

DE/28/01 Land north of Mill Hill and DE/28/05 Land adjacent to 75 High Street

- Originally submitted as development envelope changes, without a site submission. Now being promoted as a site submission for the combined area (Site/28/06)

LGS/28/04, 05, 07 & 08 (rejected sites)

- The Local Green Space promoters disagree with the findings of the assessment of the site, stating that they believe, despite being an extensive tract of land, the site fulfils the criteria for a Local Green Space.

New Site(s) suggested

- Site/28/06 Land South of High Street
- Site/28/07 Adjacent to 38 Mill Hill

4 Local Plan Policy: Proposed Submission

- 4.1 Other than more standardised changes, Policy Swaffham Prior1 and 2 have not been amended for the Proposed Submission Local Plan.
- 4.2 Policy Swaffham Prior3 has been amended as follows:

- SWP.H1 – Rear of 73 High Street, (20 dwellings); has been added, for reasons set out in the Site Assessment Report.

- 4.3 All comments relating to new and previously rejected sites were carefully considered, with full details as to the assessment of such sites available in the Site Assessment Report. All assessment of Local Green Space submitted for consideration and reasoning for not including as allocations are contained in the Local Green Spaces Evidence Report.
- 4.4 Policy Swaffham Prior5 has been introduced for the Proposed Submission Local Plan, linked to the inclusion of the new site at rear of 73 High Street. The bespoke policy is needed due to the particular circumstances and issues relating to this site.

5 Alternative Reasonable Options

- 5.1 Option 1 is the preferred policy approach for Swaffham Prior, comprising the five policies as set out.
- 5.2 Option 2 would be to not include either Policies Swaffham Prior1 or 2, but these are rejected on the basis that they both give locally specific policy matters for the settlement, which would be lacking without such a policy.
- 5.3 Option 3 would be to include alternative site allocations. Such alternatives are assessed in both the Sustainability Appraisal report and the Site Assessment Report.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 This Evidence Report demonstrates the rationale for the proposed Swaffham Prior related policies as contained in the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan (November 2017). It is hoped that this report helps demonstrate how we have responded to comments received during the previous Draft consultations, as well as how the latest evidence and national guidance has been taken into account.