

A stylized, light brown map of the North West Cambridge area is positioned on the left side of the page, partially overlapping the dark brown background and extending into the light blue area at the bottom. The map shows the irregular shape of the region with some internal lines representing roads or boundaries.

# NORTH WEST **cambridge**

National Planning Policy Framework Statement

March 2012

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## 1 INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 Since the submission of the University of Cambridge's planning application for the North West Cambridge scheme in September 2011, the Government has published the National Planning Policy Framework ("the NPPF").
- 1.2 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to apply. It replaces most of the previous Planning Policy Statements and Guidance notes in England.
- 1.3 Regard was had to the draft policies in the consultation version of the National Planning Policy Framework within the suite of information submitted for the planning application in September 2011, as well as to the PPS and PPG policies which it consolidates, simplifies and streamlines.
- 1.4 Planning policy references within the March 2012 Updated Environmental Statement have been updated to reflect the policies now set out in the published NPPF.
- 1.5 The purpose of this Statement is to explain the effect of the NPPF and how it relates to the planning application for the North West Cambridge Development.

## 2 THE STATUS OF THE NPPF

- 2.1 The NPPF was published on 27 March 2012, with immediate effect. Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states that the NPPF: *"does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Proposed development that accords with an up-to date development plan should be approved, and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless material considerations indicate otherwise..."*.
- 2.2 The NPPF addresses the relationship between the NPPF and existing adopted policies within this context. Within paragraphs 211 to 215 of Annex 1 to the NPPF it is stated that:
- for the purposes of decision-making the policies in the Local Plan should not be considered out of date simply because they were adopted prior to the publication of the NPPF;
  - the policies contained in the NPPF are material considerations which planning authorities should take into account from the day of its publication;
  - for 12 months from the day of publication of the NPPF, decision takers may continue giving full weight to policies adopted since 2004 even if there is a limited degree of conflict with the NPPF;
  - in other cases and following the 12 month period, due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF and that the closer the policies in the plan are to those within the NPPF the greater the weight that may be given.

### 3 PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The presumption in favour of sustainable development is regarded by the Government as fundamental to planning. The Ministerial Foreword to the NPPF states: *"The purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development.....Development means growth. We must accommodate the new ways by which we will earn our living in a competitive world. We must house a rising population, which is living longer and wants to make new choices. We must respond to the changes that new technologies offer us.....Development that is sustainable should go ahead, without delay - a presumption in favour of sustainable development that is the basis for every plan, and every decision."*
- 3.2 The NPPF places a presumption in favour of sustainable development at its heart. The presumption is described as a *"golden thread running through both plan making and decision-taking."*
- 3.3 The planning policies within the NPPF are grouped under the heading *"achieving sustainable development"*.
- 3.4 According to the NPPF, the presumption in favour of sustainable development means, for decision-taking, (unless material considerations indicate otherwise):
- *"approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
  - *where the development plan is absent silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless:*
    - *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits, when assessed against the policies in [the NPPF] taken as a whole; or*
    - *specific policies [in the NPPF] indicate development should be restricted"*

### 4 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NORTH WEST CAMBRIDGE DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The North West Cambridge site is identified by both the Cambridge Local Plan 1999-2016 and the South Cambridgeshire Council Local Development Framework and the Site Specific Development Plan Document entitled "Responding to a Housing Shortfall – Technical Appendix October 2008". The production of the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan, adopted in 2009 as part of the Statutory Development Plan, has defined the policy framework for this site and the level of development which will be permitted. The Area Action Plan accords with the policies in the NPPF.
- 4.2 The Proposed Development fully accords with the relevant provisions of the new National Planning Policy Framework and with those of Planning Policy Guidance and Planning Policy Statements which it replaces. It accords with the various parts of the Development Plan covering the Application Site.
- 4.3 As the Planning Statement for the Proposed Development concludes: the Proposed Development is an exemplar development critical to the delivery of the vision for the Cambridge sub region to develop further as a world leader in the fields of higher education and research, critical to the future development of the University.

The Proposed Development will encourage substantial investment in Cambridge and help to recruit and retain the best staff and students from around the world, which is good for the Cambridge area and the wider UK economy.

- 4.4 In all the circumstances, analysis by reference to the development plan, consideration of material considerations in relation to the Proposed Development, analysis by reference to the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development require that the North West Cambridge proposals be determined without delay.