

# South Cambridgeshire District Council – Harston & Comberton Ward

## Report to Haslingfield Parish Council September 2020

### Government Planning White Paper

The government, through the MHCLG (Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government), published at the start of August a white paper for consultation outlining their radical plans to make far reaching changes to the planning system. This is a public consultation which closes on 29<sup>th</sup> October and full details can be found on the website at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future>

The Council is digesting the proposals and considering the implications on our district, some of which are quite concerning. The thrust of the changes focuses on simplifying local plans by zoning land into Growth, Renewal and Protected areas, changing to a “sustainable development test”, set out site specific requirements and design codes for development instead of “planning policies”, creating new plans in no more than 30 months, scrapping five-year land supply requirement (a welcome proposal), introducing a single infrastructure levy to replace S106, raising the threshold for providing affordable housing to 40+ (which will affect parishes badly) and others. Once we have fleshed out the Council’s response, we will make it available to the parishes. But in the meantime, we are encouraging all parishes to consider putting in their responses too as it is a public consultation.

### South Cambs re-opening to public

South Cambs Hall will be re-opening to the public by appointment only starting on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020 between 10am and 3pm on Tuesdays to Thursdays only. Please go to the website at <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/your-council-and-democracy/ways-to-contact-us/book-an-appointment/> to book an appointment. No walk-ins are allowed. Strict social distancing and hygiene procedures will be followed. Visitors will be required to wear face coverings and should take one with them. This is a limited opening and we will be reviewing this regularly.

### Local Covid Testing Site

The drive-through coronavirus testing facility at the Milton Park & Ride is still operational, though very busy. Some have reported difficulties in getting appointments there and have had to go further afield, including Bedford.

Book an appointment on the NHS website <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/> or by calling 119.

### Business Support and Businesses reopening

The Business Support team has got into its stride and is assisting businesses operating in the district to re-open and providing assistance to help them get through this difficult time. You can read more about the team here <https://www.cambridgeindependent.co.uk/business/the-new-team-helpingsouth-cambridgeshire-s-businesses-to-recover-9118631/> and contact via [scambs.gov.uk/business](https://www.scambs.gov.uk/business), email [openforbusiness@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:openforbusiness@scambs.gov.uk) or call 01954 713 465.

## **Planning Committee PAS Review**

The promised PAS review of the South Cambs planning committee process is ongoing. The last stage of that is a forum with parish councils. This will be taking place during September and parishes will be getting their invitations shortly. As there are 105 parishes, there will be four sessions so every parish can have their chance to engage in this review. Thank you for your patience and hope you will send a representative to the forum.

## **Greater Cambridge Local Plan Update**

We are working toward having further discussions with local councillors and other stakeholders this autumn about the findings of the Issues and Options consultation. We will also be releasing information on the 600+ sites that land owners submitted to the Council in the Call-for-Sites stage.

Some are for housing, others for businesses and others for green spaces. It is most important to note that these sites have no planning merit whatsoever; it is just a list and we have not done any work to assess their suitability. They are nothing but aspirational on the part of the owners who hope that theirs will fit into our spatial strategy, when we do decide on the strategy.

This stage is a requirement by government and is the same thing that happened with the previous plan. These sites will go through further testing later in the process before they can be considered for selection.

Cllr Philip Allen	<a href="mailto:Cllr.Allen@scambs.gov.uk">Cllr.Allen@scambs.gov.uk</a>
Cllr Ian Sollom	<a href="mailto:Cllr.Sollom@scambs.gov.uk">Cllr.Sollom@scambs.gov.uk</a>
Cllr Tony Mason	<a href="mailto:Cllr.Mason@scambs.gov.uk">Cllr.Mason@scambs.gov.uk</a>