

CAMBRIDGESHIRE HORIZONS

Agenda Item No: 8b

Progress on Major Developments and Infrastructure

To: **Cambridgeshire Horizons Board**

Date: **9th December 2009**

From: **Director for Development**

Purpose: **To update Board members on progress in delivering major developments and strategic infrastructure projects, and progress on the Housing Growth Capital programme.**

Recommendation: **The Board is invited to note progress and comment on the matters raised in the report.**

Contact: Name: John Onslow
Job Title: Director for Development
E-mail address: john.onslow@cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk
Telephone No. 01223 714046

1. OVERALL PROGRAMME

- 1.1 The earlier signs of improvement in the housing market continue with the issue of outline planning permission for Trumpington Meadows and the re-commencement of work on some sites.
- 1.2 Horizons and the authorities are continuing to work with the housebuilders, the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA), and other key stakeholders to progress development on major growth sites.
- 1.3 **Housing Growth Fund (HGF):** See agenda Item 10.
- 1.4 **HCA Kickstart funding:** Although we may welcome the fact that one site in Cambridgeshire has been awarded Kickstart Round One funding (56 homes in Oxmoor, Huntingdon), this is a disappointing outcome in the national context. Only four schemes in East of England Region have so far been successful. Government has invited expressions of interest for Round 2 of Kickstart (including the Private Rented Sector Initiative [PRSI], a scheme enabling major institutional investors to bring forward packages of private homes for rent where needed) in September 2009. Fifteen Cambridgeshire schemes have bid into this round and an announcement of the successful schemes is anticipated early in the new year.
- 1.5 **Major Infrastructure Projects:** Handover of the northern section of the Cambridgeshire Busway has been deferred and announcement of the commencement of services has been postponed pending completion of snagging works, handover by the contractor, and driver training. Work on the southern section continues and completion is anticipated in June 2010. Outline planning permission has been issued for the Cambridge Biomedical Campus that enables a start to be made on the final section of the **Addenbrooke's Access Road** (often referred to as the Boulevard). This is expected to lead to a significant growth in jobs at the site, putting further pressure on the importance of delivering homes, especially affordable homes. Meanwhile, work continues on the County Council's final sections of the road junctions and completion is anticipated in June 2010.
- 1.6 **Risk Management:** Scores of the risks rated RED in the Strategic Risk Register (SRR) remain unchanged. Further use of the Flexible Fund to deliver infrastructure on the growth sites is dependent on the outcome of the Clay Farm inquiry. Funding for Chesterton Station is expected to be part of the bid for TIF (transport).
- 1.7 New mitigation 1.3c (rated amber) has been added in response to concern that alternative development proposals, emerging as part of the RSS review to 2031, may deflect attention from delivering the agreed strategy.

2. SUMMARY OF PROGRESS WITH MAJOR DEVELOPMENT SITES

2.1 Cambridge Southern Fringe

- 2.1.1** The **Trumpington Meadows** loan agreement with Grosvenor/USS was completed on 9 October 2009 and with development partner, Barratt, an ambitious programme for taking forward the early stages of the development has commenced. Work has begun on the Design Code and it is anticipated that it will be brought before the Joint Development Control Committee early in 2010. Reserved matters applications for the first phase of 350 housing and site wide infrastructure are being progressed concurrently.
- 2.1.2** The planning appeal relating to Countryside Properties' **Clay Farm/Glebe Farm** site (total around 2,550 homes) has been closed and the Inspector anticipates reporting to the Secretary of State by 23 December 2009. The Secretary of State's decision letter is expected on or before 10 March 2010. We are continuing to discuss a potential equity investment with Countryside Properties, notably the level of investment that might be available, for implementation if a favourable decision is announced, but subject to the level of HGF available.
- 2.1.3** Countryside has submitted an application into Round 2 of Kickstart and proposes to submit a full planning permission for the Glebe Farm in early December. Kickstart guidance requires that the development should commence by April 2010.
- 2.1.4** Countryside is also seeking approval of the Clay Farm Design Code and the Spine Road in March/April 2010, and is concurrently progressing discharge of strategic site-wide conditions and details on two phases of 300 units each at the southern end of the site. The current intention is to submit both reserved matters applications in late March/April 2010. Depending on the outcome of the appeal and the market, Countryside anticipates building out 60–80 units/year on each of the two phases on Clay Farm and on Glebe Farm by mid-2011.
- 2.1.5** The implications of the Clay Farm/Glebe Farm inquiry on the draft section 106 agreement for **Bell School** application are being considered, but it is anticipated that the Bell School section 106 agreement will be completed before Christmas.

2.2 North West Cambridge

- 2.2.1** Developers of the main **NIAB** site (1,580 homes) have requested that the Joint Development Control Committee defers consideration of the application pending receipt of the decision on Clay Farm. Developers of the **NIAB Extra** site have advised that no progress will be made with an application for the site until the main NIAB site is well under way.

2.2.2 Masterplanning has commenced on the North West Cambridge **University** development. The Area Action Plan, adopted by the City Council and SCDC in October, proposes up to 3,000 new homes (50% of which will be University key worker homes), accommodation for 2,000 students, 100,000m² academic and research development, and supporting services and facilities. The Plan also calls for high sustainability standards. Key issues to be worked through are around demographics (including the crucial role of the lettings policy for the proposed key worker housing), transport and access, noise, air quality, and retail proposals. Stakeholder and public consultation took place in November and a member workshop is planned for January 2010. The project team proposes to fix the key parameters of the Masterplan in January for the purpose of testing them in the environmental assessment. The draft master plan will be taken through the University's internal processes between January and July 2010, working up to submission of outline planning applications to Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils in October 2010.

2.2.3 Transport work to supplement continuing work on the **NW Cambridge retail study** is being commissioned.

2.3 Cambridge East

2.3.1 Members, Chief officers, representatives of Marshall Group, and officers from Hunts District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council visited RAF Wyton on 26 October. Discussions between Marshall and Defence Estates continue around the requirements of Marshall's activities that would be re-located, and how Wyton or Waterbeach would accommodate these.

2.4 Cambridge Northern Fringe (East)

2.4.1 Further consideration of the site is being taken forward by the Cambridge City Fringes Joint Committee (also known as the Section 29 Committee) in the form of a Joint Area Action Plan. It is anticipated that the Area Action Plan will be adopted in 2012, with preparation of the draft plan and sustainability appraisal report completed by early 2011. The proposed new Chesterton Station and transport interchange would form a critical part of this development.

2.5 Orchard Park

2.5.1 The site continues to grow with three new land parcels now being developed and stalled sites now being completed. The community centre was transferred to the Community Council at the end of August. Work has started on Public Open Space 1 with drainage being put in for the sports pitches and tennis courts.

2.5.2 The Inspectors' draft Report on the Site Specific Policies DPD has accepted South Cambridgeshire's recommendation for an extra 220

homes in place of other uses at Orchard Park to contribute towards meeting the housing shortfall.

- 2.5.3** SCDC has appointed a consultant to explore options for the City Council-owned site K1 (and possibly other sites) working with officers. The developers of the sites have opted not to bid for Kickstart 2 or the PRSI, but discussions are taking place between the developers and the private sector investors directly.

2.6 Northstowe

- 2.6.1** The housing minister has announced that Northstowe is included in the second wave of eco-towns and has pledged that local councils will get £10 million to help to develop them. Discussions continue between the Homes and Communities Agency and Gallagher Estates on the best options for moving Northstowe forward. The Northstowe Delivery Board met on 1 December 2009 and a further oral update will be given at the Board meeting.
- 2.6.2** The Northstowe Renewable Energy Project has evolved into a much wider scheme, the Low Carbon Development Initiative, that will also be working with other growth site developers.
- 2.6.3** A solution has been agreed with major developers to upgrade Uttons Drove to allow a land drainage solution at lower cost and lower carbon impact than alternatives. A Memorandum of Understanding has been completed between the main parties (Anglian Water Services, and the developers of Northstowe and Cambourne). It is anticipated that work will commence in summer 2010 and be completed by March 2011.

Cambourne

- 2.6.4** Development at Cambourne continues and 2,375 homes have now been completed. The police station, currently under construction, is due to be completed in December.
- 2.6.5** The County Council application to the Department for Children, Schools & Families for capital funding for a secondary school at Cambourne has not yet been determined. The DCSF is currently reviewing all of its existing capital funding streams and no decision will be made on the application until this is complete.

2.7 Market Towns

East Cambridgeshire

- 2.7.1** The Draft **Ely** Masterplan sets out key proposals to enable the City to accommodate growth sustainably over the next 20-25 years. Over 1,000 houses are in the pipeline, with 3,000 more proposed in the draft Ely masterplan. Public Consultation on the Draft Ely Masterplan closed in November, and 200 responses have been received including responses from a range of key stakeholders.

The responses will be considered by the Strategic Development Committee in January and the intention is for the final plan to be adopted as Council Policy in February 2010. It is clear that a major package of infrastructure measures required to ensure that the impacts of this growth are mitigated successfully, in particular major improvements to the A142 around the railway station including the consideration of an Ely Southern Link Road. However, the Masterplan consultation document also demonstrates that growth should help to attract private sector investment and new employment into the City with associated improvements to the level of facilities and services. The first phase of works for the **Ely Country Park** project is planned to commence on site in Spring 2010 with enhanced play areas, landscaping and access.

Fenland

2.7.2 March: Fenland District Council is preparing a housing and regeneration project to deliver up to 400 homes and other associated works supported by HGF funding. The latter is being sought for transport infrastructure, subject to a funding package linked to delivery of outputs being agreed. In addition as part of the LDF Core Strategy, Fenland DC is taking forward two strategic allocations providing around 800 homes in South East March and a further 800 homes as a first phase in West March.

2.7.3 Wisbech: Work continues with Fenland colleagues to bring forward housing and mixed use development at Nene Waterfront and a £2m decontamination contract has been completed. A Round 2 Kickstart application has been submitted. HGF funding has been allocated for transport infrastructure, subject to a funding package being agreed, and implementation is likely to commence in March 2010.

Huntingdonshire

2.7.4 St Neots: Discussions are continuing with the HCA about the potential for the St. Neots eastern extension to be an eco-quarter demonstration project with funding support from government. A report to inform these discussions on the potential for the use of renewable energy in association with the adjacent Barford Power Station has been completed and will be published shortly. The consultant's report on the St. Neots Health Check has been completed.

2.7.5 The Love's Farm development is of strategic importance to the district. In addition to about 1,400 new homes, it will also include a new school, sports facilities, and a community building. BPHA has almost completed 158 of the 477 affordable homes (excluding the extra care units) that will be built here and the next phase will soon be under way. They will offer a range of affordable tenures including rent and shared ownership and a scheme that offers applicants a chance to rent a home now with the option to buy it

later. Aldwyck Housing Association has also secured funding for 14 homes, which are now complete. There are also plans to provide an extra care scheme in a later phase to enable older people who need support to continue to live independently. The number of affordable homes to be provided on Loves Farm will exceed the number initially sought in the planning agreement, supported by £19.8 million of grant funding secured from the Homes & Communities Agency to build the affordable housing. A separate bid for funding towards the extra care scheme will be submitted when plans are more advanced.

2.7.6 Huntingdon: The project has been scaled back in the light of the recent Learning & Skills Council funding difficulties which have impacted of the Huntingdon Regional College. However, the remainder of the Huntingdon town centre extension and redevelopment project in is progressing and a funding agreement for HGF investment is being discussed. The new link road has received planning permission and the County Council's Cabinet has agreed to seek compulsory purchase powers if required. A detailed implementation programme is being drawn up and negotiation with land owners has commenced.

2.7.7 The development at **Mayfield Road**, Huntingdon, comprising 29 affordable homes to be built to Code Level 5, has full planning permission and remains on programme.

3. **QUALITY OF LIFE AND STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

Quality Charter for Growth

- 3.1** The Quality Charter for Growth is the principal means to ensure new developments meet local expectations in addressing the needs of the community. The work programme will be reviewed and rolled forward by the Quality Charter Steering Group. Meanwhile, work continues on the roll-out of the Training Programme, running through to 2010 and working with all authorities in Cambridgeshire on embedding the Charter principles in planning processes, e.g., local development plans, transport planning and community plans
- 3.2** The most recent event was a sustainable construction workshop in November. The steering group recently considered the next phase of work, including officer and member training on the Quality Charter for Growth planned for early 2010.

Strategic Infrastructure

- 3.3** The County Council has resolved to bid for the proposed **Chesterton Station** as part of the Transport Innovation Fund.

- 3.4 Cambridge Gateway (CB1) Project:** This scheme is critical to growth of the Cambridge area and meetings continue. City Council's Planning Committee on 18 November received an update on S106 negotiations with developers relating to mitigation measures for CB1 (e.g., new station square) and financial contributions towards community infrastructure (e.g., open space). As a result, work can now proceed to complete the S106 agreement. The proposals are related to improvements between the Station area and the city centre as part of a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) bid, which has been forwarded by Horizons and the City and County Councils in response to the invitation in this year's Budget for pilot schemes. An announcement on this is expected in the Pre-Budget report.
- 3.5** Detailed discussions continue on **The Hive**. A project plan is in place and a project board comprising representatives of Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge Regional College, Horizons and Citylife has been established. A planning application is anticipated early in 2010, with implementation by summer 2011.

Green Infrastructure (GI)

- 3.6** Work continues on the strategy review and the programme of GI projects, although some projects are 'on hold' pending the outcome of the proposal to cut HGF for 2010/11 (Agenda Item 10). The 'due diligence' process is being completed for projects that will go ahead in the near future, e.g., Ely Country Park and Cambridge SW Habitats & Access projects.
- 3.7** It has not yet been possible to acquire all the land for the Swavesey to Buckingway Business Park cycle route and it has therefore been dropped from the current programme with a view to funding it in a later HGF round.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – New Communities

- 3.8** It is anticipated that the consultation draft of the new communities JSNA will be considered by the Horizons Board prior to completion and launch during 2010.