

**CAMBRIDGESHIRE HORIZONS**

**Agenda Item No: 9b**

**Progress on Major Developments and Infrastructure**

*To:* **Cambridgeshire Horizons Board**

*Date:* **24 September 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.**

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## 1. OVERALL PROGRAMME

- 1.1 Overall progress with delivering homes and infrastructure continues to be mixed and the recession has slowed progress with major development sites. There are, however, some signs of improvement with the re-commencement of work on some sites reflecting the comparative strength of the underlying local economy in the Cambridge area.
- 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 **HCA Kickstart funding:** The HCA invited expressions of interest in the first round of £400m of funding but, disappointingly, only one site in Cambridgeshire has been shortlisted for Round One funding (56 homes in Oxmoor, Huntingdon) and this is not one of our major growth sites. Round 2 of Kickstart was announced in July and it is understood that expressions of interest will be invited in September 2009, followed by detailed bidding, with announcements of successful schemes being made early in the new year. Alex Plant and Liz Bisset wrote jointly to the HCA Regional Director in August to suggest that there be greater involvement in the process from local partners in this second round.
- 1.4 **Major Infrastructure Projects:** The northern section of the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway is now scheduled to be handed over to the County Council at the end of October and the expectation is that this section will be open and in use within a month of handover, although a firm date is still to be conformed. Work on the Hauxton Road junction with Addenbrookes Access Road commenced on 17 August 2009 and completion is anticipated in June 2010.
- 1.5 **Risk Management:** The Audit & Risk Committee (ARM) has considered work undertaken on risk management and will continue to monitor progress on key risks and mitigations. ARM recommends that the Strategic Risk Register (SRR) is updated on a quarterly basis, and that meetings within that cycle should receive the most recent copy plus an exception report. Changes for risk scores and mitigation actions are outlined in the body of this report. Notably, we have increased the score on the risk relating to funding for infrastructure because of the proposed HGF cut for 2010/11 and concerns about the general funding of infrastructure in the future.

## 2. SUMMARY OF PROGRESS WITH MAJOR DEVELOPMENT SITES

### 2.1 Cambridge Southern Fringe

- 2.1.1 We have secured agreement in principle on the section 106 and flexible fund agreements for the **Trumpington Meadows** (1,200 homes) site. The funding agreement between Cambridgeshire Horizons and Grosvenor and USS for a Flexible Fund loan will unlock the development, deliver 300 new homes by 2012 (with 40%

affordable), and secure completion of the first phase of a primary school and related community facilities.

**2.1.2** Countryside Properties plc has so far declined to accept the offer of an HGF Flexible Fund equity investment deal that would have enabled early commencement on the **Clay Farm/Glebe Farm** site (total around 2,550 homes). The planning appeal proceedings are now in train and the public inquiry is scheduled to commence on 28 September 2009. The door has been left open to Countryside to accept this offer, subject to the agreement of the Horizons Board on 24 September. Countryside's HCA Kickstart Round 1 application was unsuccessful, but there are good proposals for an application into Round 2 of Kickstart, due to be launched in September. The door has also been left open to Countryside to continue negotiations on the duplicate applications and so avoid the need for the Inquiry. This also means that the Section 106 agreement for this site has not been completed, so we have not secured the anticipated contributions. We have increased the score on the risk relating to securing anticipated contributions and unblocking delivery of new homes accordingly.

**2.1.3** Agreement on the **Addenbrooke's 2020** proposal has been reached in principle and engrossments have been sent out. Work has commenced on the construction of the northern section of the **MRC Boulevard** and completion is anticipated early in the new year, with the southern section following by mid-year.

**2.1.4** The owners of the **Bell School** site (350 homes) have been asked to comment on the draft 106 agreement. Negotiations continue.

## **2.2 North West Cambridge**

**2.2.1** The planning application for the main **NIAB** site (1,580 homes) is scheduled to be considered by the Joint Development Control Committee on 1 October 2009. The draft Inspectors' Report on the South Cambridgeshire Site Specific Policies DPD dealing with the **NIAB Extra** land has been published. The report confirms that the development will include the proposed North West Cambridge secondary school and identifies capacity for approximately 1100 dwellings on the site.

**2.2.2** The Inspectors' final report on the examination in public of the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan for the University development concludes that the site footprint will have capacity for approximately 3,000 new homes, accommodation for 2,000 students, 100,000m<sup>2</sup> University-related academic and research development, and supporting services and facilities. The Inspectors have confirmed the challenging policy for Climate Change and Sustainable Design and Construction, which requires the development to be a step ahead of Building Control requirements. Masterplanning has commenced, with a view to submitting an outline application in October 2010.

**2.2.3** A consultant has been commissioned to undertake a NW Cambridge retail study that will supplement the 2008 sub-regional retail study, testing the capacity for a new retail store in North West Cambridge and looking at a range of locations within the quadrant if capacity is found. Transport work to support this study will also be commissioned in parallel with looking at the best solutions. Findings are due to be produced later in the year.

## **2.3 Cambridge East**

**2.3.1** Work on relocation options has been continuing with Marshall Group and Defence Estates and a detailed progress report is reported under Agenda Item 10.

## **2.4 Cambridge Northern Fringe (East)**

**2.4.1** The partners have commenced joint work with key stakeholders with the expectation of presenting proposals to the Section 29 Committee that will lead to a formal local development scheme

## **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. Occupations at 15<sup>th</sup> July were 508 (260 market and 248 affordable). The community centre was transferred to the Community Council at the end of August and a date is now being set for its formal opening.

**2.5.2** The Inspectors' draft Report on the South Cambridgeshire 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. The final report is due to be issued shortly.

**2.5.3** Planning permission has been granted for the local centre and it is hoped the commercial centre application will be presented to South Cambridgeshire District Council's planning committee in October.

**2.5.4** We have identified a critical risk relating to provision and affordability of services to meet the demands arising from growth generally (although this relates to other areas as well as Orchard Park). The authorities are considering service and resource implications of growth and exploring alternative funding and options for more efficient service delivery.

## **2.6 Northstowe**

**2.6.1** Progress on submission of a revised planning application for Northstowe has been delayed while the Homes and Communities Agency and Gallagher Estates have been re-appraising the project and the best options for moving it forward.

## **2.7 Cambourne**

- 2.7.1** Development at Cambourne continues and 2,736 homes have now been completed. The third primary school has opened for the autumn term in temporary accommodation and the police station, currently under construction, is due to be completed in December.
- 2.7.2** The draft South Cambridgeshire Site Specific Policies DPD Inspectors' Report confirms that higher density development in the remainder of Cambourne would be sound, enabling around 950 further dwellings to be built within the existing Masterplan footprint. The County Council has applied to the Department for Children, Schools & Families for funding for a secondary school at Cambourne, with part funding from section 106 contributions from the 950 further dwellings proposed.

## **2.8 Market Towns**

- 2.8.1** East Cambridgeshire District Council is publishing the Draft **Ely Masterplan** for public consultation at the end of September. This document sets out the key proposals to enable the City to sustainably accommodate growth over the next 20-25 years. Over 1,000 houses are in the pipeline, with 3,000 more proposed in the draft Ely masterplan. It is clear that a package of infrastructure measures are 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 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 document will be on deposit for public consultation from 28th September 2009 to 16th November 2009, (see ECDC website [www.eastcambs.gov.uk](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk)) and the consultation feedback will be considered early in 2010. Work has also commenced on an Infrastructure Development Strategy which will investigate the future infrastructure requirements for the District as a whole. An application for the **Ely Country Park** project, for which the final land assessments and landscape designs are currently being undertaken, will be submitted in November 2009. Works are planned to commence on site in Spring 2010 with enhanced play and educational amenities.
- 2.8.2 St Neots:** Discussions are continuing with the HCA about the potential for St. Neots eastern extension to be an eco-quarter demonstration project funded. A report to inform these discussion on the potential for the use of renewable energy in association with the adjacent Barford Power Station will be available shortly. The consultant's report on the St. Neots Health Check has been completed.
- 2.8.3** The **Loves 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 ExtraCare) 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 ExtraCare 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 ExtraCare scheme will be submitted when plans are more advanced.

- 2.8.4 Huntingdon:** The project has been scaled back in the light of the recent LSC funding difficulties which have impacted on the HRC. However, the remainder on the Huntingdon town centre extension and redevelopment project is progressing and a funding agreement for HGF investment is being discussed. A planning application for the new link road has been submitted and a decision is expected in September. The County Council will be considering starting the process for CPO powers concurrently.
- 2.8.5** The development at **Mayfield Road**, Huntingdon, comprising 29 affordable homes to be built to Code Level 5, has full planning permission and is on programme.
- 2.8.6 March:** Fenland DC is preparing a housing and regeneration project to deliver up to 800 homes and other associated works supported by HGF funding. As part of the LDF, Fenland DC is taking forward two locations for which refreshed concept plans are anticipated in late June 2009 providing around 800 units in South East March and 1200 in March West. HGF funding has been allocated for transport infrastructure, subject to a funding package linked to delivery of outputs being agreed.
- 2.8.7 Wisbech:** Work continues with Fenland DC to bring forward housing and mixed use development at **Wisbech Nene Waterfront** and a £2m decontamination contract has been commissioned. The Round 1 Kickstart application was unsuccessful, but discussions have commenced on a further application in Round 2. HGF funding has been allocated for transport infrastructure, subject to a funding package being agreed.

### 3. QUALITY OF LIFE AND STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE

#### 3.1 Quality Charter for Growth

**3.1.1** The 'Quality Charter for Growth Agenda Training Programme' continues, running to the end of 2009, and we will work to ensure the Quality Charter is fully embedded in planning processes.

**3.1.2** Most recently, we undertook study visits to the Building Research Establishment Innovation Park to examine the exemplar low energy homes, and to the new development New Hall, Harlow, an exemplar of excellent masterplanning.

**3.1.3** Further events are arranged for later in the year, e.g., low carbon economy debate at Clare College on 19 October, two sustainable construction workshops in the autumn, and officer and member training on the Quality Charter for Growth.

### **3.2 Strategic Infrastructure**

**3.2.1** The proposed **Chesterton Rail Station** is due for delivery in 2015/16 and is funded from the Regional Funding Allocation (RFA). An expected review of RFA may, however, impact on this timetable.

**3.2.2** Strategic projects:

- **Cambridge Gateway (CB1) Project:** We are working with partner organisations on the vision for the proposed high quality public transport interchange at Cambridge train station, funded by £1.5m of HGF. This funding will support the £3m of Community Infrastructure Fund funding that is being used to improve public access to the station area in conjunction with the major redevelopment of the area.
- Detailed discussions continue on the potential for funding **The Hive**.

### **3.3 Green Infrastructure**

**3.3.1** Work continues on the programme of green infrastructure projects.

### **3.4 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – new communities**

**3.4.1** It is anticipated that the consultation draft of the new communities JSNA will be considered by the Growth Partnership prior to completion and launch in early 2010.

## **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**4.1** The Board is invited to note progress and comment on the issues raised in this report.