

Major Development Sites Progress Report

To: **Joint Strategic Growth Implementation Committee**

Date: **9 April 2008**

From: **Director for Development, Cambridgeshire Horizons**

Purpose: **To update the Committee on progress with the major growth area development sites in and around Cambridge and to consider key strategic risks.**

Recommendation: **The Committee is invited to comment on the matters raised in the report.**

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1. Overall Programme and Strategic Risks Register

- 1.1** The overall programme for growth in the Cambridge Sub Region is shown in Appendix 1. An updated Strategic Risk Register is at Appendix 2. The overall programme and risk register have been compiled from information provided by the partners.

2. Summary of Progress with Major Development Sites

Northstowe

- 2.1** The joint promoters' outline planning application for approximately 9,500 homes, together with three separate applications dealing with access, are being given priority by South Cambridgeshire District Council. They are expected to be considered by the Joint Development Control Committee: Northstowe in late 2008. The statutory planning consultation finished at the end of March 2008.
- 2.2** An informal briefing of the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee was held on 25th March 2008 at which the key issues emerging from the consultation were discussed. Initial feedback was also given to the joint promoters later that day. The Director of Joint Planning will give an oral update on the emerging key issues at this meeting.
- 2.3** Cambridgeshire Horizons chaired a meeting of the Highways Agency, County and South Cambridgeshire Councils and the joint promoters to discuss how best to mitigate impacts on the A14 caused by development at Northstowe ahead of the planned permanent improvement to the length of the A14 from Ellington to Fen Ditton. A set of measures, designed to maintain the 'level of service' along the A14, is being prepared. Ongoing commitment to achieving a solution has been secured through a Memorandum of Understanding.
- 2.4** Work continues towards establishing a Community Trust for Northstowe, and discussions continue amongst the local authority partners and the promoters.
- 2.5** Partners are working with Renewables East to scope the feasibility and viability of a Biomass Combined Heat and Power (CHP) with a district heating main for Northstowe to provide the town centre and employment sites with heat and cooling, plus power for all the homes. Cambridgeshire Horizons, Renewables East and the Local Authorities are working to establish a 'Special Purpose Vehicle' to support the production of renewable energy at Northstowe.

Cambridge Southern Fringe

- 2.6** The Joint Development Control Committee: Cambridge Fringes approved the outline planning applications for Trumpington Meadows (two applications, as the site lies within both the City and South

Cambridgeshire) on 20th February 2008. The approval is subject to finalising the Section 106 agreement, which will be brought back to the Joint Development Control Committee in April. The landowner (Grosvenor/USS Ltd) intends to market the site to house-builders.

- 2.7 At time of writing, a number of outstanding items are to be resolved to allow the outline application for development at the Bell Language School site (347 dwellings plus 100-bed student accommodation) to come to the April meeting of the Joint Development Control Committee. Subject to submission of amendments by the end of March, this date can be met. The Clay Farm outline application (up to 2300 dwellings) is due to be considered by the Committee in May. Work is progressing on a small number of outstanding items and the Section 106.
- 2.8 Countryside Properties has submitted an outline application for residential development at Glebe Farm, for up to 300 dwellings. The City Council intends to cap the combined housing numbers at Clay Farm and Glebe Farm to 2,550 dwellings.
- 2.9 Work on the Addenbrooke's Access Road from Hauxton Road to the hospital, including preparation work on the new bridge over the railway, is well under way and the main beams are due to be lifted into place in September 2008. The County Council anticipates that the road will be completed by September 2009.
- 2.10 The revised Cambridge Southern Fringe Delivery Plan is being prepared. Focus of the plan, which will be brought to a future JSGIC meeting, will shift from the planning stage to the delivery stage of the development.

North West Cambridge

- 2.11 The Joint Development Control Committee: Cambridge Fringes met to consider two applications (full application for the NIAB headquarters consolidation and reserved matters application for access, external appearance, landscape and design for 187 dwellings on the NIAB frontage land). These applications were deferred from the previous meeting. Both applications were deferred to a subsequent meeting. The Committee felt unable to consider the applications fully following the submission of an informal amendment by the applicant, showing proposed access arrangements to properties along Huntingdon Road.
- 2.12 The Councils continue with the drafting of responses to representations and amending the Area Action Plan in preparation for submission for the Secretary of State in May 2008.
- 2.13 The North West Cambridge Delivery Plan is in preparation and will be brought to a future JSGIC meeting.

Cambridge East

- 2.14 A programming, risk management and masterplanning workshop was held on 4th March 2008 at Cambridge Airport. The workshop gave an

opportunity for stakeholders to come together and discuss the programme for development and capture key risks to progress. The workshop spent some time addressing how to make Cambridge East a success and what progress should be made in the short-term. Four opportunities were identified, which form an 'Action Plan' for Cambridge East over the next six months. These are:

- Prepare a communications strategy and promote Cambridge East as part of the growth of Cambridge;
- Show benefits to existing communities by working with them and early delivery of infrastructure (e.g. community, transport);
- Put in place stronger partnership working using new structures, in particular a Cambridge East Delivery Board (public and private membership) and Section 29 Committee, supported by preparation of the Cambridge East Delivery Plan (Terms of Reference for the Cambridge East Delivery Board and Programme Group are at Appendix 4);
- Develop an investment plan of broad infrastructure requirements and costs for the development and its related strategic infrastructure.

A summary of the risk workshop findings is shown in Appendix 3. In addition, the workshop gave partners the opportunity to provide early input to the masterplanning process.

Cambridge Northern Fringe East

2.15 The results of a feasibility study on whether proposals to redevelop the Cambridge Northern Fringe East can be made viable are expected in April. Roger Tym & Partners are nearing completion of their report. Initial findings suggest that a scheme to redevelop the entire site, including relocation of the sewage works would not be viable without substantial public funds. Alternative options for partial redevelopment of the site for residential and / or employment purposes are currently being explored as part of the study. The findings will be available to input to the Cambridge City LDF and the Minerals and Waste Plan.

3. Resources and Funding

3.1 Use of Additional GAF2 Funds for Growth

3.1.1 The Committee has previously given guidance on the allocation of the additional £1.4m secured to fund joint working.

3.1.2 Good progress has been made with recruitment to the new posts, although there remain key vacancies in some areas. Work is continuing to set up the co-located joint urban design team.

3.1.3 Since the funding was confirmed (mid-2007), the partners have made excellent progress in identifying and completing consultancy work to support the growth agenda. It is now envisaged that all the £1.4m will be

spent.

- 3.1.4 Studies that have received funding include preliminary design work of Northstowe schools, best practice on the adoption of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and the Sustainability Appraisal of the Long Term Delivery Plan (see Item 5). A number of studies have involved partnership working across authorities, notably the GIS Partnership Project to improve efficiency and sharing of spatial data.
- 3.1.5 However, we are still awaiting written confirmation of the LDV Revenue Core Budget and the continuation of the arrangements for the £1.4M Additional Revenue Budget for Local Authority Posts. This is identified as a “red risk”.

3.2 Infrastructure Funding

Funding for infrastructure remains another “red risk”. Although considerable progress has been made with the settlement on Housing Growth Funds, there are still major concerns regarding the longer term. Work is currently progressing on a number of fronts, including the Transport Innovation Fund (TIF), refresh of the HGF submission and the Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF), together with work looking at the options arising from the new Community Infrastructure Levy. These matters are dealt with in detail in Agenda Item 10.

4. Progress with Strategic Infrastructure Studies

Transport

- 4.1.1 Consultation on the County Council's Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) proposals ended on 24 March 2008. A clearer view on how to progress the scheme will emerge when the consultation results are known.
- 4.1.2 The Joint Transport Forum will meet for the first time on 14th April 2008. The forum is made up of three councillors from each of County, City and South Cambridgeshire, plus supporting officers including Cambridgeshire Horizons, and will consider how to take forward the schemes outlined in the Transport Innovation Fund bid. The officer Long Term Transport Strategy Steering Group will meet at the beginning of May.

4.2 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

- 4.2.1 The draft SHMA has been prepared and is currently being amended following consultation. Key emerging findings confirm that high levels of housing generally and affordable housing particularly are required to meet demand generated locally and from households moving in to the Sub-Region, supporting arguments for at least 40% affordable housing in major new developments. A briefing note and executive summary are being drafted ready for the first launch of the SHMA in April.

- 4.2.2** On the basis of needs identified in the SHMA, a Sub-Regional housing strategy will also be drafted and consulted on during Summer 2008, ready for acceptance/approval in Autumn 2008.

4.3 Quality Charter and Cambridgeshire Design Guide

- 4.3.1** The Quality Charter document is in the final stages of preparation and will be finalised by the Steering Group, which will meet in April. Barbara Follett, the Regional Minister, has agreed to write a Foreward. The plan is to launch the Charter in May.

- 4.3.2** In October 2007, County Council Cabinet agreed to adopt the Cambridgeshire Design Guide. Cabinet noted that to respond to the challenge of building successful and attractive new neighbourhoods, a new design guide for streets and public realm is being developed with support from Cambridgeshire Horizons and the City and District Councils. A workshop is being arranged with local authorities to agree how to implement the guidance.

4.4 Communication the Growth Strategy

- 4.4.1** The need for a comprehensive communication strategy is identified as a “red risk”. Horizons have now appointed a Communication Manager who is due to take up the post in late April. A priority task for the postholder will be developing a communication and community engagement strategy, working with the partner authorities.