

Cambridgeshire Horizons - Joint Strategic Growth Implementation Committee Meeting

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The following update is based upon the ongoing progression of the Water Cycle Strategy (WCS) for the Cambridge Growth Area and information has been provided by the Environment Agency's Development Control and Planning Liaison Teams who remain in consultation with the relevant developers and LPAs.

The Cambridge WCS, which formally commenced in December 2007, is being led by Cambridgeshire Horizons in partnership with Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge Water, Anglian Water, Swavesey Internal Drainage Board and the Environment Agency which is helping to fund the study and is providing the necessary data.

The study represents an integrated, evidence-based approach towards the management of the water cycle. It is of particular importance given sustainability and the environment are key drivers in development planning. It also considers water cycle infrastructure planning which is a vital component in the urban planning process. A WCS usually comprises two distinct phases: Phase 1 provides an essentially a high level constraints assessment of the existing water services infrastructure; Phase 2 involves detailed modelling and assessment and site-specific investigations. Whilst the Cambridge WCS is essentially a phase 1 study, it includes site specific assessments for Northstowe and Cambridge Southern Fringe in order to accommodate the required timescale/planning process for these sites.

Water Cycle Strategy

The Environment Agency welcomes the study's consideration of planning policies, the Code for Sustainable Homes, water demand/supply issues including sustainable abstraction and the timely phased delivery of the required infrastructure, climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, integrated urban drainage, SUDS, flood risk management, the identification of ecological constraints and opportunities and the Water Framework Directive. We also value the involvement of the aforementioned partners and Cambridgeshire Horizon's agreement to lead the WCS.

Cambridge Southern Fringe

The Environment Agency is currently reviewing:

- (i) Anglian Water Services' proposals to provide the necessary infrastructure to take sewerage west to Haslingfield STW and south to Sawston STW. Consents will need to be issued by the Environment Agency to enable the agreed scheme to proceed.
- (ii) A scoping report produced by Countryside Properties (CP) concerning their drainage proposals for Glebe Farm and Clay Farm planning applications. The Environment Agency has also requested further information regarding potential runoff/discharge into Hobson's Brook and ongoing responsibilities for the adoption and future maintenance of the proposed balancing ponds and outfall structures.

Northstowe

As previously reported, there is a potential constraint regarding the capacity of the receiving watercourse for Uttons Drove STW. The Environment Agency is currently reviewing the Northstowe Sustainable Drainage Strategy and is preparing its formal response to the Northstowe Planning Application. It is understood these proposals will be considered in more detail at the next meeting of the Northstowe Drainage Group which is due to convene in mid February.

Flood Risk Management

Work is ongoing within the Environment Agency to update the Catchment Flood Management Plan for the Great Ouse

Concluding Remarks

It is important the Environment Agency continues to be kept fully informed and consulted at early stage regarding planned development in the Cambridge Growth Area. Such action will help ensure we are able to engage fully and respond in a timely manner.