

# Joint Strategic Housing Framework

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## Purpose of Document

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The purpose of this document is to define the project arrangements for the local authorities working with affordable housing providers and the Homes and Communities Agency (or successor body) on strategic and/or growth sites.

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## Background

The project management framework links to but is not limited to the Cambridge Challenge process, which led to the selection of one provider to deliver 3,300 of the affordable homes across three of the strategic sites at Cambridge Southern Fringe (CSF), NIAB (North West Cambridge) and Northstowe. The proposals seek to ensure that the delivery of the affordable housing and any additional commitments offered by affordable housing providers are monitored and followed through. All the partners involved in the delivery of the affordable housing across the growth sites are fully committed to the successful delivery of these large projects and to maximise the likelihood of outcomes meeting expectations.

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## Project Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives for this project have been drawn from the following:

### **Cambridge City medium term objectives:**

- *Promote Cambridge as a sustainable city, in particular by reducing carbon dioxide emissions and the amount of wastes going into landfill in the city and sub-region*
- *Ensure that residents and other service users have an entirely positive experience of dealing with the council*
- *Maintain a healthy, safe and enjoyable city for all, with thriving and viable neighbourhoods*
- *Lead the growth of Cambridge to achieve attractive, sustainable new neighbourhoods, including affordable housing, close to a good range of facilities, and supported by transport networks so that people can opt not to use the car.*

### **South Cambs corporate objectives 2008/0 onwards:**

*Work in partnership to manage growth to benefit everyone in South Cambridgeshire now and in the future.*

*Deliver high quality services that represent best value and are accessible to all our community.*

*Enhance quality of life and build a sustainable South Cambridgeshire where everyone is proud to live and work.*

**The overarching aim of the project is to:**

*“Deliver well-managed and balanced communities consisting of high quality homes with well designed and cared for public realm covering the Strategic Growth Sites in and around Cambridge & South Cambridgeshire Area”*

**The project objectives include the following:**

This list is not exhaustive

- To provide good quality housing for all now and into the future
- To provide high quality housing management services
- Contribute to the management of the public realm across all tenures
- Develop stewardship structures to ensure long-term sustainability in new and existing communities.
- To assist in the creation and ongoing management of good quality community facilities
- Deliver housing for the future which enables the customer to become energy conscious by providing them with eco-friendly homes
- Allow procurement efficiencies and procurement innovation.
- Create exemplar housing developments, demonstrating sustainable development with low carbon and greenhouse gas emissions
- To meet current and future housing needs
- To provide a range of housing types and tenures that will be flexible enough to accommodate changing needs, aspirations and lifestyles in the longer term
- To provide for the needs of all households including BME, older people and others with support needs and other hard to reach groups
- To promote choice through sustainable and/or local lettings policies
- To maximise the overall percentage of affordable housing delivered in new communities in line with Councils planning policies,
- To ensure that the balance of tenures is appropriate to meet identified housing needs
- To ensure that intermediate products are both appropriate and affordable to those in housing need both now and into the future

- To monitor delivery of affordable housing against agreed targets and performance indicators
- Promote well-designed communities with functional and high-quality homes

## Scope

The project management arrangements will cover the delivery of housing including the affordable housing provision and any other commitments entered into by the affordable housing provider(s) in respect of the following sites:

- Northstowe
- Southern Fringe
- NIAB
- Cambridge East

However over time other sites subject to the affordable housing partnership between the two local authorities as agreed in 2002 will also be included within these project management arrangements.

In addition to the delivery of affordable housing the project will be integrated with the project management arrangements that have been put in place to take forward the Cambridge Challenge process by the Homes and Communities Agency. Those arrangements will seek to also test whether the Homes and Communities Agency (or successor body) providing certainty of funding on strategic sites to one (or more) provider(s) can lead to:

- More efficient use of public subsidy
- Unlocking long term delivery/certainty on sites with developers
- Promotion of well-designed communities that are integrated and of high quality

Its important to understand that this document is about delivering the agreed joint partner outcomes and as such should not be a duplication of any work being done elsewhere. The document should be considered along side the Homes and Communities Agency Project Initiation Document (PID) for taking forward the Cambridge Challenge but will encompass the wider context of the growth agenda, and any work carried out by the project team will complement and feed into the role of the Delivery Boards that are part of the Cambridgeshire Horizons infrastructure that will consider blockages and barriers to delivery of the growth agenda on the strategic sites within the Cambridge Sub-region.

The main aim of the Joint Housing Framework is to enable the Local Authorities and partners to work jointly and offer consistency in approach, and also one of monitoring progress from the affordable housing provider in fulfilling of promises made through any selection process. The public subsidy requirements for the affordable housing will need to be led by officers from the

Homes and Communities Agency (or successor body) with the support from other partners as required. However the local authorities will provide support and evidence base as necessary to influence the level of grant required to meet the aims and objectives of the project.

## **Project Organisation Structure**

The project will be led by the two Local Authorities who have overall responsibility for delivery of the affordable housing on the growth sites and for ensuring this contributes to the wider sustainable community strategies for their respective districts – the Project Sponsors will be Steve Hampson from South Cambridgeshire District Council & Liz Bisset from Cambridge City Council.

**The Joint Housing Framework** will comprise of the following representatives from each of the partner organisations who will be involved:

- Alan Carter Head of Strategic Housing Services Cambridge City Council
- Jo Mills New Communities Corporate Manager South Cambridgeshire DC
- Jane Green Major Development Manager (planning) South Cambridgeshire DC
- Sharon Brown Major Development Manager (planning) Cambridge City Council
- Sue Beecroft Sub-regional Housing Strategy co-ordinator Cambridgeshire Horizons
- Sarah Lyons Cambridge City Council & South Cambridgeshire DC Project Manager
- John O' Mahony Investment Manager Homes and Communities Agency
- Katrina Laud Managing Director Cambridgeshire Partnerships Ltd CPL
- Charlotte Smith Senior Development Manager BPHA
- Rachel Underwood Senior Development Manager BPHA
- Other Affordable Housing Providers (as required)

The local authority representatives will rotate the role of chair of the group on an annual basis.

The frequency of meetings of the meetings will initially be on a bi-monthly cycle. Over time it is expected that the frequency of the meetings will need to change to reflect varying stages within the development period, this will be agreed by all the relevant partners on at least an annual basis.

Sarah Lyons as Project Manager acting jointly for both Local Authorities will lead task specific groups as required. The Project Manager will arrange and service/feedback.

The role of the group is likely to evolve as progress on the delivery of the affordable housing shifts from strategic and developmental to operational. The project manager will attend the Housing Corporation (or successor body) linked Cambridge Challenge project team meetings. It may be appropriate for the JLASG meetings and/or agendas to be divided into site-specific meetings with relevant stakeholders attending for parts of the meetings as needed. The two local authorities will link into the Delivery Boards for the three sites through the senior planners and/or project sponsors as necessary e.g. to identify potential blockages/barriers created by or affecting delivery of the affordable housing.

Due to the nature of the project it will be envisaged that the group membership may need to be flexible to:

- Enable the relevant officers involved with each site to be engaged in the process
- Reflect the stage of development and/or progress with the delivery of the affordable housing on each of the sites
- Draw on the necessary operational expertise available from the partner organisations to ensure delivery on the ground.

## **Project Controls**

### **Reporting**

The Project Manager will be responsible for providing regular progress updates and report on key issues to the group in relation to the following: (this list is not exhaustive)

- Progress against and completion of key milestones for each of the sites within the scope of this project framework
- Cross-cutting themes to ensure a consistent approach to the delivery of the affordable housing
- Examples of best practice from other sites/areas
- How and what we can learn from our previous experiences
- Barriers and blockages to operational delivery that need strategic intervention
- Monitoring and performance information on delivery against key targets and performance indicators
- Exception reporting

The Project Manager will also be responsible for overseeing the operational activities associated with the delivery of the affordable housing and monitoring arrangements.

### **Review Process**

The project will need to be reviewed initially after six months and at least annually thereafter to ensure that the structures and plans that are in place are still required and are effective in delivering the agreed project objectives

and outcomes (including those from the Cambridge Challenge) in relation to affordable housing and the wider growth agenda.

### **Project Sign Off**

Each partner organisation will need to sign off the project management framework and their roles within it through their own internal decision-making structures and/or processes. It is proposed that the representatives on the Joint Housing Framework agree this document subject to elected member approval.

### **Project Outputs**

Due to the complicated nature of the various growth sites there will need to be key outputs identified for each of the sites covering issues such as:

- Provide affordable housing related information to inform S.106 negotiations
- To work up the Local letting policies and plans in conjunction with all relevant partners
- To consider housing delivery issues with the market provision as required.
- Supporting bid submissions by affordable housing providers to the Housing Corporation (or any successor body) and ensure all appropriate information is provided to the HC in a timely fashion.
- To explore the proposals for supported housing provision within the development e.g. for older people, young people and people with disabilities.
- To agree the proposals for the management of affordable housing and the public realm with all partners.
- To agreeing tenure and housing mixes for each site with all partners.
- To agree on the delivery mechanisms for the affordable housing – land parcels or built units
- Investigate the affordability criteria – based on income
- Work through the cascade mechanisms for the delivery of affordable housing with all partners.
- To look at the size of clusters and proposals for integration of units across each sites.
- To set target and performance indicators for the affordable housing provider(s)

(The above are indicative only and other outputs can be added to the plan as required)

This project framework will need to link into the Cambridgeshire Horizons delivery arrangements for the growth sites within the scope of these proposals.

## **Strategic & Operational Roles & Responsibilities**

- To promote joint working and exchange good practice between all the partners.
- To ensure that decisions are taken with reference to the democratic decision-making processes of the local authorities where appropriate.
- To manage risks to delivery of the affordable housing.
- To secure resources required to deliver the affordable housing and maximise opportunities for investment in affordable housing through external agencies as well as partner organisations.
- To provide a forum for dispute resolution between the partners organisations.
- To develop and review a project plan for the delivery of the affordable housing on each of the major growth sites.
- To work together to provide good quality affordable that will meet the needs of people now and into the future.

## **Communications**

The key issue on communication is keeping all interested parties and officers informed of progress on a regular basis, by the usual forms of contact.

The two local authorities may want to use existing regular publications e.g. newsletters/magazines to publicise information regarding the developments and this would need to be managed through the relevant communication teams within each local authority who would collaborate on production of publicity material. Also all press releases that relate to the affordable housing provision on the growth sites should wherever possible be done jointly through the local authority communication teams with partner organisations, including the affordable housing providers as necessary.

## Team Structures, Roles and Responsibilities

