

CAMBRIDGESHIRE HORIZONS

Agenda Item No: 5

Major Development Sites Progress Report

To: **Joint Strategic Growth Implementation Committee**

Date: **15 July 2009**

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

Purpose:

- 1.To update the Committee on progress with the Programme for 2009/10;**
- 2. To update the Committee on the review of the SRR;**
- 3. To provide a Summary of Progress with Major Development Sites;**
- 4. To update the Committee on HGF Capital and Revenue projects, including Quality of Life and Strategic Infrastructure.**

Recommendation: **The Committee is invited to note progress and comment on the issues raised in this report.**

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1. Programme Overview

- 1.1 Overall progress with delivering homes and infrastructure has been mixed, with good progress on overall housing completions and ongoing implementation of key infrastructure. However, there is a concern about the number of new starts and there is slow progress at some key sites.
- 1.2 The impact of the recession has meant that progress with major development sites continues to be slower than previously expected, although there are some signs of improvement with the re-commencement of work on key sites, notably at Orchard Park, Cambridge. This reflects the comparative strength of the underlying local economy in the Cambridge area and is a welcome response to the acute housing needs of the area. (For more information, please see Appendix 1 – Housing Update report as forwarded to Horizons Main Board on 30th June.)
- 1.3 We are continuing to work with the authorities, housebuilders, the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA), and other key stakeholders to initiate development on major growth sites.

2. Strategic Risks

- 2.1 The key strategic risks identified are:
 - The risk of local policy commitments for levels of affordable housing and housing tenure mix not being met, resulting in reduced ability to meet housing demand and targets. We are continuing to negotiate with developers in southern fringe sites on public funding support that will enable commencement of delivery whilst securing 40% affordable housing. However, it is also important to work towards implementation of other strategic sites, such as North-West Cambridge in the short to medium term.
 - The risk of not addressing traffic demand arising from growth (and inadequate funding). The findings of the Transport Commission will be tabled at the Joint Transport Forum on 23 July and the County Council Cabinet will consider a response to the Commission report on 29 September 2009. We are negotiating to secure improvements to public transport and cycle ways and footpaths from developers, and that developments are permeable by buses. Opportunities are being exploited to link up development schemes with the City's status as a Cycle Demonstration Town through Area Transport Plans, and to establish car clubs and other sustainable transport initiatives.
 - The risk of not identifying the scale of services needed (including public services) to meet the requirements of a growing and

changing population, resulting in reduced ability to secure necessary funding. We are improving our research base for example by continuing development of the Geographical Information System project that will enable spatial representation of multi-layer information, informed by the monitoring and update of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and other studies such as the review of the Green Infrastructure Strategy.

- The risk of not providing services to meet demands arising from population growth, resulting in increased pressure on budgets and services for the wider community including existing residents. Authorities are to review service and resource implications of growth. . We are also exploring alternative funding and delivery methods that do not rely on traditional public sector financing (e.g., tax increment financing).
- Risk of housing growth not corresponding with job growth, leading to rising unemployment and financial difficulties, and making it more difficult for people to live near to work, resulting in continuing commuting/traffic congestion pressures. This highlights the importance of reinforcing integration of housing, spatial, transport and economic planning and delivery, for example through the emerging Integrated Development Plan.
- Risk of residents not adapting to sustainability measures built into new developments. This reinforces the need to continue to raise awareness of sustainability and climate change issues, such as through the Quality Charter and the renewable energy consultation.

3. Summary of Progress with Major Development Sites

3.1 Cambridge Southern Fringe

- 3.1.1 Agreement in principle has been reached with Grosvenor and USS for a Flexible Fund loan that, subject to legal work and completion of the Section 106, will unlock development at the **Trumpington Meadows** (1,200 homes) site. The agreement will deliver 300 new homes by 2012, with 40% affordable and completion of the first phase of a primary school and related community facilities.
- 3.1.2 Countryside has lodged an appeal for the **Clay Farm/Glebe Farm** planning applications (total around 2,600 homes) and the hearing date has been set for late September 2009. In parallel, however, negotiation continues on the potential use of HGF Flexible Fund, linked to a Kickstart application for HCA support and some easement on the timing of education contributions for the County Council.

3.1.3 Agreement on the Addenbrooke's 2020 application is now concluded following re-phasing of triggers for the Section 106 contributions, bringing forward some larger payments to earlier in the process and pushing some back. Engrossments for the 106 agreement are likely to be sent out on or around 16 July following the agreement to the revised Heads of Terms by the County Council Cabinet on 7 July 2009 (but allowing the appropriate time for call-in by Scrutiny) and the decision notice issued accordingly. Completion of the agreement is a pre-requisite for enabling the Papworth PFI to move on to the next stage. Negotiations are continuing on this issue and County Council and other colleagues are confident that a successful conclusion can be reached by the end of July 2009.

3.1.4 Owners of the Bell School site (350 homes) are keen to achieve an implementable outline planning permission as soon as practicable. Once the permission has been granted, the owners will consider a number of factors prior to deciding when to market the site.

3.2 North West Cambridge

3.2.1 Barratt Strategic has advised that development of the consented 187-home NIAB frontage site will not now commence until 2011. The planning application for the remainder of the main NIAB site (1,590 homes) is programmed for determination in October.

3.2.2 The Inspector has published his report into the allocations of SCDC housing land to meet the LDF shortfall. The NIAB Extra site, to the north of the current (City) application site, has been allocated for 1,200 homes, and will include a site for a further primary and for a secondary school. County Council officers are organising a meeting with Barratt to discuss education on NIAB and NIAB extra land.

3.2.3 The Inspector's report on the EiP of the North West Area Action Plan for the University development site is due at the end of July 2009. The authorities have advised the Inspector of the output from capacity tests for up to 3,000 homes (of which 50% would be for University key users) and accommodation for 2,000 students. The University has commenced the commissioning of consultants with a view to establishing a master plan by late autumn 2009 and submission of an outline planning application in autumn 2010.

3.2.4 Progress with policy plans provides the basis for delivery of development in the sector. However, there are a number of key issues that need to be addressed to ensure that delivery

takes place in accordance with policy expectations and that quality and sustainability objectives are achieved.

3.2.5 Coordination of development planning and delivery which spans the City and South Cambridgeshire boundary. Joint development control arrangements will deal with the planning applications (note the remit of the JDCC needs to be amended to include the additional NIAB land), however, further work is needed on provision and operation of community facilities. It is vital that there is cross-authority member engagement, supported by Horizons, and member views are sought on how this can be best achieved.

3.2.6 Under the auspices of the North West Cambridge Delivery Board, officers from the authorities and Horizons are identifying key issues that require resolution. The authorities have jointly commissioned a retail study for the north west sector to supplement the regional retail study and inform retail strategy across the sector. Other issues to be further explored include transport, environmental sustainability, green infrastructure and finance.

3.3 Cambridge East

3.3.1 Marshall Aerospace and Defence Estates are preparing Heads of Terms to guide the potential relocation to RAF Wyton or RAF Waterbeach. Discussion took place at the Cambridgeshire Horizons Board on 30th June, informed by assessments of the land use and planning constraints and opportunities associated with a move to either site. Marshall has commented on the difficulty in committing to make a decision in principle by early September, which is the timescale that must be met to give Local Authorities confidence of the deliverability of Cambridge East to inform the RSS Review. A sub-group of the Delivery Board is managing the process to support Marshall in making a decision and a proposed joint press statement was shared at the Horizons Board, which has subsequently been released.

3.4 Northern Fringe (East)

3.4.1 The City Council is leading on planning policy work on the future of this area as a key site for transport, employment and possible community uses.

3.5 Orchard Park

- 3.5.1** Developers have returned to site at Orchard Park, with building work re-starting on four individual developments.
- 3.5.2** The local authorities have worked hard to address local residents' concerns relating to street lights, bus routes, pavements, signage, and the general upkeep of the site. The new Community Centre and associated public open space are in the process of being handed over to the newly formed Orchard Park Community Council and are due to open soon.
- 3.5.3** As at April 2009, 473 homes were occupied, with construction work continuing to deliver more new homes and to complete the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway main route which runs alongside the new development and the spur which runs through it.
- 3.5.4** Revised plans for the local centre have been submitted by Gallagher Estates to South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC), and are being reported to the planning committee in August for decision. The commercial land is a separate application, which will go before SCDC planning committee in October for determination.
- 3.5.5** The hearing into the housing shortfall sites at Orchard Park was held week commencing 29th June 2009 and SCDC anticipates receiving the Inspector's report in August.

3.6 Cambourne

- 3.6.1** The development consortium is in the process of submitting applications for development of a further 950 homes. South Cambridgeshire DC will meet the consortium to discuss the proposed development appraisal and the public sector objectives, as captured in the draft s.106 document, on 16 July 2009
- 3.6.2** Discussions are on-going with the development consortium regarding the delivery of the proposed sports centre, with a view to delivery within the terms of the S.106 for the currently permitted development. The process for selecting operators is under way and detailed discussions are being held between the South Cambridgeshire DC and the developers.
- 3.6.3** The Cambourne Church community centre is progressing well and the topping-out ceremony is to be held on 13 July. This project was made possible due to HGF funding of £500,000 as well as other locally raised contributions and landfill tax credits.

3.7 Northstowe

3.7.1 The Homes and Communities Agency and Gallagher Estates are continuing their joint discussions to agree the future direction of the Northstowe project.

4. Relevant HGF Capital Projects

4.1 Cambridge Station Gateway CB1

4.1.1 The Horizons Board has allocated £1.5m of HGF to support and enhance the successful £3m bid for **Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF2)** funding of the CB1 project that will deliver a high quality gateway to Cambridge in conjunction with major development around Cambridge Station. HGF will be used particularly to deliver high quality cycle facilities, footpaths and information points, bus shelters with seating and real-time information. County officers are working with CB1 developers towards an anticipated start on site early in 2010 and have commenced work on the concept and vision of the improvements that will be funded by HGF.

4.1.2 The work will have to be completed by March 2011 to meet the availability of CIF2 funding.

4.2 The Hive (formerly known as the International Climate Exchange)

4.2.1 Discussions are taking place amongst partners with the aim of agreeing a funding package for a revised project, which incorporates a social enterprise centre with sustainable construction training and demonstration facilities.

4.3 Green Infrastructure

At the meeting on 26 March 2009, the Green Infrastructure Forum welcomed the Year 2 and 3 settlement and agreed the programme of GI projects that would fit the available 10% top-slice of HGF Capital. Funding agreements have been put in place for several key projects. The main projects relevant to the City / South Cambs area are:

4.3.1 The **RSPB Fen Drayton Lakes** project will run until March 2011, providing habitat enhancements and visitor infrastructure, including improved access to Fen Drayton lakes.

4.3.2 The **Cambridge Green Necklace** will link existing and planned developments to the countryside and wider network of green infrastructure sites and corridors. The five elements of the project that are being taken forward are listed in the table above.

- **East Pit:** The Wildlife Trust will make restore 20 acres of wildlife habitat to favourable condition and make it fully accessible to the public by March 2011
- **Wandlebury Cycle Route:** Cambridge Preservation Society is working jointly with the County Council and Horizons to provide a new cycle/pedestrian link from the southern fringe to Wandlebury Country Park by March 2010.
- **Wicken Fen Vision:** The National Trust and Horizons project to improve the Wicken Fen Spine Access Route includes surface improvements to existing tracks, and bridges over Swaffham Bulbeck Lode and Reach Lode by March 2010.
- **Cambridge Countryside Access:** A two year County Council led scheme to enhance access and paths to archaeology and interpretation sites, habitat improvements and monument protection.
- **South-west Cambridge Habitats & Access:** The City Council and Horizons joint project for habitat protection, creation and enhancement in the Cambridge South-west area, including Byron's Pool Biodiversity Improvements and Hobson's Conduit wildlife site enhancements by March 2010, and other wildlife site biodiversity improvements by March 2011.

5. Relevant HGF Revenue Projects

5.1 A programme of HGF Revenue projects has been determined. Projects in the Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire areas are:

- **Water Cycle Strategy Phase 2:** see 6.2 below.
- **Large-scale Infrastructure Studies** (including cultural and sports facilities)
- **Business Planning for Community Facilities:** environmental standards and facilities management planning for joint facilities, including those in Cambridge North West and Southern Fringe (and Northstowe).
- The **Northwest Cambridge Retail Study** has been commissioned and the report is expected in late summer 2009.

- A feasibility study has been requested to explore potential for improving **cycle route between Histon and Cambridge**, particularly at the B1049 crossing off the A14.

5.2 Other HGF Revenue-funded projects that affect City and South Cambridgeshire as well as the remainder of the County include the Green Infrastructure Review, Sub-Regional Historical Environment Audit, Air Quality Emissions Inventory, Zero Carbon Infrastructure Studies, the Young People's Engagement Programme, HomeTrack subscription, and a Section 106 Monitoring module extending the functionality of the authorities' existing planning database systems.

6. Quality of Life and Strategic Infrastructure

6.1 Quality Charter for Growth

6.1.1 The 'Quality Charter for Growth' is delivering three programmes of work:

- The Quality Charter Growth Agenda **Training Programme** – this is currently under development for 09/10.
- **Looking and Learning Programme** (URBED) – three Masterclass sessions have been delivered and a visit to BRE and New Hall Harlow planned for 16th July 2009. Further study tours are in development including a focus on renewable energy implementation.
- **Design For Life:** A Climate Change Event for Councillors and Businesses is being prepared for 19th October 2009.

6.2 Strategic Infrastructure

6.2.1 Halcrow was appointed in March 2009 to deliver the site-specific work on Phase 2 of the **Water Cycle Strategy**. Priority for this work is on North West Cambridge initially. The Final Water Cycle Strategy will be completed by the end of 2009.

6.2.2 Renewable Energy Infrastructure Programme for Growth in Cambridgeshire– a consultants brief is being developed. The aim of this project is to identify how the Growth Agenda can facilitate the delivery of a programme of low carbon decentralised energy projects.

6.2.3 We are continuing discussions with Network Rail and the Train Operating Companies the possibility of bringing forward **Chesterton Station** earlier than 2016 using Regional Infrastructure Funding.

6.2.4 The northern section of the **Cambridgeshire Guided Busway** between St Ives and Cambridge (including the Orchard Park link) is due to open in late summer 2009 although a firm date has not yet been agreed. The opening of the southern section (to Addenbrookes and Trumpington) will follow

7. Recommendations

7.1 The Committee is invited to note progress and comment on the issues raised in this report.