

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a special meeting of the Council held on
Friday, 18 November 2005 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt – Chairman
Councillor JH Stewart – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Dr DR Bard, JD Batchelor, RF Bryant, BR Burling, Mrs SJO Doggett,
SM Edwards, R Hall, Mrs SA Hatton, Dr JA Heap, Mrs EM Heazell,
Mrs CA Hunt, Mrs HF Kember, SGM Kindersley, RMA Manning, RB Martlew,
Dr JPR Orme, Mrs DP Roberts, Mrs GJ Smith, Mrs HM Smith,
Mrs DSK Spink MBE, RT Summerfield, Mrs BE Waters and Dr JR Williamson

Officers: Caroline Hunt Principal Planning Policy Officer
David Hussell Development Services Director
Keith Miles Planning Policy Manager

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors JP Chatfield, Mrs PS Corney, Mrs J Dixon, Mrs A Elsby, Dr SA Harangozo, Mrs JM Healey, MP Howell, MJ Mason, JA Quinlan, A Riley, NJ Scarr, RJ Turner, Dr SEK van de Ven, DALG Wherrell, JF Williams, TJ Wotherspoon and NIC Wright.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following personal interests were declared:

JD Batchelor	as an elected County Councillor, Cambridgeshire County Council having made representations
Mrs SJO Doggett	as a member of the Conservation Advisory Group during its consideration of the Longstanton Conservation Area Appraisal
SM Edwards	as a resident of Oakington whose property in the centre of that village is neither adjacent to the Northstowe site nor overlooks the Northstowe site and from which the Northstowe site cannot be seen
R Hall	as a member of the Conservation Advisory Group during its consideration of the Longstanton Conservation Area Appraisal
SGM Kindersley	as an elected County Councillor, Cambridgeshire County Council having made representations
Dr JPR Orme	as the recipient of a pension from Bayer CropScience, that company having made representations and as a member of the Conservation Advisory Group during its consideration of the Longstanton Conservation Area Appraisal
Mrs DSK Spink	as a member of the Conservation Advisory Group during its consideration of the Longstanton Conservation Area Appraisal
Dr JR Williamson	as a member of the Conservation Advisory Group but was not present during its consideration of the Longstanton Conservation Area Appraisal

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts expressed her disappointment that the Council had not attempted to obtain a dispensation for the local member for Longstanton, to which it was announced that Longstanton Parish Council had appointed and briefed Councillor SGM Kindersley to represent the interests of that village and speak on their behalf at the meeting.

2. NORTHSTOWE AREA ACTION PLAN

The Planning Policy Manager emphasised that these important Local Development Framework (LDF) meetings were necessary to agree the documents for submission to the Secretary of State. Debate on the new Regional Spatial Strategy was underway at Ely and representatives there were arguing that the amount of development the government required in this region could not be delivered on time, leading to the need for identification of additional areas of development; however, SCDC was on schedule to deliver its plans on time.

The number of representations received on the Pre-Submission Northstowe Area Action Plan (AAP) had decreased by two-thirds from the Preferred Options Stage, reflecting the focusing down from options to draft policies that Members had taken in deciding the Pre-Submission AAP. The majority of the representations received had been from members of the local communities or developers with an interest in the site. The primary objections from the developers were the decision on a size for a town of 8,000 rather than 10,000 dwellings and criticism that the AAP was too detailed. The Planning Policy Manager explained that the Structure Plan set a dwelling range for the town and it was for the AAP to determine the actual number having regard to the appropriate site. Officers felt that there was an appropriate level of detail in the AAP for bringing forward a development of this scale and complexity as well as to ensure that any planning application could be ready for a favourable determination by Easter 2007.

Preface – the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF)

Council **AGREED** the Preface to the Area Action Plan.

A – Introduction

Council **AGREED** Chapter A – Introduction.

B – Vision and Development Principles

Policy NS/2 Development Principles

The Town of Northstowe (Paragraph 2)

There were objections to the reference to “*approximately* 8,000 dwellings”, which was not sufficiently specific and, on the proposal of Councillor SGM Kindersley, seconded by Councillor Dr DR Bard, Council **AGREED** to revise the wording to read, “*not more than* 8,000 dwellings” and the paragraph to be concluded with “and no additional dwellings to be permitted without a change to the Local Development Framework”.

Transport (Paragraph 16)

Conflicting representations had been made regarding transport links between Northstowe and existing villages: some supported improved access to services, while others cautioned that access could draw additional traffic through the villages. The AAP sought to provide local links for non-motorised modes, such as cycleways, footpaths and bridleways, to Northstowe and the wider network which should not increase village traffic.

Supporting Services and Facilities (Paragraph 23)

Northstowe would be a very complex development and thus the government had established Cambridgeshire Horizons as a delivery vehicle to co-ordinate service and infrastructure provision as defined in the AAP, although it was too early to create a finite list of specific services.

Council **AGREED** that paragraph 23 be re-worded to read, "With the developers of the town providing the *normal* services, infrastructure and facilities *appropriate to a settlement of 8,000 dwellings as defined by the Masterplan*, including making provision for long-term management and maintenance."

Land Drainage (Paragraph 25)

Council **AGREED** that paragraph 25 be re-worded to read, "...to mitigate current flood risks affecting Oakington village *and Longstanton village*".

Implementation and Phasing (Paragraphs 26 and 28)

Although there were concerns that the paragraph was vague, it was meant as an overview and Policy NS/30 defined the services and facilities in detail. A burial ground had been identified as a necessity, with the timing and provision to be resolved in the overall Project Plan for the delivery of services.

Council **AGREED** that paragraph 26 be re-worded to read, "Phased to ensure that the necessary landscaping and infrastructure are provided *from the start and services and facilities are provided* in step with the development and the needs of the community".

Council **AGREED** that the reference to Local Masterplans be reinstated at paragraph 28.

Northstowe Area Action Plan: Concept Diagram

Council **AGREED** that the arrow indicating the emergency vehicle access would be removed and the Green Separation area at Oakington would be re-drawn to correspond with Northstowe Proposals Map 3 of 3 (page 223 of the report).

Conclusion

Subject to the changes made above, Council **AGREED** Chapter B – Vision and Development Principles.

C – The Site and its Setting

C1 – The Site for Northstowe

The representations received had not caused any changes to the Area Action Plan aside from a factual change to paragraph C1.3 to agree with the Structure Plan, setting out a policy requirement for "8,000 to 10,000 dwellings". Members felt that this introduced some element of doubt and contradicted the earlier decision to limit development to no more than 8,000 dwellings, but it was accepted that paragraph C1.3 was a direct quotation from the Structure Plan and Council therefore **AGREED** to include in paragraph C1.8 a reference acknowledging that the Structure Plan called for 8,000 to 10,000 dwellings and to include a new sentence at an appropriate place in chapter C1 that the District Council had made a decision to limit development to no more than 8,000 dwellings, the exact wording to be determined by Planning Policy Officers.

Subject to this change, Council **AGREED** C1 – The Site for Northstowe.

C2 – The Setting of Northstowe

Council **AGREED** C2 – The Setting of Northstowe.

C3 – Landscaping the Setting of Northstowe

Members expressed concern that Northstowe and surrounding villages could coalesce if there were too many rights of way links and queried whether the amount of connectivity would bring any benefit to wildlife. Landscaping implementation would include consideration of maintaining wildlife habitats.

Council **AGREED** C3 – Landscaping the Setting of Northstowe.

C4 – Mitigating the Impact of Northstowe on Existing Communities
Policy SP/21 Conservation Areas and Green Separation at Longstanton (Core Strategy) and Policy NS/6 Green Separation from Longstanton and Oakington (Northstowe Area Action Plan)

Members referred to the Site Specific Policy SP/21 of the Core Strategy, which had been deferred from the Council meeting of 15 November.

Members were reminded of the amount of work undertaken by the Northstowe Member Steering Group on the issue of green separation. The changes proposed to the AAP included mitigating measures to protect the privacy and amenity of potentially affected Longstanton and Oakington properties backing onto green separation land to which the public had access. Policy SP/21 in the Core Strategy had been simplified in response to the decision made by Cabinet on 8 September 2005 to amalgamate and revise the boundaries of the Conservation Areas at Longstanton St Michael's; the revised Conservation Area boundary included the 50 metres beyond Long Lane.

Members queried the amendment expressing the extent of green separation from St Michael's Mount as 300 metres from the village framework and feared that the public would perceive this as inconsistent treatment although the change had been necessitated by the revised Conservation Area boundary, from which the 200m separation had previously been measured. There were also concerns that this amendment could leave the policy open to challenge at public inquiry. The Planning Policy Manager explained that a 300-metre separation from the village framework was equivalent to a 200-metre separation from the revised Conservation Area boundary: the amount of green separation was unchanged. Returning to the separation being expressed as 200-metre would require reconsideration of the Conservation Area extension.

A Member suggested that an alternative would be to include St Michael's Mount within the Longstanton village framework and designate it as a Protected Village Amenity Area (PVAA), with the result that the property would be treated under the same 200-metre separation as the rest of the village while remaining part of the Conservation Area. The public would have the opportunity to make representations on this decision from January 2006 once the documents had been submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration by the Inspector.

On the proposal of Councillor Dr DR Bard, seconded by Councillor Mrs DP Roberts, Council **AGREED** to indicate to Longstanton Parish Council that the Council was minded to extend the Longstanton Village Framework to include St Michael's Mount and to designate St Michael's Mount as a Protected Village Amenity Area, the Parish Council's response to be reported to Council on 9 December 2005 prior to a final decision.

Councillors JD Batchelor and Mrs EM Heazell recorded their votes against this decision. Councillors Mrs SJO Doggett, R Hall, Dr JPR Orme and Mrs DSK Spink abstained from voting, having been members of the Conservation Advisory Group during its consideration of the Longstanton Conservation Area Appraisal. Councillor Dr JR Williamson, although a member of the Conservation Advisory Group, noted that she had not been present during these discussions, and participated in the vote.

The Council had produced a Land Use Budget to see if the land allocated would provide all the required development and amenities. As Gallagher's Masterplan appeared to provide more housing than was required by the Land Use Budget, there should be room to accommodate the open space uses sought by the Council, including a burial ground,

without encroaching upon the green separation

At the request of Longstanton Parish Council, it was **AGREED** that the sentence "All parts of existing Conservation Areas, whether built or open areas, must remain part of the villages in which they currently reside" be added to Policies NS/6 and SP/15.

Members **DEFERRED** a decision on the green separation at St Michael's Mount to 9 December once the Parish Council's response to the proposed inclusion of St Michael's Mount within the Village Framework had been received.

Council **AGREED** to amend paragraph 11.32 of Core Strategy Policy SP/21 to read: "...Urban uses *and* open space uses such as playing fields...".

Subject to the above change and to those issues deferred for further consideration on 9 December 2005, Council **AGREED** Core Strategy Policy SP/21 Conservation Areas and Green Separation at Longstanton and Northstowe Area Action Plan C4 – Mitigating the Impact of Northstowe on Existing Communities.

D – The Town of Northstowe

D1 – The Structure of Northstowe

Following representations from the Primary Care Trust and Education Authority, Policy NS/7 The Structure of Northstowe now included reference to education and healthcare provision. Facilities and infrastructure provision were covered in more detail in Policy NS/32.

Council **AGREED** to:

- include "faith" in the list of services, facilities and infrastructure at paragraph 7; and
- amend paragraph 10 to read, "...by a new balancing pond upstream of the village *and a relief channel for Longstanton Brook following the line of the B1050 Longstanton bypass*".

Subject to the above changes, Council **AGREED** D1 – The Structure of Northstowe.

D2 – The Town Centre

Council **AGREED** that objective D2/a be amended to provide "a vibrant *and diverse* town centre". With regards to paragraph 7 of Policy NS/8, Members discussed whether requiring town centre development to start "no later than three years" after the commencement of development would be detrimental to the quality of life of the earliest residents. Members were advised that this would mean that the town centre construction would start about 18 months after the completion of the first houses on the site. Shops would not open until the area was commercially viable, but at the same time the town centre would include open areas which could be used for public events from early days of the settlement. Council **AGREED** that a form of words be included to ensure that town centre development continued in step with residential development

To preclude any expectations that a market would be required to be provided by developers, Council **AGREED** that paragraph D2.10 be amended to refer to a "*public square*" and refer to "*ownership of the land to be vested to the future Town Council*" and a sentence be added stating that the potential for a market should be explored

Members felt that the location of the town centre, as described in paragraph D2.5 as being "somewhat to the east and separate from Rampton Drift" was too vague and consideration should be given to it being not nearer than 200m. There was concern that locating the town centre further from Rampton Drift could bring it to the Oakington

Barracks boundary. Cllr Edwards also asked that consideration be given to restricting the town centre extending no closer to Oakington than the southernmost buildings at the Oakington Barracks/Airfield complex. Members were advised of the danger of restricting the town centre size and location to the point it was not viable. Council **DEFERRED** consideration of the town centre location to 9 December 2005.

Subject to the change listed above and the deferral of the town centre location, Council **AGREED** D2 – The Town Centre.

D3 – Local Centres

Council **AGREED** D3 – Local Centres.

D4 – Housing

Policy NS/10 Northstowe Housing

New chapters on delivery and monitoring, including a housing trajectory, had been added to the Area Action Plan, detailing the projected build rate and approximate start date for delivery of 6,000 dwellings by 2016. Development was unlikely to start before 2007, rather than 2006, so it was expected that 5,300 houses would be completed by the deadline: this had been taken into account in the Core Strategy and the Council was still very close to its overall housing delivery target.

Council **AGREED** that Policy NS/10 Northstowe Housing paragraph 3 (Housing Types and Quality) refer to a high calibre of design and materials.

Housing Types and Quality

It would be difficult to include in the AAP a requirement for the developers to set aside land for self-build projects although there was reference in the supporting text.

Housing Mix

In response to representations and government guidance, the market housing mix was proposed to be changed to 40% 1- or 2-bedroom dwellings, 30% 3-bedroom dwellings and 30% 4+ bedroom dwellings. Some Members' expressed disappointment that this had been proposed in the light of the previous decision without any statistical or technical support in favour of the new mix, while other Members felt it appropriate to respond to representations and that the new mix would lead to a more balanced community. Cambridgeshire Horizons had commissioned a new study about balanced development in the Cambridge Sub-Region, the pre-print version of which had concluded that it was important to have a wide range of mix and provide a wide range of choice for households of all levels.

On a proposal by Councillor SGM Kindersley, seconded by Councillor RF Bryant, Council, with 11 in favour and 8 against, **AGREED** that the market housing mix should be:

- at least 50% of homes with 1 or 2 bedrooms;
- approximately 25% of homes with 3 bedrooms; and
- approximately 25% of homes with 4 or more bedrooms;

unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the District Council that a different mix would better meet local needs. As a consequence of this decision, the Core Strategy housing mix policies would apply to Northstowe, including the caveat, and would not be repeated in the AAP.

Affordable Housing

A deliberate decision had been taken to exclude duplicate policies from the AAP to limit the size of the document, and the section on Affordable Housing should be read in conjunction with the Development Control Policies DPD. The Development Control

Policies should also be referred to for sections on lifetime homes and adaptability and disabled housing. Any housing adapted for disabled residents should be located near the town centre to enable ease of access to services and facilities.

Officers were asked to compose a form of wording specifying that affordable housing mix would be determined by need. Concern was expressed about all dwellings on Registered Social Landlord (RSL) sites being occupied at once causing sudden fluctuations in population and impacting on local services, such as schools, but this was not an issue for the AAP and should be discussed with RSLs during the implementation stage.

Subject to the above changes, Council **AGREED** D4 – Housing.

D5 – Employment

Members debated a relaxation of the employment policies in the Cambridge Sub-Region which had so successfully nurtured the Cambridgeshire phenomenon of high technology research and development companies. Members were advised that relaxing this policy would result in a still higher level of housing growth in the District and at Northstowe. Such a significant change to this policy should be the subject of a full report and debate in its own right. Members were also advised that there were no representations supporting the change that members were debating. Council **AGREED** that Objective D5/d should be reworded to read, “To provide *only* for firms...”. Officers were asked to develop a form of wording highlighting the need for live-work units.

Subject to the above changes, Council **AGREED** D5 – Employment.

D6 – Community Facilities, Leisure, Art and Culture including Community Development

Changes had been made to the population size in the objectives, as the original text had been based on an undecided town size and site. Faith provision had been included, as had the need that land provided for faith use must be serviced, but references to specific faiths would be removed from the policy.

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts, Community Development Portfolio Holder, declared herself satisfied with the chapter and thanked officers for working with the Community Development team. She felt that Policy NS/12 Community Services, Facilities, Leisure, Art and Culture paragraph 4 was sufficiently robust, but cautioned that the Council would not have the resources necessary to undertake all the community, arts and sports development work required for a settlement of this size. Councillor SGM Kindersley confirmed that discussions were on-going with the developers to provide funding for Community Development workers.

Council **AGREED** that:

- paragraph D6.6 be amended to read, “...in order to ensure that Northstowe has a range of services and facilities...”;
- that the list of Lifelong Learning include provision for “...voluntary sector *accommodation*...”; and
- that the list of Commercial facilities include both privately-funded sheltered housing and extra-care housing.

Subject to the above changes, Council **AGREED** D6 – Community Facilities, Leisure, Art and Culture including Community Development.

D7 – Transport

Refinements had been made to highlight access to schools and safe cycleways.

Policy NS/13 Road Infrastructure

Council **AGREED** that officers develop a form of words to ensure that the AAP makes clear that specific requirements will be needed on the A14 for certain levels of Northstowe development to come forward. The reference to "appropriate" improvements would be revised to "necessary". Officers were asked to make reference to latest best practice in traffic calming in paragraph D7.7.

Policy NS/14 Alternative Modes

With regards to Public Transport (paragraph 3), officers were instructed to withdraw the final clause, as the site had been selected on the basis that the government would be providing the guided bus and A14 improvements. The reference to "non-car" modes of transport was queried, as this could include mini-motorcycles.

Subject to the changes above, Council **AGREED** D7 – Transport.

D8 – Landscape

Issues such as street lighting provision were too detailed for an AAP and would be considered in a Design Guide.

Council **AGREED** D8 – Landscape.

D9 – Biodiversity

Council **AGREED** D9 – Biodiversity.

D10 – Archaeology and Heritage

Council **AGREED** D10 – Archaeology and Heritage.

D11 – Meeting Recreational Needs**Policy NS/22 Public Open Space and Sports Provision**

Members queried the proposal at paragraph 8n to amend the maximum distance between a dwelling and a Local Area for Play (LAP) from 60 to 100 metres, as it was not consistent with the National Playing Fields Association measure. A local playing fields policy was yet to be adopted. Council sought further explanation and **DEFERRED** the matter until 9 December 2005.

Council **AGREED** to

- amend Formal Sports Provision (paragraph 2) to read, "The requirements of the strategy for formal sports provision *and its implementation*...will be met in full by the development";
- amend Town Park (paragraph 9) to read, "A town park...will be developed ~~within~~ ~~or~~ adjoining the town centre".

Officers were asked to add words to ensure that all facilities must be fit for purpose before they could be handed over and to remove the duplication of golf course provision from Policy NS/22, which also appeared in Policy NS/23.

Council **NOTED** that there was one Sports Development Officer remaining in the Community Development Section and that the amount of work required for sports provision at Northstowe could not be accommodated without developer funding for additional staff.

Policy NS/23 Countryside Recreation

An inconsistency between Policy NS/23(5) and paragraph D11.30 regarding golf course provision would be resolved by the deletion from paragraph D11.30 of the sentence that

reads "A more detailed assessment will be made of the need to replace this facility to serve the new town and the local area."

Subject to the above changes, Council **AGREED** D11 – Meeting Recreational Needs.

D12 – An Integrated Water Strategy

Council **AGREED** that all policies referring to Oakington would also include reference to Longstanton.

The changes to Water Conservation (paragraph 9) had been made due to recommendations from GO-East. The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder agreed to refer to Building Control questions about builders linking to foul drainage systems.

Longstanton Parish Council asked that the Council adopt a two-pronged approach to mitigating flood risk at Longstanton (paragraph D12.6), incorporating both surface water attenuation ponds and a diversion channel for the Longstanton Brook along the Longstanton Bypass. Council **AGREED** that revised wordings be brought to the 9 December 2005 meeting of Council.

With regards to management and maintenance of watercourses (paragraph D12.7), Longstanton Parish Council had indicated it preferred that the District Council assume these responsibilities. Members questioned why Policy NS/24 (7i) proposed to delete requirement that funding of managing organisation in perpetuity should be revised so that "at the cost of the development" be deleted. Council **DEFERRED** this decision until 9 December 2005.

Subject to the change made above and those issues deferred to 9 December 2005, Council **AGREED** D12 – An Integrated Water Strategy.

D13 – Telecommunications

Council **AGREED** D13 – Telecommunications.

D14 – An Exemplar in Sustainability

Council **AGREED** D14 – An Exemplar in Sustainability.

D15 – Waste

Council **AGREED** D15 – Waste.

E – Delivering Northstowe

E1 – Implementation

A strategy would be developed to address both construction spoil and traffic noise. Local Members asked that wording be included prohibiting construction traffic from passing through Longstanton and Oakington. Details about set hours of work would be addressed through a Considerate Contractors Scheme at a later date. Paragraph E1.7A would be amended to require processing facilities to be situated as far from existing residents as possible, and not near country parks or other amenities. Policy NS/29(2) should clarify that a recycling plant should "be located towards the *eastern* edge of the Oakington Barracks".

Subject to the clarifications requested above, Council **AGREED** E1 – Implementation.

E2 – Planning Obligations and Conditions

Although it had not been the pattern in Cambridgeshire for a secondary school to have

sixth form provision, the Education Authority had requested this as there would be enough residents to justify a sixth form. The Education Authority and Primary Care Trust had also requested a nurse practitioner in every primary school.

The Leader was liaising with Anglian Water through Cambridgeshire Horizons and would report back on any decision regarding the adequacy of the existing foul drainage and sewerage system for the Northstowe development.

Although service provision in the Northstowe region would benefit the surrounding area, it was right to ask developers to provide funding only for the requirements of the Northstowe development and not the wider area. Wording would be added to state that the required funding would be specific to services for the new town.

Subject to the addition of new wording about service funding, Council **AGREED** E2 – Planning Obligations and Conditions.

E3 – Delivering Northstowe and E4 – Monitoring Northstowe

These new chapters had been included since the Pre-Submission stage in response to representations from GO-East, but would need updating to include amendments made by Council on 15 November 2005.

Subject to the inclusion of amendments made by Council on 15 November 2005, Council **AGREED** E3 – Delivering Northstowe and E4 – Monitoring Northstowe.

Glossary of Terms

Subject to the amendment of High Quality Public Transport, as agreed in the list of representations, Council **AGREED** the Glossary of Terms.

Conclusion

Council **AGREED** the amended Maps and the Sustainability Report.

Subject to the changes made during the meeting, Council **AGREED**:

- (a) the responses to representations to the Pre-Submission draft Northstowe Area Action Plan (AAP) as contained in Appendix A of the report;
- (b) the responses to representations to the Draft Final Sustainability Report for the Northstowe Area AAP as contained in Appendix A of the report;
- (c) the proposed changes to the draft AAP as contained in Appendix A of the report and incorporated into Appendix B of the report and **THAT IT BE SUBMITTED** to the Secretary of State in January 2006; and
- (d) **TO DELEGATE** further minor editing changes to the Development Plan Documents to the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder where they involve matters of policy and to the Development Services Director where they are technical matters.

The Meeting ended at 4.45 p.m.
