

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on  
Tuesday, 17 July 2007 at 10.00 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillor JH Stewart – Chairman  
Councillor RE Barrett – Vice-Chairman

**Councillors:** Dr DR Bard, Mrs PM Bear, EW Bullman, FWM Burkitt, SM Edwards,  
Mrs SM Ellington, Mrs A Elsby, Mrs JM Guest, R Hall, Mrs SA Hatton,  
Mrs EM Heazell, RMA Manning, RB Martlew, MJ Mason, Mrs CAED Murfitt,  
CR Nightingale, A Riley, RT Summerfield, Dr SEK van de Ven, JF Williams and  
NIC Wright

**Officers:** Caroline Hunt Principal Planning Policy Officer  
Keith Miles Planning Policy Manager  
Richard May Democratic Services Manager

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors JD Batchelor, D Bird, BR Burling, JP Chatfield, Mrs PS Corney, NS Davies, Ms JA Dipple, Mrs SJO Doggett, Mrs VG Ford, Dr SA Harangozo, Mrs CA Hunt, PT Johnson, SGM Kindersley, Mrs JE Lockwood, DC McCraith, DH Morgan, Mrs LA Morgan, AG Orgee, JA Quinlan, NJ Scarr, Mrs DSK Spink MBE, RJ Turner and TJ Wotherspoon.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Members declared interests in Agenda Item 3:

Councillor Mrs SA Hatton declared a personal non-prejudicial interest on the basis that her son worked on the West Cambridge site. Notwithstanding this interest she remained in the meeting and took part in the discussions and voting.

Councillors Dr DR Bard, EW Bullman, Mrs CAED Murfitt and A Riley declared personal non-prejudicial interests as members of Cambridge University's Superannuation Scheme. Notwithstanding these interests they remained in the meeting and took part in the discussions and voting.

Councillor Dr SEK van de Ven declared a personal non-prejudicial interest on the grounds that her husband was an employee of Cambridge University. Notwithstanding this interest she remained in the meeting and took part in the discussions and voting.

Councillor MJ Mason advised that he had considered the matter as a member of Histon Parish Council; however, he intended to consider the matter afresh as a District Councillor.

### **3. NORTH WEST CAMBRIDGE AREA ACTION PLAN: RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION AND PREFERRED WAY FORWARD**

Council considered a report setting out the results of the public participation on the Issues and Options for the Area Action Plan (AAP) for North-West Cambridge, which was being prepared jointly by Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. The report recommended a preferred approach to the development of the AAP,

and that Council approve responses to representations on the Issues and Options.

The Chairman of Council welcomed representatives of Cambridge University and Girton Parish Council to the meeting and outlined the procedure that Council would follow.

Mrs Caroline Hunt, Principal Planning Policy Officer, drew the meeting's attention to the following additional material circulated beforehand:

- (1) A detailed site assessment of Option E.
- (2) An index to the report and appendices.
- (3) The script of representations made by Cambridge University to the North West Fringe Member Reference Group on 29 June 2007.

Council considered a preferred Site Footprint for the AAP, the options for which were set out in Paper 1 to the report. Mrs Hunt explained the background to the report and outlined the stage which the plan-making process had reached. The options which had been subject to consultation accorded with the provisions of the Cambridge and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and were intended to meet the development needs of Cambridge University whilst maintaining and enhancing the setting of Cambridge. The AAP which would eventually follow this consultation required a clear and defensible evidence base for the preferred options chosen. Following extensive public consultation between September-November 2006, 4 revised options had been put forward to the North West Joint Member Reference Group on 29 June 2007, as follows:

- **Option A:** Development along the Girton Ridge generally not extending below the 20m contour, the green belt between Girton and Cambridge narrows to 100m south of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) towards Madingley Road where it is not visible from Huntingdon Road.
- **Option B:** Development along the Girton Ridge generally not extending below the 20m contour, the green belt between Girton and Cambridge narrows to 200m south of the SSSI towards Madingley Road where it is not visible from Huntingdon Road.
- **Option C:** Based on option 10.1, development is drawn slightly further up the slope, the strategic gap widens out into a large circular open space in the vicinity of the SSSI.
- **Option D:** Based on option C, with additional green indentations into the outer edge of the development, the 200m strategic gap runs south towards Madingley Road.

At the meeting, a refinement to Option A was put forward, Option E, which generally maintained development above the 20 metre contour line in South Cambridgeshire in order to respect the Green Belt setting whilst providing a large, high amenity value central green space as part of the north-south strategic gap, primarily within Cambridge city. The width of the strategic gap narrowed to 100 metres under this option, south of the central green space, running towards Madingley Road.

Mrs Hunt referred Council to plans within the report illustrating the various options. The University had favoured Options C and D, however the Reference Group recommended that Option E be agreed by the City and District Councils as the preferred way forward.

Mr. Lindsay Dane, representing Cambridge University, addressed the Council. Mr. Dane advised that the University held serious concerns about the option recommended by the reference group, taking the view that the footprint proposed would not allow quality development, indicated more development than could reasonably be achieved and would not allow quality public transport links to be established. The 20 metre contour

was not a landscape feature and the importance of the view from the M11 motorway had been overstated; the motorway in itself had detracted from the quality of the Green Belt setting. As a consequence the University was unlikely to support the option recommended, nevertheless Mr. Dane urged Council to make a decision which could be a basis for further joint working.

Councillor Dr Douglas de Lacey, Chairman of Girton Parish Council, addressed the Council. Cllr de Lacey expressed concern at the likely affects of the development on the integrity of Girton village, much of which was located within the area earmarked for development.

Councillor James Ford-Smith, Girton Parish Council, addressed the Council. Cllr Ford-Smith expressed concern that the future of the village of Girton as a community separate from Cambridge was under threat as a consequence of the development plan proposals.

Councillor Dr DR Bard, Growth and Sustainable Communities Portfolio Holder, proposed and Councillor RE Barrett seconded the recommendation of the reference group that Option E be agreed as the site footprint and revised Green Belt boundary as set out in paragraphs 17 to 21 of the report and informed by Paper 1 and the Option E assessment circulated prior to the meeting. Councillor Dr Bard urged Members to support this recommendation to enable the process to move forward based on a preferred option which did most to protect the Cambridge Green Belt.

Council **RESOLVED** that Option E be agreed as the site footprint and revised Green Belt boundary as set out in paragraphs 17 to 21 of the report and informed by Paper 1 and the Option E assessment circulated prior to the meeting.

Councillors Mrs A Elsby, Mrs SA Hatton, Mrs EM Heazell and Dr SEK van de Ven requested to be recorded as abstaining from the vote.

Council considered Paper 2 to the report, which set out representations, received on the Issues and Options consultation and the Council's recommended response to them.

Council considered Paper 2, drawing attention to the following specific aspects which should be taken into account in drafting the Area Action Plan (AAP):

- **Affordable housing** – The University's definition of 'Affordable housing' was different to that of the government. For clarity, future reference should be made in the AAP to the definition to apply to the University. The Growth and Sustainable Communities Portfolio Holder suggested 'Housing for University Priority Workers.'
- **Provision for Travellers** – Cross-reference was required in the AAP to the emerging South Cambridgeshire Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document which would address the needs of the Travelling community on a district-wide basis.
- **Travel and transport** – The AAP needed to take into account the wider impact on traffic, specifically the A14 improvement proposals. Concern was expressed that the consultants' traffic report, should its measures be implemented, would increase traffic on local networks; consequently the report should be treated with extreme caution. The Planning Policy Manager advised that the AAP would establish the policy parameters within which detailed transport proposals would be evaluated, including the Orbital Road and suitable pedestrian and cycle routes.
- Concern was expressed that if the new secondary school were located north of the Huntingdon Road, outside of the development site, it must be ensured that

the University development made proper contributions. Members were advised that the County Council had decided on a preferred location following its review of secondary capacity in the Cambridge area. The AAP would be concerned with the requirement for Section 106 contributions to secondary school provision.

- **Local centres** – Concern was expressed that any decision by the University to proceed with the Cambridge Ice Centre was likely to affect adversely the viability of local centres within the development.
- **Recreation and Open Space** – Members were advised that the preferred Option E made provision for open space within and outside the site, however it was not appropriate to be prescriptive about the location until the Master Planning stage.
- **Energy** – Concerns were expressed at the achievability of the 20% renewable energy target. Members were advised that it was appropriate for the AAP to encourage this percentage, following government guidance and obligations to secure sustainable development, and the target included in the Northstowe AAP. Again, details were a matter for the Master Planning stage.
- **Drainage – (1)** Concern was expressed that the consultation document had misleadingly indicated that Cambridge City was at risk of flooding as a consequence of development in the north-west, through the inclusion of misleading photographs, whereas the areas most likely to be affected were villages closest to the development.
- **Drainage – (2)** The draft AAP would require a Strategic Water and Drainage Strategy covering drainage, flood risk, management and water conservation as well as the requirement for SuDS, in response to the Environment Agency's representation.
- **Drainage – (3)** Flood risk assessments would be vital and must be catchment-wide. Balancing Ponds would also be a crucial element, and resources must to be considered if the Council was required to maintain water courses. The Planning Policy Manager referred Members to Option 20.2 which would require legal agreement to be entered into prior to development to ensure that organisations with sufficient powers, funding, resources, expertise and integrated management were secured to maintain and manage all surface water systems on the North West Cambridge site in perpetuity. This organisation could be the Council, in which case the resources required would be negotiated as part of the Section 106 Legal Agreement.

Councillor Dr DR Bard, Growth and Sustainable Communities Portfolio Holder, proposed and Councillor RE Barrett seconded the recommendation of the reference group that the Responses to the Issues and Options document and the preferred approach to the Area Action Plan, as set out in Paper 2 to the report, be agreed.

Council **RESOLVED** that this recommendation be agreed.

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**The Meeting ended at 12.55 p.m.**

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