

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee held on  
Wednesday, 28 January 2015 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Cllr Tim Wotherspoon (South Cambridgeshire District Council) – Chairman

Councillors: Brian Burling (South Cambridgeshire District Council), Ed Cearns (Cambridgeshire County Council), Barry Chapman (Cambridgeshire County Council), Lynda Harford (South Cambridgeshire District Council), Bill Hunt, David Jenkins (Cambridgeshire County Council), Douglas de Lacey, Alex Riley and Hazel Smith (South Cambridgeshire District Council)

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Lois Bowser	Northstowe Team Leader
Ian Howes	Principal Urban Designer
Jo Mills	Planning and New Communities Director
Tam Parry	Northstowe Transport Planning Officer
Stephen Reid	Senior Planning Lawyer
Juliet Richardson	Business Manager (Growth and Development)
Ian Senior	Democratic Services Officer
Tanya Sherridan	Head of Growth and Economy
James Stone	Principal Planning Officer

### **1. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Barry Chapman nominated Councillor Peter Hudson as Vice-Chairman of the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee. This nomination was seconded by Councillor Alex Riley.

Councillor David Jenkins nominated Councillor Ed Cearns as Vice-Chairman of the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee. This nomination was seconded by Councillor Hazel Smith.

The Chairman called for a secret ballot to be held. He noted that Councillor Bill Hunt was substituting for Councillor Hudson, and allowed both him and Councillor Cearns to remain in the Chamber and vote.

The result of the ballot was:

Councillor Peter Hudson	7 votes
Councillor Ed Cearns	3 votes

The Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee resolved that Councillor Peter Hudson be appointed as its Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the Civic Year 2014-15, subject to confirmation that he is willing to accept the office.

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors Edd Stonham (South Cambridgeshire District Council) and Peter Hudson (Cambridgeshire County Council) sent apologies. Councillors Douglas de Lacey and Bill Hunt were their respective substitutes.

### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Alex Riley reiterated that he had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest by reason of the proximity of his domestic property to Northstowe, but that he had a dispensation allowing him to speak and vote.

Councillor Tim Wotherspoon declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest because he had attended meetings of Oakington & Westwick Parish Council and Rampton Parish Council in order to provide factual information upon request. Councillor Wotherspoon is not an elected or co-opted member of either Parish Council and did not contribute to the debates.

### 4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee authorised the Chairman to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2014 as a correct record, subject to the following:

**Minute 6 - Consideration of the grounds for contesting the Appeal against the local planning authority's failure to determine the section 73 application for the removal of condition 14 of the outline planning permission S/0388/12/OL, within the prescribed time period (application ref S/2097/14/VC)**

Delete the following paragraph:

“Councillor David Jenkins noted that the Committee’s desire was that the development should proceed as quickly as possible. He was concerned that the determination of this Appeal, especially by means of a Hearing, might run counter to that aspiration. In reply, the Planning and New Communities Director referred to the benefit of preserving Condition 14 in that such a Condition would help to avoid the construction of small bedrooms, which had been much criticised at Orchard Park. Councillor Jenkins said that Orchard Park had been developed at a time of economic recession in the building industry, whereas the aspiration now was to promote Northstowe as an exemplar New Town.”

With reference to the following paragraph:

“Councillor Riley was minded to support officers in asking for the Appeal to be dealt with at a Hearing. However, he insisted that the overriding issue was the Appeal process must be transparent and open to the public. Officers answered Members’ questions relating to the possible extent of a Costs award against the Council, timescale for the Appeal, and the Appeal’s implications for the commencement of the development. Councillor Riley noted that Phase 1 had lower Dwellings per Hectare density, which suggested that there was no need for smaller rooms.”

Delete the first sentence, and then replace the words. “However he” with the words “Councillor Riley”.

### 5. NORTHSTOWE PHASE 2 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee **received and noted** a report on consultation responses in relation to the Outline application for Phase 2 of Northstowe, comprising up to 3,500 dwellings together with education and community facilities, road

and cycling network, town centre, water and drainage network, sports and public open space, and full application for southern access road West.

The Principal Planning Officer updated the Committee about progress. The key points were:

- Proposed inclusion of a town centre park
- Fewer but wider Green Ways
- Reduction in the height of buildings immediately abutting Rampton Drift
- Steps to protect Longstanton Conservation Area
- Redesignation of land to the north and north-west of the Primary School to residential
- Consideration of 7-storey buildings towards the town centre in order to free up land elsewhere for other purposes
- Transport related, including inadequate car parking

County officers would arrange to meet with interested Councillors informally to discuss a number of transport-related topics, including dimensions of roads and cycle paths, and cycle parking.

The Committee Chairman invited Councillor Gill Ashby, Chairman of Longstanton Parish Council, to address the meeting. Gill Ashby made the following statement:

“Having looked at the Phase 2 plans and given our feedback we would like to draw the Committees attention to the following which we feel is a serious problem.

Longstanton Parish Council take very seriously our duty of care to Northstowe as it is in our Parish and will continue to be in our Parish. We certainly want the best for Northstowe and to see it become an amazing place to live.

Residents will be paying their precept to Longstanton and we are sure will be expecting something for that money. The District Councillor and County Councillor for Longstanton will also be the Councillors for Northstowe as it is in Longstanton Parish.

So it was with interest this morning when listening to the Chair on Radio Cambridgeshire that you said, “Throughout the build out of Northstowe we are committed to providing enough facilities to meet the needs of the growing population”

Because we noted that in the Phase 1 section 106 agreement there was nothing included that could help Longstanton provide any community facilities for Northstowe. Phase 1 will have small community facilities within the primary school but these have already been allocated to health services and a possible mother and baby group and are a temporary measure as they will be taken back when the school needs them for its growth. There is no other community facility planned that we can see. The Sports Centre is also not a social hub it would appear to be changing rooms, showers and toilets for the sports areas and is not expected to be built until the final stages.

The needs of Northstowe are much more than this. A community space where people can meet, facilities for older children, teenagers young adults. Older parents, single people, the elderly. What are they all going to be doing? How are they going to build a Community?

Longstanton has very outdated facilities that will also not be able to cope or provide these things. We are looking to upgrade these so we can provide a social centre with facilities for Longstanton residents and also Northstowe residents as they are in our Parish and therefore should there not be something in the Phase 2 106 agreement to help here.

We note that in the Trumpington Meadows 106 agreement the multi use flexible community centre was made available for the residents of Trumpington and Haslingfield as it sits in those two Parishes. So we feel that money should be made available for Longstanton to provide its duty of care to its new residents.

The numbers of Phase 1 will double our current population of Longstanton and not taking into account the early stages of 3500 houses of Phase 2. Longstanton has approx. 1300 houses.

So Councillors and Officers, if you are to build an amazing New Town we really should be looking at what we think we are providing.

By taking into account what previous new builds have not provided from the outset. We can learn from this published data and advice from the people who worked on and live in these developments.”

The Planning and New Communities Director gave a brief summary of the proposed timescale for delivering some community facilities within Phase 1, and gave notice of the initial deliberation of the Phase 2 application.

The Chairman invited Members to debate the report under a number of themed headings.

(a) **Impact on neighbours**

Members made the following points

- All the points made by Rampton Drift Residents' Association should form the basis of Conditions or Heads of Terms **except** the one calling for a clear route out of Northstowe to the north to enable access to Longstanton
- Care is needed to make sure that Longstanton Conservation Area is not destroyed There must be a burial ground for Northstowe provided as part of Phase 2

(b) **Flood risk / Drainage**

- It is imperative that Anglian Water's comments are taken seriously so that concerns can be addressed, and problems prevented, before it is too late
- Evidence is needed that there is sufficient capacity
- Concern that the drainage system must be properly maintained and ditches kept clear
- Concern at the number of dwellings draining to Uttons Drove
- Drainage work should be completed before any dwellings are occupied
- Ongoing discussions with regard to the Sustainable Urban Drainage System must resolve when adoption of the system will take place
- The Northstowe Area Action Plan required the mitigation of flood risk at Longstanton and Oakington. Oakington might have to wait 20-30 years before balancing ponds designed to alleviate flooding in that village were constructed as part of Northstowe Phase 3. An effort should be made to include the balancing ponds in Phase 2.

(c) **Housing / Community**

- Houses must cater for **living** – if people demand car and bicycle parking space, then it must be provided
- Storage for waste receptacles must be provided and must anticipate as far as possible future requirements to store a greater number of bins
- 20% Affordable Housing is unacceptable, and the development of Northstowe must be reconciled with housing need – the amount of Affordable Housing must be 40%. It would be difficult to explain why the District-wide shortfall in Affordable Housing had increased as a result of Northstowe being built should the level not be appropriate.
- There must be a link between Affordable Housing and education provision – pupil yield
- The Northstowe Area Action Plan indicated that Affordable Housing levels should be informed by viability
- The Homes and Communities Agency was offering only half of what was required by the Local Plan
- It was unreasonable to expect schools to bear the burden of community provision
- The footprint of buildings must be appropriate, with significant space for bike and bin storage. Verges should be of sufficient width to allow for bin collection without obstructing footpaths and cycle paths.
- Houses must be of proportions suitable for 21<sup>st</sup> century living. They must be built to 'lifetime living' standards and must be future proof.
- The former Officers' Mess should be retained if possible

(d) **Employment**

- A crucial element of community development
- Early provision of infrastructure aids viability

(e) **Town Centre**

- Proposed provision of a Town Park was essential
- The absence of any landmark buildings was disappointing
- The reality of emergency services cover being provided from Cambourne
- Any possibility of a shared use facility / fire station at Northstowe?

(f) **Sustainability**

- Rain water harvesting
- Water recycling on site

(g) **Ecology**

No comments

(h) **Archaeology / Heritage**

This provided an opportunity to engage and provide a sense of place

## 6. **RISK REGISTER**

The Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee received and noted the Northstowe Risk Register.

Members said that the Risk Register should:

- In addition, monitor compliance with exemplar targets
- identify the nature of the Planning Performance Agreement between South Cambridgeshire District Council and the Homes and Communities Agency and, in particular, the risks associated with failing to grant planning permission for Phase 2 by the end of March 2015
- be linked with the Project Plan
- be easily accessible and easy to read
- be kept up to date
- assess the possible affect the General Election might have on timescales

(During the course of this item, the Committee became inquorate.)

**7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members **noted** that the next Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee meeting had been scheduled for Wednesday 25 February 2015, starting at 2.00pm.

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**The Meeting ended at 5.10 p.m.**

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