

REPORT TO: Scrutiny and Overview Committee

18 December 2018

LEAD OFFICER: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire

Cambridge Northern Fringe Area Action Plan - Issues and Options 2

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to seek agreement for the joint Cambridge Northern Fringe Area Action Plan Issues and Options 2 and supporting documents to be published for consultation. It will be reported to Cabinet on 9 January 2019.
2. This is a key decision, and it was first published in the November 2018 Forward Plan.
3. NOTE: The Issues and Options Report and supporting documents for the South Cambridgeshire Scrutiny and Overview Committee are in a draft form. Further work will be undertaken before they are published for the Cabinet agenda, in particular on the structure and flow of the document, simplifying language, and providing further examples, photos and maps.
4. The Area Action Plan is being produced jointly with Cambridge City Council. It will also be considered by the Cambridge Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee on 15th January 2019.

Recommendations

5. It is recommended that the Scrutiny and Overview Committee recommends to Cabinet that it:
 - (a) Approves the Cambridge Northern Fringe Issues and Options 2 for Regulation 18 public consultation in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 for a period of six weeks jointly with Cambridge City Council (Appendix 1);
 - (b) Approves the Statement of Consultation (Appendix 2)
 - (c) Notes the findings of the Interim Sustainability Appraisal and Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendices 3 and 4)
 - (d) Delegates authority to the Deputy Leader to consider and agree, as is consistent with this Council's Corporate Objectives, any changes proposed by Cambridge City Council.
 - (e) Delegates authority to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development in liaison with the Deputy Leader, to make editorial changes to the Issues and Options Report and supporting documents prior to the commencement of the consultation period (to comprise minor amendments and factual updates and clarifications).

Reasons for Recommendations

6. The Cambridge Northern Fringe represents a major brownfield development opportunity which can make a significant contribution to the future development needs of the Greater Cambridge area. Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council have committed to producing a joint Area Action Plan in their respective Local Plans 2018, and in their recently adopted Local Development Schemes (LDS). The Issues and Options 2 consultation represents the next stage in preparation of the plan. The draft report responds to the changing circumstances in the area, in particular the Housing Infrastructure Bid and the opportunities it could provide for the relocation of the Water Recycling Centre, and the Ely to Cambridge Transport Study's evidence of the need to seek a more balanced mix of uses, and focus on transport means other than the car.

Executive Summary

7. The Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans identify Cambridge Northern Fringe East as an area for regeneration, and propose the production of a joint Area Action Plan (AAP). An Issues & Options Report was published for consultation in December 2014, and the consultation results were reported to members in 2015. Following consultation, work on the AAP was paused at this point to consider the way forward, and whilst the Councils' Local Plans were progressed.
8. Since the close of consultation on the Issues & Options 1 document, there have been a number of significant developments that both affect and inform the preparation of the AAP. In particular, submission of a Housing Infrastructure Fund bid to relocate the Water Recycling Centre off-site, and completion of the Ely to Cambridge Transport Study.
9. It is now proposed to carry out an Issues and Options 2 consultation, which provides a revised vision for the site, reflecting the more comprehensive regeneration that could be achieved if the HIF bid is successful and the Water Recycling Centre is relocated off site. In addition, the LDS proposes to include the Cambridge Science Park within the AAP area, to ensure best use is made of land, to manage the constraints of the current transport network, and to seek opportunities to support travel by means other than by car. To reflect the change in boundary area, the AAP has been renamed as Cambridge Northern Fringe (CNF). The Councils will make a decision on the AAP boundary following consultation.

Background

10. The Cambridge Northern Fringe East area is designated in the new local plans for both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire as an area for regeneration. The area extent, and the quantum and phasing of development, is proposed to be established through the production of a joint Area Action Plan (AAP).
11. In the current local plans, the Councils have so far placed no reliance on any levels of development in this area in meeting the growth needs of the Greater Cambridge area. Therefore, the Area Action Plan is particularly significant as it will feed into meeting development needs that will be identified in the wider joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan that the Councils have committed to start work on in 2019.

12. Work on preparing the joint AAP initially commenced in early 2014. An Issues & Options Report was published for consultation in December 2014. Recognising the challenges involved in relocating the Water Recycling Centre (WRC), this set out four potential options for the future development potential of the area. The first three options focused on development opportunities that could coexist with the WRC remaining on site as is currently or in a consolidated form. Due to adverse odour constraint issues associated with the WRC, these options significantly constrain the potential development in the vicinity to primarily employment uses. The fourth option proposed relocation of the WRC, enabling a greater mix of development. The consultation also proposed the potential of expanding the AAP boundary beyond the Local Plan site allocation to include the Cambridge Science Park, to ensure development across the area was coordinated.
13. The results from the consultation were reported to members in 2015 (Joint Strategic Transport and Spatial Planning Group - 16 November 2015; South Cambridgeshire District Council's Planning Portfolio Holder Meeting - 17 November 2015; Cambridge City Council's Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee – 17 November 2015). Previous representations are also available to view in full on the Councils' websites.
14. While the results from the consultation indicated a strong preference for variations of Options 2 and 4, City Cambridge City Council members considered the cost and challenge of relocating the WRC under Option 4 was unfeasible at that time, rendering the option a non-starter. Work on the AAP was paused at this point to consider the way forward, and whilst the Councils' Local Plans were progressed through the examinations.

Considerations

15. Since the close of consultation on the Issues & Options document, there have been a number of significant developments that both affect and inform the preparation of the AAP. These are:

The new North Cambridge Station and extension of the Guided Busway

16. These key elements of public transport infrastructure were still proposals or under development when the last Issues & Options consultation was undertaken. Now operational, and with increasing patronage, there is a need to maximise the investment in these new public transport facilities and ensure they become part of the sustainable transport network for the city.

The Ely to Cambridge Transport Study (ECTS)

17. The ECTS was commissioned by the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) to consider the transport needs of the Ely to Cambridge corridor as a whole, in addition to the specific needs of the major developments included in the Local Plans of the new town north of Waterbeach and on the CNF.
18. The transport modelling considered the previous employment led options from Issues and Options in 2014 and suggested that a more residential-led development mix for the comprehensive approach to the site, which reduces external trips, would provide better transport outcomes. Therefore, plans for the area would need to minimise car use to the site, maximise the take-up of non-car modes including walking, cycling, bus and rail use, and promote land uses that encourage trips to be retained on-site where possible. This suggests it will be important to review the policies in the Local Plans which are for employment led development with supporting uses including

residential, and consider whether a more balanced development is now appropriate, and if so what the balance should be.

19. The ECTS identified significant transport constraints to the realisation of further growth across CNF. In accordance with the findings of the ECTS, it recommends the application of a highway 'trip budget' approach, which essentially identifies the level of vehicular trips that can be made to and from the areas east and west of Milton Road without leading to a severe further impact on the strategic road network. It is therefore based on the number of trips generated and not any particular level of development. The highway trip budget, alongside further mitigation through innovative transport policy measures and other transport infrastructure improvements, will inform the different levels and mixes of development that could be considered on CNF through the AAP.
20. The ECTS has also confirmed the importance of the Science Park to the transport issues of in the vicinity of CNF. If further growth in the CNF is to be enabled there is a need to bring this development forward in a very different way so as to significantly reduce the mode share of trips made to the site by car, and enable access by other means. Links to the Railway Station, busway, and other transport improvements will be key to this.

Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund

21. In July 2017, the government announced a new funding initiative – the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) – which funds the unlocking of challenging sites for the delivery of significant housing. In September 2017, with the endorsement of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, Cambridge City Council and Anglian Water submitted a bid to cover the cost of relocating the WRC. This separate but parallel process, if successful, could release the site for comprehensive regeneration.
22. The Government announced in March 2018 that the HIF bid had been shortlisted and was advancing to the detailed business case stage. A formal announcement on the HIF is due in early 2019 and will inform future stages in the preparation of the AAP.
23. The planning process for the future location of the Water Recycling Centre is outside the scope of this Area Action Plan. The County Council is the Local Planning Authority for waste matters.

The Cambridge Northern Fringe AAP Area

24. New transport evidence identifies significant capacity issues in the network in the vicinity of Cambridge Northern Fringe East such that it will be necessary to consider such that a comprehensive approach to managing the future of the Cambridge Science Park together with the CNF East area identified in the Local Plans is required to ensure best use is made of land in this area having regard to the constraints of the current transport network. It is therefore proposed in the Issues and Options Report 2 that the Area Action Plan will be prepared which includes both the CNF East area and the Cambridge Science Park. A decision can then be made taking account of the results of consultation. In order to make clear that the Area Action Plan comprises a wider area than the Cambridge Northern Fringe East policies in the Local Plans, and to simplify the title, it is proposed to update the name of the Area Action Plan to Cambridge Northern Fringe.

Issues and Options 2

25. The Issues and Options 2 report responds to the changing circumstances, and is the starting point for reconsidering how the CNF could be developed in the future.
26. The Issues & Options 2 Report identifies the key issues, challenges and opportunities facing the CNF area and sets out the different ways (options) these could be responded to. It invites public and stakeholder views and comments on these but also offers the opportunity for people to offer up further information of relevance to the development of the Plan.
27. The draft Issues and Options 2 Report is included as appendix 1 of this report. It includes an Executive Summary, which details what the issues and options covers. Members are directed to that for a more complete summary, but in brief the draft Issues and Options 2 report includes:
 - The broader planning policy context that the AAP must be developed within;
 - What the area is like today, and the opportunities and constraints it presents. This includes consideration of the different land uses currently within the area;
 - A new vision is proposed for the AAP area: ‘Cambridge Northern Fringe - A thriving low carbon place for innovative living and working; inherently walkable where everything is on your doorstep’;
 - A number of objectives are proposed for the area around three headings:
 - A place with a strong identity that successfully integrates into Cambridge
 - A high quality, healthy, biodiverse place
 - An adaptable knowledge district.
 - Principles for place making, exploring how to make best use of the land available and to maximise the possibility of creating a self-supporting high quality new City District. A Concept Diagram is included, as a basis for indicating the kind of place that could be created, and as a hook for a series of issues regarding how the area could come forward;
 - Transport issues, seeking views on ways to make travel to and within the area focus on means other than the car. Given the existing constraints on the road network this will be key to making this new district a success;
 - Employment development issues explore the types of space that should be provided in CNF, and what is needed to support those uses;
 - Housing issues seek views on the types and mix of housing that should be sought;
 - Retail, Leisure and Community Services & Facilities, and what sort of facilities will be needed to support this new City District;
 - Climate Change and Sustainability, proposing options regarding sustainable design and construction standards that should be applied. This section responds to both Councils aim towards zero carbon by 2050;

- Implementation, delivery, variability and phasing, including issues regarding how infrastructure delivery and funding will be taken forward. It also sets out how the Council's will address planning applications that come forward ahead of the AAP reaching a more final stage.

Consultation

28. It is proposed to carry out consultation on Issues and Options 2 in Spring 2019, with dates to be confirmed but anticipated to be in February/March.
29. The Issues and Options report 2 would be accompanied by a number of supporting documents (these are also currently in draft form):
 - Consultation Statement (appendix 2): Sets out the consultation process for plan making, including how the Issues and Options 2 consultation will be carried out. It includes a summary of representations received in 2014, and how those issues have been considered and taken into account in preparing Issues and Options 2.
 - Interim Sustainability Appraisal (appendix 3): An appraisal of the sustainability effects of the issues and options 2 2018. This is an interim stage of the sustainability appraisal that must accompany the draft plan itself at the next stage.
 - Equalities Impact Assessment (appendix 4): Considers the impact of proposals on people that live in, work in or visit the area.

Next Steps

30. The next stage of the AAP's preparation will be to consider the responses received to consultation, as well as responses received to the first consultation, alongside the emerging evidence base, to inform an appropriate development strategy to be progressed in a draft of the AAP. This will start to set out the types and quantity of development to be provided within CNF as well as the policies and site allocations needed to give effect to the vision and strategic objectives for CNF as a whole as well as its constituent parts.
31. Both Councils have recently updated their Local Development Schemes, which include an updated timetable for production of the AAP. Key future stages include Consultation on Draft Area Action Plan - Spring 2020; Proposed Submission Consultation - Spring 2021; Submission to the Secretary of State - Summer 2021; AAP Adoption Summer 2022.

Options

32. Members may decide to:
 - Approve the Issues and Options Report and consultation statement for public consultation without amendments;
 - Approve the Issues and Options Report and consultation statement for public consultation with amendments;
 - Not agree to publish the Issues and Options Report and consultation statement for public consultation.

Implications

33. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Risk Management

34. The results of the Housing Infrastructure Fund bid for the relocation of the Water Recycling Centre is yet to be determined. It is due to be determined in the Spring. If the bid is unsuccessful, it would impact on the delivery of the vision identified. The approach to the AAP would be reviewed if the HIF bid were unsuccessful.

Equality and Diversity

35. The Issues and Options 2 report has been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment, which is included as an appendix to this report.

Climate Change

36. The Issues and Options 2 Report responds to climate change, proposing a series of options regarding the nature and form of development, which have the potential to provide climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Consultation responses

37. The drafting of the report has been informed by consultation responses received from the Issues and Options 1 consultation in 2014. A series of forums have also been established, to provide a mechanism to discuss the AAP with stakeholders. Details are included with the Statement of Consultation, which is included as an appendix to this report. It also sets out the consultation arrangements that will be applied to the Issues and Options 2 consultation.

Effect on Strategic Aims

Aim 1 – Living Well

38. The AAP will provide the opportunity to guide development to provide a high quality built and natural environment and the potential to pursue healthy towns objectives is included in the consultation document.

Aim 2 – Homes for our Future

39. The Cambridge Northern Fringe has the potential to make a significant contribution to the delivery of new homes.

Aim 3 – Connected Communities

40. The vision proposed for the Cambridge Northern Fringe seeks to deliver a community where services facilities and employment are available without the need to travel on a day to day basis, and with sustainable transport opportunities.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Background documents:

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 - <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/about-the-local-plan-review>

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - <http://www.scambs.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-and-neighbourhood-planning/the-adopted-development-plan/south-cambridgeshire-local-plan-2018/>

Cambridge Northern Fringe Issues and Options 1 (2014), including background documents and representations received:

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/cambridge-northern-fringe-east-area-action-plan>

Responses to Issues and Options 1 were reported to the following meetings:

- Joint Strategic Transport and Spatial Planning Group - 16 November 2015 - <http://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=415&Year=0>
- South Cambridgeshire District Council's Planning Portfolio Holder Meeting - 17 November 2015 - <http://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=1059>
- Cambridge City Council's Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee – 17 November 2015 - <http://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=184&Year=0>

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft Issues and Options 2 Report

Appendix 2 – Draft Statement of Consultation

Appendix 3 – Draft Interim Sustainability Appraisal

Appendix 4 – Draft Equalities Impact Assessment

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