

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a special meeting of the Council held on
Wednesday, 23 March 2005 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor RF Bryant – Chairman
Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Dr DR Bard, RE Barrett, JD Batchelor, BR Burling, SM Edwards, Mrs A Elsby, R Hall, Dr SA Harangozo, Mrs SA Hatton, Mrs JM Healey, Dr JA Heap, Mrs EM Heazell, Mrs CA Hunt, Mrs HF Kember, SGM Kindersley, RMA Manning, RB Martlew, MJ Mason, DC McCraith, Dr JPR Orme, A Riley, Mrs DP Roberts, J Shepperson, Mrs GJ Smith, Mrs HM Smith, Mrs DSK Spink MBE, RT Summerfield, Dr SEK van de Ven, TJ Wotherspoon and SS Ziaian-Gillan

Officers: Jonathan Dixon Senior Planning Officer (Economic Policy)
Jane Green Major Developments Manager
Caroline Hunt Principal Planning Officer (Housing)
David Hussell Development Services Director
Keith Miles Planning Policy Manager
Michael Monk Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport)
Jane Thompson Cultural Services Manager

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors JP Chatfield, Mrs PS Corney, Mrs J Dixon, Mrs SJO Doggett, Mrs JA Muncey, CR Nightingale, NJ Scarr, JH Stewart, RJ Turner, Mrs BE Waters, JF Williams, Dr JR Williamson and NIC Wright, and also from County Councillor Shona Johnstone.

1. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillors **AGREED** during the meeting that the special Council meeting to consider the Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan be rescheduled from 8 April to 21 April, starting at 9.00 a.m.

The Chairman welcomed County Councillor John Reynolds and Mr Mark Vigor, Head of Strategic Services at Cambridgeshire County Council, to the meeting. County Councillor Reynolds thanked the Council for inviting him to the meeting and circulated the County's comments on the draft Area Action Plan (AAP). Members were concerned that the paper was tabled at the meeting, which meant that they had no time to give it proper consideration. Members considered that the County Council had had time to submit comments ahead of this meeting on the information available from the two previous special Council meetings on 1 and 11 February 2005, which had informed the draft AAP.

Following a fifteen-minute adjournment of the meeting to allow Members time to review the County Council's comments, Council unanimously

RESOLVED that the County Council's comments be not further considered at the meeting and that Cambridgeshire County Council be advised of the concerns at the late tabling of the paper.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the meetings held on 1 and 11 February 2005 as correct records, subject to the following amendments:

Attendees (11 February 2005)

Councillors JD Batchelor and Mrs EM Heazell's names to be added to the attendance list.

Land Drainage (11 February 2005)

Council had agreed that Longstanton Brook be diverted along the proposed Longstanton bypass. The Planning Policy Manager agreed to amend the Northstowe Area Action Plan to reflect this decision.

Phasing and Implementation (11 February 2005)

Minor typographical errors were corrected.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following personal interests were declared:

Councillor SM Edwards	As a resident of Oakington.
Councillor RMA Manning	As a resident and landowner in Willingham.
Councillor MJ Mason	As a member of various land drainage boards.
Councillor A Riley	As a resident of Longstanton and as the Chairman of Longstanton Parish Council, as a small field on the B1050 is managed by the Parish Council as Trustees of a Charity

4. LDF - NORTHSTOWE (DECISION ON THE DETAIL OF THE POLICIES AND PROPOSALS FOR THE DPD)

The draft Area Action Plan (AAP) would serve as the basis for the Northstowe Sustainability Appraisal, which would be prepared by consultants and presented to Members as part of the agenda for the 9 May 2005 special meeting of Council.

Chapter A: Introduction

The draft AAP was intended to outline what the Council wanted to achieve with the new town and how it would monitor that achievement. It had been produced in line with government requirements for the preparation of an AAP.

Councillor A Riley, local Member for Longstanton, noted that there had been full and detailed discussions at the two previous meetings in February 2005 and commended officers on preparing a document very accurately reflecting all issues previously agreed upon by Council.

Council **AGREED** Chapter A: Introduction.

Chapter B: Vision and Development Principles

The Development Principles Policy had been created based on the original bullet points suggested at the previous meetings in February 2005, and provided an over-arching policy setting out the key factors for designing the new town. The policy also required that an overall Masterplan be produced, with local Masterplans for each phase of development, all to ensure the successful realisation of the AAP.

Council **AGREED** Chapter B: Vision and Development Principles, subject to minor

typographical amendments in paragraphs (n) and (o).

Chapter C: The Site and Its Setting

The AAP reflected Council's 1 February 2005 decision that Site A be the preferred location for Northstowe, and this section addressed specific landscaping and Green Separation issues for areas adjacent to the site, but not within the site itself. The AAP boundaries had been drawn to cover all land within which would be required for the development, its landscaping and infrastructure.

The Planning Policy Manager suggested Members think of the various Local Development Framework maps as pieces of a jigsaw: no two plans could overlap, thus the Green Belt area to the north of Northstowe was not shown on the AAP maps as it was covered by the District Proposals Map.

The following points were raised:

- Cambridgeshire County Council's school transport policy would mean that children in Oakington and Longstanton would not be eligible for free bus provision to the secondary school proposed in Northstowe so school transport issues (C1.9), restricting school access to footpaths and cycleways, had been addressed properly; and
- Old documents referred to Longstanton St Michael, not Longstanton St Michaels or Longstanton St Michael's.

Council **AGREED** Chapter C: The Site and Its Setting, subject to

- Bar Hill being included at C3/a as a distant neighbour; and
- Inclusion of plants at C3/b in addition to wildlife.

Chapter D: The Town of Northstowe

D1: The Structure of Northstowe

These policies referred to the components building up the town of Northstowe, provision of services, facilities and infrastructure, transport and landscape. The Phasing Policy would direct construction: evidence provided to the Examination in Public had suggested that the only way to meet the required construction rate per annum would be to commence construction in two separate areas. Developers would be given the opportunity to consider this in later consultation and make appropriate representations if they felt this was inappropriate.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport) advised against removing references to the Guided Bus, as it remained an infrastructure requirement of the development. He confirmed that the bus route through the town centre would be a dedicated bus lane or similar, not a guideway.

Clarifications were sought and given:

- Landscape treatment at Rampton Drift would be detailed in master planning.
- The policy on flooding infrastructure (D1(j)) would be re-worded to incorporate the diversion of Longstanton Brook;
- "Fenland lode" was a term suggested to reflect the local historic character of lodes and canals, where water was a permanent feature.
- Developers would be required to survey existing buildings on site to see which were worthy of retention, and to identify alternative uses to which they could be put, such as the conversion of the Officers' Mess at Duxford into a hotel.

Council **AGREED** D1: The Structure of Northstowe.

D2: The Town Centre

The objectives addressed the town centre location, form, vitality and viability as agreed by Council in February. Officers explained that “comparison and convenience goods” were agreed planning terms: comparison goods included white goods, electronics and clothing, while convenience goods were items like food and toiletries.

The Planning Policy Manager agreed to reconsider the issue of the start of development of the town centre (Policy NS/7 (g)), possibly requiring a development finish date rather than a development start date, the latter having caused problems with Cambourne.

It was confirmed that:

- The Town Centre Strategy would guide the development of policy surrounding provision of a range of shops: there was no intention to prevent construction of a food-only supermarket, rather an aim to prevent one large store from dominating the town centre;
- The Town Centre Strategy would be developed by experts in the field to advise Members how best to proceed with identifying the most suitable range of shops without being too prescriptive.

Council **AGREED** D2: The Town Centre, subject to officers reviewing the issue of timescale for the town centre development.

D3: Local Centres

Five local centres along the dedicated bus route through the town would provide some convenience shopping and employment opportunities, as well as being the locations of the primary schools and, at one local centre, the secondary school. The policy would be re-worded to refer specifically to bus stops at each local centre. The Cambridgeshire County Council Corporate Services Group, attended by the Planning Policy Manager and Major Developments Manager, was seeking provision of five two-form, 420-place, primary schools at Northstowe: preferred school size was an issue for the education authority.

The Planning Policy Manager agreed to re-word the policy to define an appropriate threshold to require development to begin early on of the local centres to serve each of the neighbourhoods in the first phase of development.

Council **AGREED** D3: Local Centres, subject to the need for local centres to be provided early in the development of each neighbourhood.

D4: Housing

Council had previously agreed that district-wide housing policies relating to affordable housing and mix would be applied to Northstowe. Northstowe housing policy NS/9 addressed density, house types and quality and affordable housing funding.

The Council had made a commitment to produce a separate district-wide Development Plan Document (DPD) to make provision for travellers. This DPD would be prepared following the completion of the Travellers' Needs Survey. Officers agreed to make reference to the DPD in all Area Action Plans. “Housing” referred to all kinds of housing accommodation.

A strategic design guide would address parking issues in high-density areas, to encourage imaginative parking solutions.

Council **AGREED** D4: Housing, subject to the inclusion of reference to the Travellers Development Plan Document in this and all other Area Action Plans.

D5: Employment

Northstowe would provide part of the labour force for Cambridge and its locality, but some employment needed to be provided to create a town that was more than a dormitory. Officers agreed to include reference to construction of live / work units for small business owners.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that Cambourne had the only Business Park in the District without restrictions limiting it to firms that needed to be close to Cambridge. The current economy had a reduced demand for employment development, but it was not anticipated that in the longer term there would be an over-provision.

Council **AGREED** D5: Employment, subject to the inclusion of reference to live / work units.

D6: Community Facilities, Leisure, Arts and Culture Including Community Development

This policy covered a key part of the community development, including both public and private facilities. Conscious of the need to encourage development of buildings which would stand the test of time, officers agreed to include "good design" in objectives D6/c and D6/e, cross-referenced to the strategic design guide.

Officers confirmed that:

- Trigger points for the phasing of community facility provision would be identified through master planning and planning applications: new bodies had been established, such as the Northstowe Project Board, to help direct the successful establishment of the new community;
- Developers could be asked to contribute towards the funding for a Community Development Worker, as had been done at Arbury Camps, with the Council reviewing the role and funding arrangements after a set period of time;
- Some services, such as fire and police, could be co-located;
- Cambridgeshire County Council was proposing a police force of around twenty-two officers for Northstowe;
- It was suggested that the swimming pool and leisure centre would be provided through a dual use scheme at the secondary school;
- A cricket pitch would be included along with other grass pitches such as football and rugby; and
- The document did not include reference to sheltered housing, although it did mention supported housing.

Council **AGREED** D6: Community Facilities, Leisure, Art and Culture including Community Development, subject to the inclusion of "good design" in objectives D6/c and D6/e.

D7: Transport

The Principal Planning Officer (Transport) drew attention to a new Policy NS/12(f), an emergency access from Station Road, Oakington at the request of the Fire Service, so that Northstowe could be served from Cottenham. Councillor SM Edwards, local member for Oakington, expressed concerns about an access in the location indicated because of the impact on Green Separation, and suggested that if one were needed, the old airfield road would be better. Councillor A Riley, local member for Longstanton, however, pointed out that the airfield road would have two dual carriageways across it and access would be difficult. Officers suggested that the time limit of any emergency

access could be tied in to the provision of a full fire service and that access could be controlled by rising bollards. Councillor Edwards confirmed that he had no problem with the suggested route being available for walkers, cyclists or horseriders.

Officers confirmed that

- The link to the rail network would be via the guided bus, at the proposed Chesterton Interchange.
- The information on a Willingham Bypass reflected the views of the County Council.
- The County Council had indicated that targets for the different modes of transport would be a matter for the County Council's Long Term Transport Strategy;
- The guided busway service would serve Addenbrooke's;
- Services and facilities at the park and ride site were not matters for the Area Action Plan, but it was understood this site would be open longer each day than currently at existing other sites;
- Traffic management in/into Cambridge would be a matter for consideration in the Long Term Transport Strategy later in the year.

Council **AGREED** D7: Transport, subject to

- Objective D7/c – addition of “highly accessible” before “cycleways”;
- Discussions with the emergency services on options for emergency service access; and
- Further reference to bus stops being within 400m in high-density areas.

D8: Landscape

Council **AGREED** D8: Landscape, subject to the following

- Para D8.8 – “airport road” to read “airfield road”;
- Policy NS/15(b) – add “provided and” before “protected for this purpose” in the 4th line;

D9: Biodiversity

Council **AGREED** D9: Biodiversity, subject to discussion with the Ecology Officer on whether the enhancement of biodiversity addresses adequate support for specific protected bird species.

D10: Archaeology and Heritage

Council **AGREED** D10: Archaeology and Heritage without amendment.

D11: Meeting Recreational Needs

Members expressed their concern that the replacement of the golf course now appeared to be conditional when the understanding locally had long been that it would be replaced. Officers confirmed that Sport England's view was that Northstowe was likely to need a golf course, but that this had to be justified under Planning Policy Guidance and especially if developer funding was being sought.

Officers further confirmed that

- Land acquisition for the country park was not yet under discussion;
- There was a tension between recreation and wildlife but the solution was a matter of design and the possible exclusive designation of some areas. This would be addressed in the Master Plan;
- Golf courses were believed to be an acceptable Green Belt use;
- Provision for children's play areas and youth facilities was based on the National Playing Fields Association standards.

Councillor A Riley declared an interest in a small field on the B1050 managed by the

Parish Council as Trustees of a Charity and expressed the view that the Parish Council would be amenable to access other than immediately south.

Council **AGREED** D11: Meeting Recreational Needs, subject to

- Para D11.16 – replacement of the last sentence by “There may be potential for some sports provision alongside the Green Corridor”;
- Para D11.17 – clarification of wording;
- Para D11.22 – amendment, as recognised by officers;
- Policy NA/21(c) – add specific reference to cricket;
- Policy NS/22(e), golf provision – deletion of first line, to “Provision,”

D12: Land Drainage, Water Conservation, Foul Drainage and Sewage Disposal

Councillor MJ Mason emphasised that Northstowe would affect the drainage of all the land to the north, east and west and the importance of consulting all the relevant drainage authorities on conditions, Section 106 Agreements etc for the discharge of water. It was confirmed that the International Drainage Boards were being fully consulted.

Officers and Portfolio Holders further confirmed that

- The developers were required to protect Oakington from flooding even if this meant providing a balancing pond larger than that required just for the development of Northstowe.
- Options for the management and maintenance of watercourses were to be discussed by the Land Drainage Advisory Group

Council **AGREED** D12: Land Drainage, Water Conservation, Foul Drainage and Sewage Disposal, subject to:

- Chapter heading to be amended to ‘An Integrated Water Strategy’;
- Policy NS/23(c) – Addition of heading before this paragraph “Mitigating Flood Risk at Oakington”;
- Policy NS/23(d)(i) – addition of “series of” between “a” and “balancing pond”;
- Policy NS23/(d)(ii) – addition of wording to urge early action on the new channel;
- Policy NS/23(e) – reference to balancing pond to become (a). Addition of sub-paragraph (b): “a relief channel for Longstanton Brook which culverts along the Longstanton Bypass”; and
- Paragraph D12.6 – addition of reference to relief channel as in Policy NS/23(e)(b) together with justification.

D13: Telecommunications

Council **AGREED** D13: Telecommunications without amendment.

D14: An Exemplar in Sustainability

This chapter had been widened from the draft, and the Principal Planning Officer (Housing) drew attention to two approaches: to increase sustainability overall or to include specific exemplar projects; or a combination of the two.

A request was made for terms used in paragraph D14.5 to be included in the glossary

Council **AGREED** D14: An Exemplar in Sustainability, subject to:

- Objective D14/b – refer to greenhouse gasses rather than just CO₂;
- Paragraph D14.2 - replacement of “reasonably” in the penultimate line of page 83 with “normally”;
- Discussion with the Strategic Development Officer on the wording of Policy NS25/b to ensure that technology used is practical; and

D15: Waste

Council **AGREED** D15: Waste, without amendment.

Chapter E: Delivering Northstowe

E1: Phasing and Implementation

Some Members expressed concern about the environment for residents if the A14 improvements were delayed, but the Planning Policy Manager advised that the improvements would be carried out in stages: the need was to ensure that the relevant sections were completed first.

Council **AGREED** E1: Phasing and Implementation, subject to:

- Policy NS/26(a) – replacement of “avoid” in the 3rd line with “minimise”; and
- Consideration of a potential discrepancy between the start date required to achieve 6,000 dwellings by 2016 (objective E1/d) and that required to keep in step with improvements to the A14 (paragraph D7.2/3).

E2: Planning Obligations and Conditions

Some concern were expressed at the wording of Objective E2/b in apparently requiring the developers to fund all services and facilities, because of the potential impact on the quality of the development; although the contrary view was that the developers should be required to provide all they had promised.

Council **AGREED** E2: Planning Obligations and Conditions, subject to:

- Objective E2/b – rewording to accord with Policy NS/11(a); and
- A statement that if the developers have to contribute towards the Guided Busway, it be taken into account in determining other developer contributions.

Council then

AUTHORISE the emerging policy approach for the Northstowe Area Action Plan to
D be subjected to independent sustainability/strategic environmental assessment; and

DELEGATE to the Planning Portfolio Holder agreement of any material changes
D resultant from further information and to the Development Services Director authority to approve any minor editing changes.

On the proposal of Councillor Mrs JM Healey, Council gave a **VOTE OF THANKS** to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman and the Officers for conducting a good meeting.

The Meeting ended at 5.00 p.m.
