

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Cambridge East Member Reference Group held on
Monday, 21 February 2005

PRESENT: Councillor City Councillor Jenny Bailey (Cambridge City Council Executive Member)– Chairman

Councillors: Dr DR Bard (South Cambridgeshire District Council, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder), B Bradnack (Cambridge City Council Labour Leader), Mrs SJO Doggett (South Cambridgeshire District Council, Fulbourn Ward), J Durrant (Cambridge City Council, Labour Spokesperson on Environment), J Gluza (Cambridgeshire County Council, Romsey Division), J Huppert (Cambridgeshire County Council, East Chesterton Division), Ms S Reid (Cambridge City Council, Chair of Environment Scrutiny Committee) and J Reynolds (Cambridgeshire County Council, Executive Member)

Officers:

Kathy Baldwin	Sustainable Communities Manager, Cambridgeshire County Council
Sara Cass	Planning Officer, Cambridge City Council
Caroline Hunt	Principal Planning Officer (Housing)
Michael Monk	Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport)
Huw Nicholas	Transport Officer Cambridgeshire County Council
David Roberts	Planning Policy Manager, Cambridge City Council

and Peter Studdert (Cambridgeshire Horizons).

1. INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs CA Hunt SCDC and Councillor RJ Turner SCDC.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a correct record.

It was confirmed that Reports pertaining to this Group, together with the meeting agenda would be available on the web site at least five working days prior to the meeting date. Draft minutes of the meeting would be placed on the web site once officers had reviewed them.

4. CAMBRIDGE EAST AREA ACTION PLAN: RESULTS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON PREFERRED OPTIONS AND DIRECTION OF WAY FORWARD

The South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) Principle Planning Officer (Transport) stated that although the timetable for the Area Action Plan (AAP) was tight, it was anticipated that the deadlines would be met and that both the City and South Cambridgeshire Councils would agree a draft AAP by May 2005 to be submitted to the Secretary of State in June 2005 and allow public consultation before the summer recess. It was noted that any slippage in the timetable could result in implications for the development strategy for both the City and District Councils.

The purpose of the report detailing the Results of Public Participation on Preferred Options and Direction of Way Forward was to advise Members of the results of the public participation exercise, including the Stakeholder Workshop, and to consider the broad direction of policies on key matters for the AAP to be recommended to Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** that members receive information on the public participation, including the Stakeholder Workshop, and endorse the proposed way forward on the broad direction of policies on key matters for the AAP.

Report on the Stakeholder Workshop

The Planning Officer, Cambridge City Council reported on the Cambridge East AAP stakeholder workshop that had taken place on 29th January 2005. The aim of the event was to ensure all main stakeholders had the opportunity to contribute to the draft AAP. The workshop was well attended with over 60 people present from 25 different organisations.

Concern was raised that the Event Record, at Appendix 1 had not addressed all transport issues including the likely increased volume of traffic the development would bring. It was noted that not all the transport information had been available when the draft Event Record was compiled.

The SCDC Principal Planning Officer (Transport) stated that the workshop was one of a number of sources of information, including comments made during the public participation, which would help inform the AAP. He agreed that Transport was a key issue that had to be addressed.

Key Issues from Public Participation

The SCDC Principal Planning Officer (Transport) introduced the key issues resulting from public consultation (listed at Paragraph 11 of the report) on which the Group was asked to give a steer. These were:

- **Vision for Cambridge East**

The preferred approach set out the vision for Cambridge East as a modern, vibrant and distinctive new urban quarter for Cambridge.

Paragraph 13 of the report. It was noted that since representations had been received, Marshall's had announced that they were no longer considering relocation to the Imperial War Museum site at Duxford but were looking at the remaining alternative site options.

Concern was expressed that the report did not address the question of what actions needed to be taken and other consequences to the AAP should Marshall's decide not to move. The Cambridge City Planning Policy Manager agreed that a fall back position was not included in the current structure plan. This was because it had been understood that the contribution of the Airport to the development site became effective during the later phases of the development. The situation would have to be reviewed regularly as part of the future Regional Spatial Strategy. It was noted that should Marshall's decide not to relocate, a review of the whole development strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region would be required.

Peter Studdert pointed out the timetable for the AAP was based on the need to allow development of the first phase North of Newmarket Road to come forward, which could make an early contribution to development on the edge of Cambridge.

There was discussion around whether the first phase North of Newmarket Road could bring forward a neighbourhood, which was satisfactory in terms of services and facilities and good planning in the context of the uncertainty of the future of the airport site. It was stated that the new Quarter would in due course provide Cambridge with new, additional facilities. Although the north of Newmarket Road site was seen as a neighbourhood of this Quarter, it was assessed that the site could be self-sustainable; it had the potential to support a Primary School and some other local services.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** that the vision set out in the Preferred Approach in CE1 be confirmed as the guiding vision for the new urban quarter of Cambridge East.

- **Green Belt, Green Corridor and Separation from the villages.**

As these matters were intertwined, they were drawn together to assist Members' consideration of the issues raised.

The letter sent from S G Sillery of Bidwells, on behalf of the Marshall's Group, to all Members of the Group was discussed. The letter contended that there was no need to retain the green corridor within the Green Belt. The letter also urged that the green corridor should be seen as appropriate location for playing fields.

It was noted that Marshall's had indicated they did not intend to build on the green corridor, but its removal from the Green Belt would result in less confidence in the protection of the area around Teversham and would leave Coldhams Common isolated from the rest of the Green Belt.

The general consensus on the key attributes of the Green Corridor from public participation was set out in Paragraph 27 of the report.

The Group suggested that the inclusion of playing fields might suggest that schools should be positioned at the edge of the green corridor and that it was too early in the process to consider this, and that playing fields lacked biodiversity value. The SCDC Principal Planning Officer (Transport) stated that although in general terms playing fields were an acceptable land-use within the Green Belt, it was recommended the Group support the attributes in Paragraph 27. It was also suggested that the green corridor should be a high quality, landscaped area with a high degree of public access. It was noted that other green spaces would also be created within the new built up area.

Members also discussed the issue of lower building heights and densities on the edges of the built up area where it adjoins the 'bell mouth' around Teversham, and the suggestion that buildings should be restricted in height in these areas e.g. to 2 storeys. Concern was expressed that both density and height requirements could become too prescriptive. The SCDC Principal Planning Officer (Transport) advised the Group that it was not the intention to be too prescriptive at this stage but to give an indication of the directions for density and building mass. It was important that the visual impact of development was less in certain areas such as those fronting on to villages. There was general agreement with this principle.

It was requested that the SCDC Principal Planning Officer (Transport) clarify the distance of the 200m separation to Teversham in Paragraph 28 of the report. It was explained that detailed work at Northstowe on green separation between the town and adjacent villages concluded that a minimum of 200m was required to provide suitable landscape treatment. It was therefore recommended that, for the purposes of this AAP, at least 200m would be maintained between any part of the new development and Teversham's village framework

in order to protect the village's identity and setting.

The Chairman asked for examples of villages with 200m/300m boundaries to be brought to the next meeting to allow members to visit and better understand the size of area.

The SCDC Principal Planning Officer (Transport) reported that sufficient work had been undertaken to define the Green Belt in the AAP, with only minor revisions at a later date and that this approach was strongly supported by Go East.

Following discussion, the Group **AGREED** that the Green Corridor should have a minimum width of 300m.

Members requested clarification regarding the tree belt within Phase 1 North of Newmarket Road (Paragraph 30). The SCDC Principal Planning Officer (Housing) confirmed that the tree belt was positioned inside the site of Phase 1. However, as it was an important feature and should be retained, it would be protected and enhanced by being defined as also lying within a policy of green separation and forming part of the strategic landscaping. It was also noted that High Ditch Road was a historic feature and should be protected. It was suggested that consideration be given to the trees being protected and retained by the serving of Tree Preservation Orders.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** that

a. The procedure set out in CE9, to define the Green Belt boundary at this stage, with the potential to refine it in a later review, be adopted as the approach in the AAP. In determining which areas should be retained in Green Belt, the boundary should take account of the need to protect the setting of the City. The site boundary shown in Option CE3 should form the basis of the Green Belt review, with the exception of:

- excluding the Green Corridor from Teversham to Coldhams Common
- land necessary to maintaining the separation of the villages from the new urban quarter to maintain their character.
- the eastern boundary of the Green Belt north of Newmarket Road be defined to follow the hedge and ditch field boundary running south from Honey Hill to Newmarket Road.

b. That the points set out in the Assessment be used to guide the policy approach to the definition of the boundaries of the Green Corridor and separation from Teversham village, its land use and landscaping in the AAP.

c. That in view of the recommendation to define the Green Belt boundary for the whole of the site in this AAP, it was not necessary to pursue CE12 in relation to land north of Newmarket Road in isolation.

- **Site**

The SCDC Principal Planning Policy Officer (Housing) introduced options for the Site of the development.

Cambridge East site

The Preferred Option (CE3) proposed boundaries for the site along the disused railway line and High Ditch Road, Airport Way (with a line extended north to High Ditch Road), the urban framework at Cherry Hinton and at Barnwell Road.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** that the preferred site in CE3 be included in the draft Area Action Plan (AAP) but amended to exclude existing residential development on Newmarket Road, and to take account of recommendations in relation to the Green Belt boundary to include only the new built-up area of Cambridge (which will be coincidental with the Green Belt Boundary on its outer edge and either side

of the green corridor) and therefore to:

- revise the eastern boundary north of Newmarket Road to follow the ditch/hedge line to west of Airport Way roundabout, consistent with the proposed Green Belt boundary
- exclude the green corridor
- exclude the existing housing south of Newmarket Road

North of Newmarket Road site

The Preferred Approach (CE5) defined the site by High Ditch Road and the disused railway line, the tree belt and the Park and Ride boundary, the edge of the Fisons housing estate and the Newmarket Road.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** taking forward the preferred approach into the draft AAP.

North Works

The preferred option (CE6) retained the car showrooms with redevelopment of the industrial uses behind. However, the limited frontage to the new development may limit the ability to ensure that the area north of Newmarket Road was fully integrated into the wider development.

It was noted that Marshall's had clearly stated that it would not pursue a scheme that required redevelopment of the showrooms. (CE7: Option 2).

It was suggested that the car showrooms be allowed to remain in Phase 1 of the development but a policy aspiration for their redevelopment in the longer term be included. The Group expressed a wish that careful consideration be given to the site development in order to harmonise residential use with the retained showrooms. The SCDC Principal Planning Officer (Housing) would ensure that the option for redevelopment of the showrooms was not compromised.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** taking forward CE 6: Option 1 into the draft AAP, with amplification as set out in paragraphs 50-53 (Inclusive) of the report.

- **Employment Uses Adjacent to the Park and Ride site.**

The Preferred Approach was to redevelop these uses as part of the first phase of development north of Newmarket Road to ensure a high quality frontage was achieved for the development, and the use of previously developed land was maximised.

Members **AGREED** the importance of retaining a petrol filling station in the area throughout the development.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** taking forward CE8 into the draft Area Action Plan, with amplification as set out in Paragraph 57 of the Preferred Options and Direction of Way Forward Report.

- **Addressing Transport Needs**

The Planning Policy Manager Cambridge City introduced Transport Needs.

North of Newmarket Road

The Preferred Approach (CE33) set out requirements for the first phase of development north of Newmarket Road, including a single road access onto Newmarket Road, a separate public transport only access onto Newmarket Road, improved bus priority on

Newmarket Road and provision for cycles and pedestrians, and car parking at PPG13 standards.

It was noted that an emergency vehicle access was required in case the main access became blocked. A possible option would be to make the second access point available for cycles in addition to emergency vehicles.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** that the preferred approach to transport for North of Newmarket Road in CE33 be included in the draft AAP subject to the following amendments:

- two road access points to Newmarket Road
- car parking standards at Redeposit Draft Cambridge Local Plan levels.
- design should not prevent future provision of a public transport only access onto High Ditch Road.

Road Access

The Preferred Approach (CE34) was to provide road access to Cambridge East onto Newmarket Road (at two points), Airport Way, Coldhams Lane and Barnwell Road.

Some Members expressed concerns about the proposal to build a road through the Barnwell Road Nature Reserve. Officers were urged to examine alternative options.

Concern was also expressed that there appeared to be no means of addressing the likely substantial increase in car trip numbers resulting from the development.

The Planning Policy Manager Cambridge City informed the Group that the County Council was currently undertaking a County-wide Strategic Transport Study in order to identify appropriate long-term transport solutions. Final publication was expected in October/November 2005. It would inform the AAP public examination in early 2006, which would examine the soundness of the plan including its road access proposals.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** that the preferred approach to road access in CE34 be included in the draft AAP subject to the following amendments:

- Access to Airport Way to be only at the Gazelle Way roundabout
- Access to Barnwell Road to avoid crossing the Local Nature Reserve if this is possible and otherwise to minimise the impact on the reserve.

Orbital Movements

Three options were included in the Preferred Options report, with no preference stated. CE35 involved improving orbital capacity on existing routes for all traffic. CE36 involved building additional orbital roads for all traffic. CE37 was to develop orbital routes open to public transport only.

It was confirmed that there were no plans to build a Southern Orbital Road.

Concern was expressed that Newmarket Road could not take additional transport without major improvements; Coldhams Lane was already congested. It was noted that improvements to Coldhams Lane would not be needed until the main airport development, by which time the County Strategic Transport Plan would inform what actions needed to be taken.

All agreed that the Transport issue was critical and fundamental to the successful implementation of the development.

The SCDC Principal Planning Officer (Transport) reminded the Group that the AAP was to be reviewed when the airport development was under consideration. Not all the problems, including transport, could be solved immediately but the current development strategy, as set out in the Structure Plan was the most sustainable option. If this failed for any reason and other options for accommodating this level of housing had to be considered, the situation would be much worse. The housing numbers required reflected the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** that the approach to orbital movements set out in CE35 be included in the draft AAP, and that the issue be a subject for further examination upon the review of the AAP.

A14 Access

Four options were included in the Preferred Options Report with no preference stated. CE38 proposed a new interchange onto the A14 in the vicinity of Honey Hill to replace the existing junctions at Ditton Lane and Quy. CE39 proposed that Ditton Lane would be restricted to public transport. CE40 proposed that there would be junction improvements only. CE41 proposed a new half interchange with west facing slip roads in the vicinity of Honey Hill and retaining Quy in its present form (whilst it is not explicit, this option intended that the Ditton Lane junction would be closed and replaced by the new Honey Hill junction).

There was considerable discussion on this issue with the following key points:

- The Highways Agency (HA) had objected to option CE41 because it created a new junction. Despite being advised that this option would involve closing the Ditton Lane Junction, the HA continued to object.
- It was crucial that the AAP long-term requirements were built into the Highways Agency (HA) options for the A14 as public consultation was due to start soon.
- It was recognised that a number of issues surrounding access to the A14 would impact on a greater area.
- It was suggested that the Local Authorities should petition the HA to extend their current plan of proposed improvements to the Quy Interchange. If this was agreed, it should become part of the Cambridge East development rather than the National Road Scheme.
- A new junction to the A14 to serve the total development would be required.
- The Ditton Lane interchange could be closed and should be replaced with a more appropriately sited junction.

The Group discussed how the requirements should be taken forward. It was suggested that Cambridge Horizons co-ordinate a meeting with the HA. It was pointed out that the HA had failed to attend Cambridge Horizons Board meetings. Therefore it was imperative that discussions with the HA were entered into as soon as possible. **ACTION: Peter Studdert, Cambridge Horizons.**

The SCDC Principal Planning Officer (Transport) stated that the Group should focus on what was required to allow the Phase 1 development North of Newmarket Road.

The Chairman requested maps of the area for the next meeting. **ACTION: David Roberts**

It was **AGREED** that the recommendation should be amended to clarify that the new junction at Honey Hill would replace the Ditton Lane/Quy junction.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** that the preferred approach to A14 access for inclusion in the draft AAP be as follows:

- No change to current junctions at Ditton Lane and Quy in relation to development north of Newmarket Road
- That development of the Airport site south of Newmarket Road be dependent upon provision of improved and satisfactory access arrangements to the A14 through junction improvements at Ditton Lane and Quy, or the provision of a new junction onto the A14, which would involve the closure of Ditton Lane junction, once the new junction was in place.
- That the design of the development north of Newmarket Road should not preclude the future provision of a new junction onto the A14 between the existing Quy and Ditton Lane junctions, as a replacement for the Ditton Lane junction.

External Public Transport

The Preferred Approach (CE42) was bus based, further research to examine scope for guided bus access. Routes to be based on Newmarket Road (City Centre and West Cambridge), a northern link (Science Park, Cambridge Northern Fringe, Guided Buss Connection), a southern link (Addenbrooke's Hospital), an additional guided bus link to the City Centre and examination needed for other orbital public transport links.

Concern was expressed at the suggestion that routes might cross open spaces such as Coldhams Common and Ditton Meadows as these were important environmental areas.

Further concerns were expressed about Paragraph 89 of the report, which stated that no additional transport links were required to enable Phase 1 to proceed (CE33). It was noted that transport systems were already overstretched.

It was noted that an additional guided bus route had been suggested in order to recognise that it could serve other areas those already listed.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** that the preferred approach to external public transport in CE42 be included in the draft AAP subject to the inclusion of a statement concerning the need to minimise and mitigate the environmental impacts of the public transport routes.

Park and Ride

The Preferred Approach (CE43) was to identify a new Park and Ride site to replace the existing one north of Newmarket Road. This would be the south of Newmarket Road and east of Airport Way.

It was noted that the adjacent country park and the proposed Park and Ride site were both in the ownership of the Marshall Group and were therefore deliverable. This was an important consideration.

Other points raised were:

- The underlying principle for Park and Ride provision, which was to serve the rural areas and not the development, should be made clear.
- The Group should urge that alternatives to routes across open spaces should be considered.
- The new development would require a high quality public transport system into the city

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** that the preferred approach to Park and Ride in CE43 be included in the draft Area AAP.

Car Parking

The Preferred Option in CE48 was for car parking standards in Cambridge East to be as in the City Council's Local Plan. An alternative Option CE49 proposed that in the District Centre, the maximum car parking standards would be those used in the City Local Plan for the CPZ.

It was suggested that provision of an acceptable level of car parking spaces was necessary to ensure adequate off road parking and prevent problems arising from on – street parking.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** that the preferred option to car parking standards in the AAP should be set out in CE48 and that no more restrictive standard be applied to developments in the District Centre as proposed by CE49.

- **District Centre Location and Form**

The Preferred Approach (CE13) was to locate the District Centre broadly at the geographical centre of the urban quarter at the heart of the development and on the dedicated public transport route to maximise accessibility to residents. The second Preferred Approach (CE14) was for a range of uses and facilities appropriate to the needs of the new quarter's residents and be capable of creating a vibrant centre in the heart of the new community, which complements rather than competes with the City Centre.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** that the preferred approaches CE13 and CE14 be taken forward into the draft AAP.

- **Housing**

Density

Option 1 – CE17 would have a target average density of at least 50 dwellings per hectare (dph) with higher densities in and around the District Centre, Local Centres and public transport stops. The actual figure would be determined following further study. Option 2 – CE18 would have a target average density of up to 75 dph, again with higher densities in and around the district centre, local centres and public transport stops. The actual figure would be determined following further study.

It was noted that Fen Ditton and Teversham had expressed concern at potential densities in areas of the development close to the villages. Officers assessed that combining the options and setting an average density across the development could overcome this. This would allow lower densities at sensitive outer edges of the development to protect village character and amenity.

The Group (with three members not voting) **RECOMMENDED** that a combination of Options CE 17 and CE18 be taken forward in the AAP with a target for 'average density in the order of 75 dph', but requiring 'at least 50 dph' across the development as a whole. The policy should also require higher densities in the most accessible locations and provide for lower densities on sensitive outer edges of the development, particularly close to villages, with an emphasis on limiting building heights in these locations.

Affordable Housing

The Preferred Approach for affordable housing was to apply the district wide affordable housing targets to Cambridge East. Any issue over viability would be addressed as part of the consideration of a planning application alongside the other calls on the development. The types of affordable housing would be determined at the time of a planning application but would include social rented housing as well as a significant proportion of intermediate tenure.

It was noted that the Government was to issue a Housing Needs Plan that would give guidance for a suitable sustainable housing mix. The plan would not be published in time to inform this AAP but it would be available when the Plan was reviewed.

A recommendation was missing from the report but the Group agreed to the assessment, which proposed that the AAP have its own Affordable Housing policy with a 50% target. It would also include indicative tenure mix for the 50% affordable housing of 30% social rented housing and 20% intermediate housing.

- **The Country Park**

CE71 was the Preferred Option for a country park to be provided on land north of Teversham linking to the Green Corridor.

The Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Preferred Option set out in CE71 for a country park north of Teversham be included in the draft AAP.

- **Waste**

The AAP could not make policies for waste. Waste would be a matter for the County Council as Waste Planning Authority, which has policies relating to the major developments in its adopted Waste Local Plan 2003. The Cambridge East AAP can refer to the policies of the Waste Local Plan for information.

The Group **RECOMMENDED** that officers of the City, South Cambs and County Councils discuss how to take forward the issue of waste at Cambridge East and bring back their findings to the member Reference Group meeting on 5 April 2005.

- **Phasing**

The Group **AGREED** that the phasing of this new, large urban quarter contained significant issues that cannot be resolved for this first version of the AAP. It was suggested that the Plan highlight the potential for a second phase of development north of Cherry Hinton, identify the issues of health impact, noise and air quality as key issues to be resolved ahead of any decision on timing of this area, and make clear that this will be addressed in the review of the AAP.

5. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

AGREED 5th April 2005 at 2.00 p.m., hosted by South Cambridgeshire District Council at Cambourne.

The Meeting ended at 6.10 p.m.
