

Report to:	Scrutiny and Overview Committee Cabinet	14 October 2021 19 October 2021
Lead Cabinet Member:	Cllr John Williams – Lead Cabinet Member for Finance	
Lead Officer:	Stephen Kelly, Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development	

In Principle Commitment to Delivery of Area Action Plan for North East Cambridge

Executive Summary

1. A joint Area Action Plan (AAP) is being prepared by Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils for North East Cambridge that will promote future structural change in the layout and land use of parts of the area. This includes new strategic walking and cycling connections; residential use of Nuffield Industrial Estate; the consolidation of industrial uses around the aggregate railhead; and the relocation of incompatible uses.
2. In addition to landowners, developers and other delivery partners, the councils may have a role in facilitating delivery of a new spatial framework for the area. Depending on the circumstances and delivery options available, this may include the acquisition or disposal of land, and may require use of compulsory purchase order powers.
3. To take the AAP to its next formal stage, the councils must be able to demonstrate that the AAP is 'deliverable', including ensuring any required land assembly or relocations can be delivered. An 'in principle' commitment to delivery of the AAP is therefore sought from both councils to satisfy this requirement ahead of the respective authority's consideration of the Regulation 19 draft of the Plan programmed for December 2021 – January 2022.
4. This is a not key decision as this report seeks to establish an 'in principle' commitment to deliver the AAP; a decision to acquire or dispose of land, or to use compulsory purchase order (CPO) powers, would be subject to a separate report to outline the specific circumstances, the case for Council intervention, and resource implications. With respect to the use of CPO, regard would also need to be had to Council's adopted [Compulsory Purchase Policy](#) (September 2020), which sets out the approach, circumstances and conditions under which the Council will consider the use of compulsory purchase powers.

Key Decision

5. No

Recommendations

6. To note that the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan is contingent upon the separate Development Control Order being undertaken by Anglian Water for the relocation of the Waste Water Treatment Plant being approved;
7. Subject to (6), agree that the Council is committed to the delivery of the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan, including land disposal or assembly, and subject to formal adoption of the Area Action Plan in due course, to use its Compulsory Purchase Orders powers if required.

Reasons for Recommendations

8. To demonstrate the Council's commitment to the delivery of the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan.

Details

9. A draft Area Action Plan for the North East Cambridge Area is being prepared on the basis that the separate Development Consent Order process for the relocation of Anglian Water's Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) will be granted. The relocation of the WWTP is being led by Anglian Water and will be paid for by Government through its Housing Infrastructure Fund.
10. Through the preparation of a joint Area Action Plan for the North East Cambridge, the councils are promoting significant change to the area. The future vision of place consulted on seeks "*the creation of an inclusive, walkable, low-carbon new city district with a lively mix of homes, workplaces, services and social spaces, fully integrated with surrounding neighbourhoods.*"
11. While the proposed layout of the new city district has had regard to existing land use, there are areas where this is at odds with the future plans for the area. In such circumstances, the plan seeks to relocate the incompatible use to a more suitable location either within or outside of the AAP area.
12. In the majority, it will be for the future developer of a site to facilitate the relocation of the existing land use through normal market processes. However, this may not be applicable in all instances. For example, where there is no developer interest or the existing landowner/occupier is unwilling to bring the site forward for redevelopment.
13. Without positive intervention from the Council, in the form of a willingness to facilitate land assembly or relocation, the barriers to delivery could have potentially limiting consequences for the spatial plan and, therein, the scale,

layout and viability of proposed development. Across North East Cambridge as a whole, such consequences could depress the efficient use of land, inhibit movement and connectivity, and undermine delivery of the Plan's vision and objectives.

14. This item, which includes the same recommendations, is being reported to the Cambridge City Council's Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on the 11th October 2021. The Regulation 19 draft of the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan is to be reported to the Joint Local Planning Advisory Group meeting of 30th November 2021 before going through the respective committees of both councils.

Options

15. The option of not providing an 'in principle' commitment to delivery of the AAP is not considered to be appropriate. In jointly preparing the AAP, the Council is setting out how it sees North East Cambridge coming forward in the future. It has consulted on these proposals with residents, businesses and stakeholders, and must have confidence that its planning strategy for the future of this area is deliverable.
16. At this time, it is not possible to be certain if barriers to delivery will arise and what these may be. However, given the role of the Local Authority is to secure the proper planning of its area, the Council must be willing to intervene, where necessary and justified to secure this.

Implications

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

Financial

18. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. A decision to acquire or dispose of land, or to use compulsory purchase order powers, would be subject to a separate report to Cabinet that would provide full details of the financial consequences of the intervention required.

Legal

19. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 grants the Council a General Power of Competence where a Local Authority has the power to do anything that individuals generally do, including acquiring or disposing of land for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area.

Risks/Opportunities

20. There are no risks or opportunities from the Council agreeing 'in principle' that it is committed to the delivery of the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan.

Equality and Diversity

21. The 'in principle' commitment to delivery of the AAP has no direct relevance to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, promote good relations and eliminate unlawful discrimination.

Climate Change

22. There are no climate change or environmental implications directly arising from the report although delivery of the NECAAP will bring forward highly sustainable development on an urban brownfield site with excellent accessibility by sustainable transport means with policies to ensure high environmental standards in construction.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

Growing local businesses and economies

23. The Area Action Plan promotes intensification of existing employment and business use, new retail and leisure uses, retention of industrial floorspace, as well as housing, creating new jobs and opportunities near to where people live and supporting the local economy.

Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in

24. The Area Action Plan proposes a vibrant new city district in a highly sustainable location, where residents and workers will have good access to facilities and transport links. The Area Action Plan also proposes significant new housing of high quality and sustainability, with 40% of all homes to be affordable.

Being green to our core

25. The Area Action Plan prioritises sustainable travel and sets ambitious targets for sustainability. It also seeks a minimum of 10% net biodiversity gain through redevelopment of the area.

A modern and caring Council

26. The in principle commitment to delivery of the AAP provides transparency about the Council's willingness to intervene, where required, to achieve the outcomes sought through the AAP.

Background Papers

None

Appendices

None

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