

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee held on
Thursday, 16 December 2021 at 5.20 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Grenville Chamberlain – Chair
Councillor Judith Rippeth – Vice-Chair

Councillors: Anna Bradnam Dr. Claire Daunton
Dr. Richard Williams

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Peter Campbell (Head of Housing), Terry De Sousa (Principal Policy Planner), Julie Fletcher (Head of Housing Strategy), Caroline Hunt (Strategy and Economy Manager), Stephen Kelly (Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development), Peter Maddock (Head of Finance), Matthew Paterson (Senior Policy Planner), Ian Senior (Scrutiny and Governance Adviser) and Liz Watts (Chief Executive)

Committee members Cllr Henry Batchelor (substitute), Cllr Paul Bearpark (substitute), Cllr Martin Cahn, Cllr Nigel Cathcart, Cllr Graham Cone, Cllr Peter Fane, Cllr Aidan Van de Weyer attended remotely.

Cabinet Members Cllr John Batchelor, Cllr Neil Gough, Cllr Bill Handley and Cllr John Williams were in attendance remotely, by invitation.

1. Chair's announcements

The Chair made several brief housekeeping announcements.

He informed Members about a letter which he and the Chair of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee had sent to Mr. Daniel Fulton of the Fews Lane Consortium. At the last Audit and Corporate Governance Committee meeting Mr. Fulton had asked a supplementary question relating to the robustness of this Council's risk management of 3C ICT. Mr. Fulton was under the impression that the Head of 3C ICT, serving South Cambridgeshire District Council, Huntingdonshire District Council and Cambridge City Council, also undertook duties at two other local authorities. The letter to Mr. Fulton was to assure him that this was not the case and that the Interim Head of 3C ICT, appointed 12 months ago, worked for no other organisation.

2. Apologies for absence

The following Scrutiny and Overview Committee members sent apologies: Councillors Sarah Cheung Johnson, Councillor Sally Ann Hart, Councillor Geoff Harvey and Councillor Steve Hunt.

Councillor Bridget Smith (Leader of the Council) also sent apologies.

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Henry Batchelor declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 7 (HRA Asset Management Strategy) as a board member of both South Cambs Investment

Partnerships.

Councillor Anna Bradnam declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 6 (North East Cambridge Area Action Plan) as a Milton Parish Councillor, a local District Councillor for Milton & Waterbeach, and the Cambridgeshire County Councillor for the Electoral Division of Waterbeach, which includes the Parish of Milton.

Councillor Paul Bearpark declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 6 (North East Cambridge Area Action Plan) as a local Member for Milton & Waterbeach.

Councillor Dr. Martin Cahn declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 6 (North East Cambridge Area Action Plan) as a local Member for Histon, Impington & Orchard Park..

Councillor Grenville Chamberlain declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 6 (North East Cambridge Area Action Plan) as the sole director of Cecil Instruments, which owns commercial property adjacent to Milton Country Park and very close to the site subject of the Area Action Plan.

Councillor Peter Fane declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 7 (Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Asset Management Strategy 2021 - 2026: Building Strong Foundations) as a Board member of both Ermine Street Housing and Shire Homes.

Councillor Judith Rippeth declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 6 (North East Cambridge Area Action Plan) as a local Member for Milton & Waterbeach.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee authorised the Chair to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2021.

5. Public Questions

The Chair said that, at the start of each meeting, the practice was to allow up to 15 minutes for questions from the public. However, as some of the questions at the current meeting were extremely long and likely to take up most of that time, he would not be allowing supplementary questions on this occasion.

Question from Margaret Starkie (about Item 6)

The Area Action Plan is predicated on the proposed relocation of Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant (CWWTP), for which the Development Consent Order (DCO) process is still in the pre-application stage. Given that the CWWTP DCO application is unlikely to be submitted until late 2022 or early 2023, the proposed Regulation 19 submission of the Area Action Plan is premature.

Why is resource being used so inappropriately and prematurely when the consultation on CWWTPR is not scheduled until February 2022 and the councils are deferring any formal public consultation on NECAAP until after the DCO and the officers have recommended that any subsequent alteration to the area action plan is delegated to individual members and officers which appears to be at odds with the democratic process?

Response

The Chair said that the Greater Cambridge Local Development Scheme, adopted in July 2020, set out the Councils' process for preparing the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan. In respect of the timing of preparing the Proposed Submission AAP, and the reason for that, it said:

“9. Significant government Housing Infrastructure Funding had been secured to facilitate the relocation of the Milton Waste Water Treatment Plant (WTP) which would enable the development of a major brownfield site and comprehensive planning of the North East Cambridge area. Anglian Water proposed that a Development Consent Order (DCO) process be undertaken to enable the relocation.

10. The formal agreement by the Councils of the Proposed Submission AAP will be an important factor in the DCO Examination process to demonstrate commitment to development of the area. Therefore, work on the AAP is intended to progress to complete the Regulation 18 stage, consider the responses received and prepare the Proposed Submission AAP. The Councils would make a decision ahead of the DCO Examination to agree the AAP for Regulation 19 publication, but actually carrying out the consultation would be subject to the successful completion of the DCO process, because of the need at Examination to be able to demonstrate that the development proposed on the site could be delivered.

11. It is therefore anticipated that the AAP process would then pause until the outcome of the DCO is known. If successful, the Councils would then proceed with the publication of the Proposed Submission AAP for the making of representations (Regulation 19), following which the AAP would progress to Submission and Examination.”

The Councils were complying with and implementing the process and timing set out in the adopted Local Development Scheme, in bringing the Proposed Submission AAP to Members now for agreement ahead of the formal stages of the DCO process progressing in 2022.

Question from Catherine Martin (about Item 6)

The North East Cambridge site has been described by officers as the most sustainable site for building in the area. [The Strategy and Economy Manager] mentioned this in her opening at the November Joint Local Plan Advisory Group meeting. Could you please consider the impact of the release of embedded carbon in the destruction of the sewage plant and the massive carbon impact of rebuilding the sewage plant on precious green belt a couple of fields away?

Response

The Chair said that the description given at the Joint Local Plan Advisory Group meeting of the North East Cambridge site had been as the most sustainable *location* in Greater Cambridge for development. This referred to the locational benefits in terms of minimising carbon emissions from transport and the opportunity to maximise travel by non-car modes, as identified in our evidence.

That comment had not been intended to relate to a wider more detailed assessment of the North East Cambridge site that included embodied carbon. It was not possible or appropriate at the plan-making stage to undertake a full carbon impact assessment, including arising from demolition and proposed development, because that level of detail was not normally available.

The Sustainability Appraisal supporting the Proposed Submission AAP considered the cumulative effects of the Plan in combination with other plans and projects, including the relocation of the waste water treatment plant, to the extent appropriate for the stage of the project at the time of the assessment. In terms of embedded carbon associated with the new proposal, this was addressed at paragraph 5.36 of the Sustainability Appraisal. The SA would be kept under review as the AAP and the DCO processes moved forward, to take into account any new information.

The Scoping Opinion relating to the Development Consent Order process for the new Waste Water Treatment Plant had now been published by the Planning Inspectorate. With specific reference to the decommissioning and demolition of the existing plant, it required assessment of the cumulative impacts of the proposal for the new works together with the effects of waste generated from demolition activities at the existing sewage works. This would include an assessment of cumulative Carbon impacts.

In any event, Policy 2 of the Proposed Submission Area Action Plan before Members required planning applications to calculate carbon emissions through a Whole Life Carbon Assessment, to demonstrate actions to reduce life-cycle carbon emissions and also to reduce construction waste.

The Environmental Assessment supporting any planning application for development on the North East Cambridge site would be expected to include consideration of the demolition of existing structures on the site and the potential for waste reduction and reuse on site. This would inform the Whole Life Carbon Assessment required by the AAP.

The fact that there were different legal processes involved for the AAP and the DCO did not mean that there was any reduction in the level of scrutiny of the projects. All matters would be considered in the correct forum and in the correct way and both would be subject to scrutiny from independent planning inspectors before they could be approved.

Question from James Littlewood (about Item 6)

There are many things to commend in the environmental aspirations for this development but disappointingly the provision on natural greenspace is not one of them.

The amount of informal green space meets the minimum amount required by the council's policies but two thirds of this is provided on a business park, described on p26 of the Open Spaces Report as "these green spaces aren't perceived as being accessible to the wider public". Would you want to visit a business park for your leisure and recreation? It should be noted that the green space on the business park already exists, so it is not new space.

Only a third of the green space is provided in conjunction with the housing. Most of this is provided as linear green space or pocket parks, in other words small areas of green space that are loomed over by high-rise buildings. There is one larger park but the size of this is not provided in any of the documents.

Extrapolating from the plans, we estimate this to be around 2-3 ha in size. Fig 20 in your report includes an infographic which aims to compare the amount of open space in the AAP with other Cambridge parks, the comparison is misleading because the parks which are used for comparison are just that, parks. A better comparison would be the main park proposed for the new development. At 2-3ha this is small in comparison to the other parks, given that it is to cater for 16,000 people.

At a bare minimum the proposals for the AAP might possibly just provide for the day-day open space needs of the new residents: play space for children, somewhere to walk the dog or kick a ball about. But what it won't do is provide the kind of green spaces that people in high density developments need access to – which is large natural greenspace:

somewhere they can go for a long walk or run, experience nature, and escape the pressures of urban life.

There is of course somewhere for them to do that, it is Milton Country Park and a subway is proposed under the A14 so that residents can get to it. And that is exactly where the 16,000 people will go. That would be great if it were not for the fact that the Country Park is already at capacity and cannot cope with 16,000 more visitors.

In the hundreds of pages text there is almost no mention of Milton Country Park at all, let alone of it meeting the needs of the development. There has been no assessment of whether the country park has the capacity to cope and what mitigation might be required to enable it to do so. We could see no requirement for S106 contributions to support the park to cope only this rather vague paragraph on page 54 of the Open Spaces & Recreation Topic Paper:

There is a need to build in community resilience and capacity into the existing open space provision for NEC. Alongside any on-site provision, opportunities to use S106 contributions outside the city on largescale green infrastructure should be considered. This will avoid pressure building up on existing parks, open spaces and cycleways, which might otherwise lose their biodiversity and other qualities. For example, undertaking negotiations for specific S106 contributions, for growth sites straddling the Cambridge/South Cambridgeshire boundary. These could explore opportunities for improving existing or creating new parks beyond the city which are easily accessible by foot and cycle, in order to avoid over-investment in, and over-use of popular or environmentally sensitive sites.

Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards would require the AAP development to have a large 100 hectare site of accessible natural greenspace within 5km. Especially as this development is to be largely car free. But there isn't one. To make matters worse, the north of Cambridge will also see 20,000 people at Northstowe and 22,000 at Waterbeach. Where will these 58,000 people go to meet their green space needs?

This is an area which has been highlighted in the evidence base for the next Local Plan as already suffering from a deficit of green infrastructure and recreational pressure. This report, informing the Local Plan, highlights North East Cambridge to Waterbeach as a priority area for green infrastructure with its enhancement marked as of 'critical importance'.

The only option for providing that critical green space is through the North East AAP and therefore it is essential that Section 106 contributions are secured towards this.

Please will the Scrutiny Committee recommend that the AAP is not adopted until there is a commitment within the AAP for development contributions towards providing the larger scale green space that will be desperately needed by the future 58,000 residents of North East Cambridge, Waterbeach and Northstowe.

Response

The Chair said it was important to clarify that the Councils were not seeking to adopt the Area Action Plan at this stage, the recommendation to both Councils' scrutiny committees was to agree the AAP and supporting documents for future public consultation following the outcome of the DCO process to relocate the WWTP.

The AAP required development to bring forward 27.6 hectares of new informal and children's play space across the area which is the equivalent of around 34.5 football pitches or around three times the size of Parker's Piece. In combination with the existing

open spaces at NEC, the development would meet the informal and children's play space requirements in the adopted Local Plans on-site, meaning all residents would have access to open space within a 5-minute walk of their homes for day-to-day informal recreation. The existing open spaces within the employment parks would form an important part of NEC for informal exercise and by providing a range of different types of spaces for people to enjoy.

The proposed open spaces were substantial in size. The new large green space was 4.1 hectares, which was around the same size as Christ's Pieces or five football pitches. Similarly, the main linear park was between 70 metres and 100 metres wide, which was the length of a football pitch, and over 1.3 kilometres long. As required by the AAP, a landscape-led approach to designing these spaces would ensure that there would be opportunities for people to go for walks, run and experience nature on their doorstep.

As set out in the First Proposals Local Plan, the Councils were also seeking to bring forward new strategic-scale green spaces as well as development. The nearest area identified to NEC lay immediately north of the A14 between the top of Cambridge, Waterbeach New Town and Northstowe. This could provide a substantial amount of open space to serve not only these developments but also existing communities. These wider proposals fell outside of the AAP area and, due to their more strategic role, would be considered further as the Councils prepared the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. It should also be noted that the majority of new homes at NEC would not come forward until after the Plan period, 20 years from now, so there was opportunity through the Local Plan process to address the strategic open space needs for not only NEC but also Greater Cambridge and therefore not relying on Milton Country Park to meet the recreation, health and well-being of people living in this area.

Question from Daniel Fulton

Mr. Fulton withdrew this question at the meeting.

In response to Councillor Dr. Richard Williams, the Chair confirmed that the three responses he had given to the three public questions had been provided by both officers and Members.

6. North East Cambridge Area Action Plan: Proposed Submission (Regulation 19)

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee considered a report seeking Cabinet support for the Proposed Submission North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (NECAAP) that would establish the policies and proposals advanced by South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council for managing development, regeneration, and investment in North East Cambridge over the next twenty years and beyond. Officers gave a short PowerPoint presentation of the proposals.

Councillor Dr. Claire Daunton was concerned by the lack of any indication of the timeframe for the construction and occupation of the first phase, which incorporated around 4,000 homes. Councillor Daunton also wondered where the alternative site or sites might be if the Development Consent Order failed, and North East Cambridge could not be developed.

Further discussion focussed on six key aspects:

A. Open space on the development and sports provision

While Members broadly welcomed the proposed increased provision of children's play space and informal open space, Councillor Dr. Richard Williams expressed concern about the inclusion as part of that provision of open space within employment areas.

Committee members agreed that the North East Cambridge development could have a negative impact of neighbouring communities and should be required to provide more open space on-site. Councillor Anna Bradnam (a local Member for Milton and Waterbeach) said that recreation space must be provided on site because Milton was already lacking in the level of recreational facilities needed to meet the demand of its own residents.

Regarding the future use of the existing Milton Waste site, it was suggested that the NECAAP should safeguard a route to this area as it could be used as open space in the future.

B. Milton Country Park

The new community would be located on the opposite side of the A14 to Milton Country Park which currently operated at capacity on several days each year. Councillor Judith Rippeth (a local Member for Milton and Waterbeach) said that the park would be overwhelmed unless provision could be agreed via a Legal Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for funding a significant expansion of the park, or of additional informal recreation space at North East Cambridge. Such Section 106 Agreement should also seek to mitigate against any harm to local biodiversity.

It was suggested that a tunnel connecting the development with Milton Country Park should be constructed under the A14. Parkrun had already discontinued use of Milton Country Park because of capacity issues.

C. Connectivity and transport

Committee members regretted that no provision had been made for connecting the development site with the residents and businesses beyond the level crossing on Fen Road by securing a permanent means of crossing the increasingly busy railway tracks. While noting that discussions with Network Rail were ongoing, Members felt that greater urgency was needed. There was a clear need for an additional vehicle access for more than 500 residents and more than 200 staff of businesses in that location.

There was some concern about the amount of parking provision proposed at Cambridge North Railway Station (and how this related to the Trip Budget) and the potential impacts of car parking displacement on adjacent communities, including Milton. Regarding the proposed trip budget, Members challenged assumptions about the use of public transport. Councillor Paul Bearpark (a local Member for Milton and Waterbeach) voiced concerns about congestion along Milton Road and in surrounding areas. He also suggested 'car barns' should be called 'multi-storey car parks'.

D. Health and other facilities

Some members specifically welcomed the provision of health facilities on-site.

E. Water

Regarding the implementation and on-going management of water systems as well as water usage requirements, one member queried whether this had been achieved elsewhere at a scale similar to NEC and whose responsibility was it to maintain water systems. Another member queried about the amount of open space on-site and how much water would be needed to maintain these spaces.

Regarding the Development Consent Order (DCO) for the relocation of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and the provision of water to serve the development, one member questioned whether the Area Action Plan was premature as it is undeliverable.

Regarding the relocation of the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), one member noted that the AAP was not transparent enough on this issue given the two projects were interrelated.

The report targeted water usage of 80 litres per person per day but even at that level the provision of a reliable, ongoing supply of water could not presently be guaranteed and clarity on how this requirement would be met was needed.

F. Quantum, Building heights and densities

Members generally supported the reduction whilst one member noted that higher heights and densities could have been retained from the draft AAP provided it was well designed.

Regarding the overall quantum of development, one member noted that housing numbers should be reduced as it would have no impact on the emerging strategy for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

Other comments

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee recommends that Cabinet

- a. Recognises that Milton Country Park is already operating at capacity and that the future strategic open space beyond the Area Action Plan area should be delivered in part through financial contributions from development at North East Cambridge.
- b. Recognises the nature of North East Cambridge as a high-density, urban development that should eventually become a part of Cambridge city (unrelated to Milton parish), with a boundary review being considered at the appropriate time.

- c. Commits to the provision of an appropriate amount of recreation space onsite with easy access for future residents.
- d. Incorporates into the development faith, cultural and community facilities, and workspace for small and start-up businesses (based on demand in the light of changed working practices because of the Covid-19 pandemic).
- e. Seeks reassurance that there is adequate provision for future cemetery requirements.
- f. Acknowledges the issues around the Fen Road Level Crossing and asks officers to continue to engage further with Network Rail on this matter through the preparation of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

7. **Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Asset Management Strategy 2021 - 2026: Building Strong Foundations**

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee considered a report about the Asset Management Strategy 2021-2026. The Strategy set out the strategic medium and long-term approach to maintaining, improving, and developing the Council's housing assets within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), and the key priorities for the physical care and improvement of the Council homes and their surrounding environment.

Councillor Peter Fane said that the Council should take a very flexible approach to addressing housing needs not met by the market. The Council must recognise that, even when it did secure 40% affordable housing on new developments, that percentage may subsequently be reduced by viability. In any event those houses were not truly affordable because of market house prices in South Cambridgeshire.

The Council must recognise the need to extend this policy by looking at rural exception sites given there will be few new homes, whether council or market houses, built in smaller communities and thus making it very difficult to maintain the viability and sustainability of those communities in social, economic, and environmental terms.

Members agreed that both Ermine Street Housing and Shire Homes played an invaluable role in enabling the Council to acquire houses and rent them out to those who needed them without necessarily having to own those homes.

Councillor Dr. Claire Daunton highlighted the need for the Strategy to be supported by appropriate staff in terms of both numbers and skills.

Councillor Paul Bearpark called for priority to be given to those residents most at risk of encountering fuel poverty when programming work to insulate Council properties.

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee recommended that Cabinet

- a. recognises that the Strategy should seek to maintain not just the fabric of the Council's housing stock but also the estate surrounding that stock.
- b. considers buying back the equity share in part-owned homes where that

provides good value for money to meet the needs of residents which could offer very much better value for money than seeking to build new houses.

- c. Subject to viability, and where the Council proposes to sell land, considers the option of itself building on that land to increase its own housing stock.

8. Audit of Accounts - Update

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee received a report updating Members about progress with the completion of South Cambridgeshire District Council's Final Accounts for 2018-19.

The Head of Finance reported that a meeting had taken place on 3 December 2021 between External Auditors Ernst Young (EY) and officers from South Cambridgeshire District Council. All information required because of that meeting had been passed to EY by 8 December 2021 so that EY then had all the information required to complete the audit.

At Councillor Richard Williams' request, the Head of Finance undertook to notify Scrutiny and Overview Committee members about additional fees incurred by the Council.

9. Work Programme

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee received and noted its work programme for 2021-2022.

10. To Note the Date of the next meeting

Members noted that the next Scrutiny and Overview Committee meeting would be on Tuesday 18 January 2022 at 5.20pm.

Appendix 1

Question from, and written answer to, Jane Williams
Question (Item 6 – North East Cambridge Area Action Plan)

Does the Scrutiny and Overview Committee agree that the NECAAP for the development is premature bearing in mind that it is acknowledged by SCDC and City that Cambridge North East cannot be progressed until a decision has been made by the Planning Inspectorate regarding the proposed relocation of Milton Sewage Works to the Cambridge Green Belt at Honey Hill in close proximity the the villages of Horningsea and Fen Ditton.

It is noted that the NECAAP Reg 19 part 2 pages 2 and 6 shows that the parcel of land where the Anglian Water Milton sewage works are sited that Cambridge City Council are also a landowner within this parcel. How will impartiality regarding the granting of planning permission be ensured should the Planning Inspectorate grant

a DCO for the relocation of the sewage works?

Supplementary question:

NECAAP vision Reg 19 page 33 the map shows housing and businesses abutting the A14. Is it ethical to expect residents and workers to live in close proximity to a highly polluted road, subjecting people to air pollution from exhaust fumes, noise, vibration, dust, light and contamination from runoff and fine particles PM2.5 from vehicle tyres and brakes. PM2.5's and can pose a great risk to human health by absorption through the skin or become deeply embedded in the lungs. It is noted that housing is proposed on the site of the sewage works and dependent on developers remediating contamination from the site. How will the site if brought forward for development be managed, monitored and enforced to ensure there is no risk to human health? Would any committee members live on this site?

Response

The Greater Cambridge Local Development Scheme, adopted in July 2020, sets out the Councils' process for preparing the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan. In respect of the timing of preparing the Proposed Submission AAP, and the reason for that, it says:

"9. Significant government Housing Infrastructure Funding has been secured to facilitate the relocation of the Milton Waste Water Treatment Plant (WTP) which will enable the development of a major brownfield site and comprehensive planning of the North East Cambridge area. Anglian Water proposes that a Development Consent Order (DCO) process will now be undertaken to enable the relocation.

10. The formal agreement by the Councils of the Proposed Submission AAP will be an important factor in the DCO Examination process to demonstrate commitment to development of the area. Therefore, work on the AAP is intended to progress to complete the Regulation 18 stage, consider the responses received and prepare the Proposed Submission AAP. The Councils would make a decision ahead of the DCO Examination to agree the AAP for Regulation 19 publication, but actually carrying out the consultation would be subject to the successful completion of the DCO process, because of the need at Examination to be able to demonstrate that the development proposed on the site could be delivered.

11. It is therefore anticipated that the AAP process would then pause until the outcome of the DCO is known. If successful, the Councils would then proceed with the publication of the Proposed Submission AAP for the making of representations (Regulation 19), following which the AAP would progress to Submission and Examination."

The Councils are complying with and implementing the process and timing set out in the adopted Local Development Scheme, in bringing the Proposed Submission AAP to Members now for agreement ahead of the formal stages of the DCO process progressing in 2022.

Question 2

It is noted that the NECAAP Reg 19 part 2 pages 2 and 6 shows that the parcel of land where the Anglian Water Milton sewage works are sited that Cambridge City Council are also a landowner within this parcel. How will impartiality regarding the

granting of planning permission be ensured should the Planning Inspectorate grant a DCO for the relocation of the sewage works?

Response

As defined in the Town and Country Planning Act the councils are the Local Planning Authorities for their area and are required to consider all district level planning applications submitted to them – regardless of whom is the applicant. In making a decision on a development proposal which either falls within council land ownership or being progressed through a development company on behalf of the councils, the application will be robustly considered at the relevant planning committee against the adopted policies. The Council's constitution, and associated standing orders seek to manage all applications where the Council may be the applicant in an open and transparent way – to avoid apparent conflicts of interest. This usually requires that the application is submitted to the Committee for a decision. The redevelopment of land owned by the council is not an unusual process to either planning authority in Cambridge or across the Country.

Question 3 (Supplementary question)

NECAAP vision Reg 19 page 33 the map shows housing and businesses abutting the A14. Is it ethical to expect residents and workers to live in close proximity to a highly polluted road, subjecting people to air pollution from exhaust fumes, noise, vibration, dust, light and contamination from runoff and fine particles PM2.5 from vehicle tyres and brakes. PM2.5's and can pose a great risk to human health by absorption through the skin or become deeply embedded in the lungs. It is noted that housing is proposed on the site of the sewage works and dependent on developers remediating contamination from the site. How will the site if brought forward for development be managed, monitored and enforced to ensure there is no risk to human health? Would any committee members live on this site?

Response

The councils are aware of the environmental constraints both within and adjacent to the Area Action Plan area and as such, have been engaging with the Council's Environmental Health Teams to identify suitable mitigation measures to inform the preparation of the Proposed Submission Area Action Plan. More detail can be found in the North East Cambridge Environmental Health Topic Paper ([NECAAPTEEnvironmentalHealth2020v22021.pdf](https://consultations.greatercambridgeplanning.org/sites/gcp/files/2021-11/NECAAPTEEnvironmentalHealth2020v22021.pdf) ([greatercambridgeplanning.org](https://consultations.greatercambridgeplanning.org))). Additionally, the councils have also undertaken a Geo-Environmental Desk Study (<https://consultations.greatercambridgeplanning.org/sites/gcp/files/2021-11/NECAAPEDPhase1Geo-EnvironmentalDeskStudyNov21v1.pdf>) which relates to land contamination within the AAP area.

The topic paper, study and other environmental evidence published to support the draft AAP last year have informed the preparation of AAP Policy 25: Environmental Protection, which sets out clear requirements any development proposals within the AAP area will need to address to ensure the amenity of sensitive uses, such as new homes, is protected. The granting of any planning applications within the AAP area will likely be subject of planning conditions to ensure that issues such as land remediation are undertaken prior to the commencement of development. This is common practice on sites such as this, and the Council has overseen a similar process recently on the former Bayer site in Hauxton which is now fully developed

and occupied following remediation ground works.

The Meeting ended at 8.15 p.m.
