

REPORT TO: Climate and Environment
Advisory Committee

7th March 2022

LEAD OFFICER: Kate Swan

Northstowe Enterprise Zone & Local Centre - Update

Executive Summary

1. This briefing note is to provide both background and context to a presentation that will be delivered by AR Urbanism to the Climate & Environment Advisory Committee. AR Urbanism will be outlining the emerging plans for the public realm, specifically sustainability and green and blue infrastructure at Northstowe Local Centre and Enterprise Zone site (which the Council bought in September 2020).

Recommendations

2. The Climate and Environment Advisory Committee is invited to note and comment on the emerging plans for sustainability, green and blue infrastructure in the presentation.

Reason for recommendations

3. The above recommendation is required to ensure that the Climate and Environment Advisory Committee is updated on zero carbon and environmental measures within the emerging master plan for Northstowe Employment Zone and Local Centre. It also provides an opportunity for the Advisory Committee to comment on progress.

Details

4. AR Urbanism (our Client Advisor Team or 'CAT') were appointed in May 2021 to provide a professional service for the design and development of the Enterprise Zone and Local Centre land at Northstowe. The aim of the Client Advisor Team is to consider the wider place making opportunities in this part of Northstowe, by developing a strategy and overarching masterplan for all the buildings in the Enterprise Zone and Local Centre.
5. The Council owns all of the land and has committed to taking forward the development (although the exact delivery route has yet to be agreed). The development will also enable the Council to pursue its Business Plan objectives to

support businesses; to reach zero-carbon target by 2050; to support Doubling Nature objectives, as well as deliver positive financial returns for the Council.

6. Northstowe is a new town located in the Longstanton Ward of the District that will eventually comprise up to 10,000 homes, delivered in 3 phases. In 2014 outline consent was given to Gallagher Estates to progress with the first phase of 1,500 new homes, a primary school, road improvements and a Local Centre (Northstowe Phase 1). In 2017 outline consent was granted to build a further 3,500 homes, a town centre, 3 more schools including a secondary school education campus and a link road to the A14, plus a road linking the town to the Guided Busway (Northstowe Phase 2).
7. The planning permission for Northstowe town centre also provides employment capacity. Northstowe is part of the Cambridge Compass Enterprise Zone (CCEZ) which supports entrepreneurs and small businesses in their early stage of development and provides an opportunity to expand the reach of Cambridge as a global centre for innovation. In 2014, Genecon produced the Northstowe Economic Development Strategy which promoted Northstowe as "a community for enterprise, innovation and sustainable development" with key aims "to be the champion of clean technologies" and "collaborative and flexible business environment". However, the Enterprise Zone site at Northstowe, part of Phase 1 of the new town, was never developed by the market and is therefore a stalled development that demonstrates market failure.
8. In September 2020 members agreed to purchase both the Enterprise Zone and the adjoining Local Centre as an investment.
9. In December 2020 Cabinet approved the procurement of a CAT for Northstowe. AR Urbanism were appointed as Client Advisor in May 2021. Their brief being:
 - a. To explore high level options for the Enterprise Zone and Local Centre.
 - b. Provide a strategic appraisal of planning considerations.
 - c. To carry out strategic risk assessments of the project.
 - d. To identify lessons learned from previous projects.
 - e. To define and agree a set of project outcomes and benefits.
 - f. To consult with key stakeholders to identify significant project issues.
 - g. To deliver the masterplan.
 - h. To prepare the outline business case.
 - i. To prepare a full project brief, output specification and project goals.
 - j. To provide guidance on the use and benefits of BIM.
 - k. To prepare feasibility studies and a strategic business case for the project.
 - l. Help set a budget and propose a funding strategy, considering whole life project costs.
 - m. To identify and develop the most appropriate procurement strategy for completing the project on time, to budget and to the quality required
10. As part of the work in developing the draft Masterplan into its current state the CAT has held several consultation events.

11. The phase 1 Consultation took place between June-August 2021 with the main aim to introduce the project to the public, uncover local aspirations and needs, and gain insights into stakeholders' views about the masterplan opportunities for the area.

12. This first phase consultation took the form of:

- 2 x residents' workshop – 36 participants across the 2 workshops
- Northstowe Community Forum
- Online survey for residents, available for 6 weeks with a total of 244 respondents.
- Online survey for businesses, available for 6 weeks with a total of 19 business stakeholder respondents.
- 1 x employment zone workshop attended by 9 participants.
- 121 interviews/workshops for businesses

The following key stakeholders were also included through 121 meetings:

- The UK Innovation Corridor
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Smart Cambridge
- Anglia Ruskin University
- Cambridge Ahead
- CPCA

13. Phase 2 consultation took place between September – November 2021, with the main objective being to provide a project update, present outcomes from phase 1 consultation, present key objectives for the masterplan and gather feedback for the masterplan.

14. This consisted of:

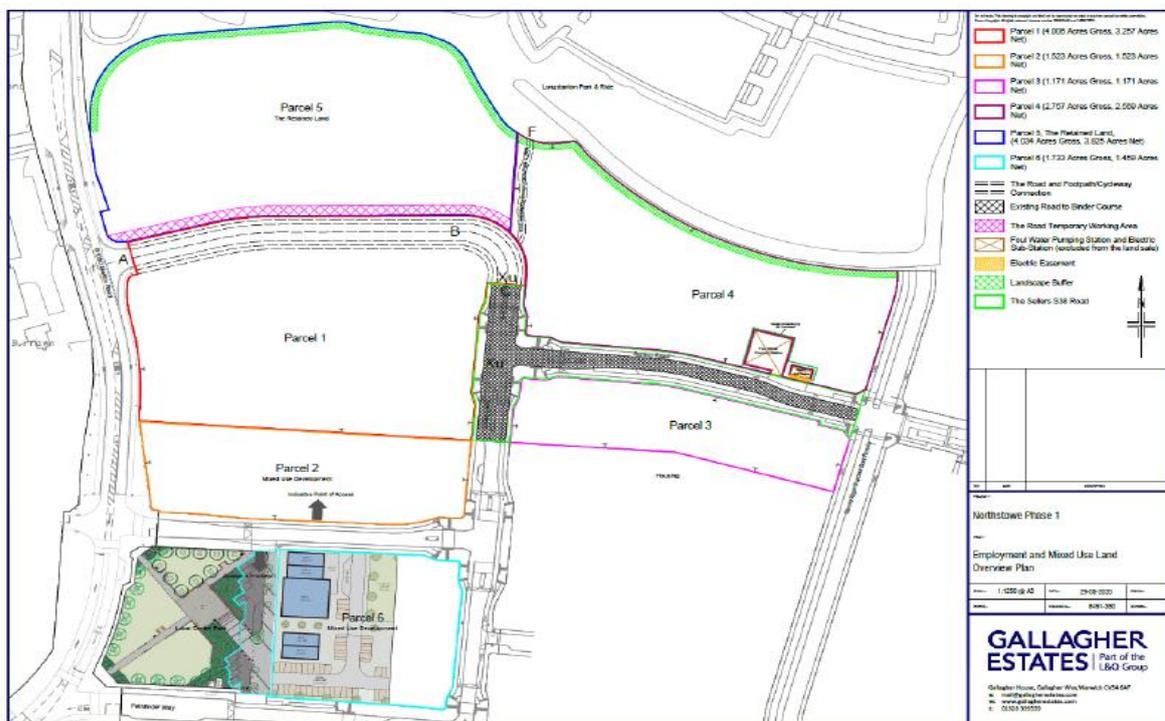
- All-day drop-in event at the phase 1 community wing – 56 attendees
- Evening event – 9 attendees
- Attendance at Northstowe Community Forum
- Business & resident workshop
- Workshops with local schools and youth events

15. An earlier iteration of the draft masterplan was formally presented to the Officer Project Team on 14th November with a further presentation to both the Urban Design & Sustainability Teams in the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service. Leadership Team reviewed the draft on 10th January and a further planning review took place on 3rd February.

16. The site lies adjacent to the Local Centre Square situated along the B1050 in Northstowe Phase 1. It is bounded by the Longstanton Park and Ride (and its expansion site) to its north, the B1050 to its west and residential development to its south and east. The development site is generally open in character, with some groups of vegetation, hedgerows and planting located along its boundaries.

17. The land which South Cambs owns, identified on the plan below, extends to some 11.19 gross acres indicatively split across 6 discrete parcels as follows:

- Parcels labelled as 1, 3, 4 and 5 are identified as Employment Land and include 4.034 acres of land (Parcel 5 and edged blue) which is currently allocated for a Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) and is subject to an option agreement. Cabinet, at its meeting on 2 September 2020, approved terms for the exercise of the option if the opportunity to incorporate this land for additional employment capacity arises. These parcels are also designated within the Cambridge Compass Enterprise Zone.
- Parcel 2 and 6 are identified for Mixed use/Local Centre and do not form part of the Enterprise Zone.



Employment Zone & Local Centre 1 (Please note buildings shown on Parcel 6 are for illustrative purposes and do not form part of the proposal for the site)

Implications

18. There are no significant implications.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

Growing local businesses and economies

1. The development will enable the Council to pursue its Business Plan objectives of supporting local businesses, as well as deliver positive financial returns for the Council.

Being green to our core

2. The emerging draft master plan for the employment zone and local centre aim to support the Councils green objectives.

Background Papers

Informal Cabinet Briefing Paper – 17th January 2022 – Update on Northstowe Local Centre & Employment Zone

Appendices

Presentation by AR Urbanism

Report Author:

Kate Swan – Project Development Officer