

3. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest

4. **20/02171/OUT - Northstowe Phase 3A Rampton Road, Longstanton**

The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development made an introductory statement for the report and application; the report presentation was made by Paul Ricketts, the Principal Planner (Strategic Sites).

Members asked questions of clarity of Officers. The questions covered the following topics:

- Levels of affordable housing, both in the application and across Northstowe as a whole- context on the levels of affordable housing was offered by the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development.
- Housing density and building heights- the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development did not confirm the housing density statistics at this point of the debate but assured Members that the information would be provided
- Traffic concerns- Cambridgeshire County Council's Interim Transport Assessment Team Manager, Jez Tuttle, outlined the County Council response to the traffic concerns. His response was centred on the concern expressed about the negative impact on traffic in the village of Oakington. The Committee was informed that a comprehensive approach to managing traffic through the village would be put in place to make it clear that the village was not a through road. Strategies such as environmental enhancements, deflections, give-way systems, reduced speed limits and narrowing of roads were all considered as potential mitigation measures; this list was not exhaustive.
- Water supply and water management- the Committee sought clarification on a number of concerns over water supply and water management. The objections from Swavesy Internal Drainage Board were noted but not extensively explored at this point as a representative from the Board was due to make representation. A question was raised on para. 485 which asked how management will be performed and what will be done if disruption occurs- the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development noted the conditions in the report and modifications to conditions laid out in the supplements. Further questions on the topic were raised and the Environment Agency's Sustainable Places Team Leader, Adam Ireland, responded. He detailed the complexity of water management on a regional scale and noted that broad-scale strategic management played a significant part in dealing with water on the site of the application in question; it was also noted that the Environment Agency and Anglian Water did not object to the proposals laid out in the report and that the conditions regarding this part of the application were deemed sustainable.

During this section of the discussion of the application, further preliminary comments were made by Members. Environmental concerns were raised, with Members expressing comments upon the environmental impact assessments laid out in the report. However, it was stressed that the Greater Cambridge Planning Service were not being criticised; it was accepted that the overall project was hugely challenging and many of the issues arose from the input of the statutory consultees.

Public Speakers

The Committee was addressed by a number of public speakers, as per the made motion in the Chair's Announcements. Daniel Fulton (Fews Lane Consortium), Ian Ralls (Cambridge Friends of the Earth) and Monica Bijok Hone (Friends of the Cam) addressed the Committee as objectors. Mr Fulton displayed visual materials showing the drying up of bodies of water in the area, and all three objectors expressed deep concern over the environmental impact of the development. Other issues were also raised. Michael Bottomley addressed the Committee in support of the application as an agent of the applicants, with other members of the applicants' consultancy team invited to support Mr Bottomley in answering Members' questions. The agents clarified what how both the plans and conditions aimed to mitigate a variety of concerns. The Committee was also addressed by Councillor Dan delaMare-Lyon (on behalf of Longstanton Parish Council), Keith Wilderspin (on behalf of Swavesey Internal Drainage Board) and Councillor Richard Owen (on behalf of Northstowe Town Council). Local Members addressed the Committee; Councillor Bill Handley (Over and Willingham) and Councillor Sarah Cheung Johnson (Longstanton) spoke on the application. Councillor Handley did not read a submission on behalf of Councillor Neil Gough (Cottenham) as he felt his representation covered the points Councillor Gough wished to raise and Councillor Cheung Johnson spoke on behalf of her fellow local Member for Longstanton, Councillor Alex Malyon. Issues raised included:

- Environmental, ground and water supply concerns
- Impact of the development on the drains and apparatus managed by the IDB
- Traffic/ transport concerns- especially the impact upon surrounding villages
- Impact of the earlier phases of development
- Heights of proposed new buildings on the site

Members asked various questions of the public speakers. The overall sentiment from the majority of speakers was that careful and more rigorous control by the way of conditions than had previously been the case was required for the application to be acceptable. However, it was noted that there had been a significant amount of good work put into the application from Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service and its staff.

Debate

Sections 1 & 2- Principle of development, land use and vision, parameter plans:

The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development offered clarity over the parameter plans. Members raised concerns over the size and depth of the tree belt close to the village of Oakington, stating that it was not large enough to provide an effective screen for such a large development. The "spur" of dwellings that extended out towards Oakington was also discussed, with Members expressing concerns over the height of the buildings in this area of the development and the impact it would have on the residents of Oakington. The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development advised that the "spur" could not be reduced in size without impacting the number of properties and that such significant changes to the parameter plan would be inappropriate to undertake without further engagement, but a condition limiting the height of buildings in the area of the development would be acceptable.

Section 3- Access and transport:

The routing and control of construction traffic was raised by Members as a point of concern- the impact of heavy vehicles going through local villages en-route to access the site was discussed. The Committee debated the methods of vehicle monitoring to ensure that any infractions could be effectively enforced. The Senior Planning Lawyer recommended that vehicle monitoring would be more robust if dealt with in the Planning

Obligations. He advised that including the construction vehicle monitoring and routing in the s.106 agreement would allow for greater detail and more effective enforcement. The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development responded to concerns over the suitability of the site for all forms of transport and informed the Committee that the ambition was to introduce non-car based transport infrastructure at the earliest possible stage.

In response to concerns about the Southern Access Road East (SARE), Cambridgeshire County Council's Principal Transport Officer, Tam Parry, informed the Committee that when either 2000 dwellings in Phase 3 or 5500 dwellings across Phases 2 and 3 were completed a review into the requirement for the construction of the SARE would be triggered. This was in place to relieve pressure on the Bar Hill junction if necessary and the Principal Transport Officer highlighted the inclusion of this obligation in the s.106 agreement for flexibility to make the most appropriate decision. The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development stated that the review into the need for the SARE would prevent a road being inappropriately developed and if it was not required it could benefit residents of the area, in particular those in Oakington.

Sections 4, 5 & 6- Employment assessment, housing delivery & social and community infrastructure:

The Principal Planner (Strategic Sites), Mike Huntington, informed the Committee of the density of housing across the site. The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development offered further details on density.

Sections 7, 8, 9 & 10- Environmental considerations, cumulative impact, financial obligations/S.106 & planning balance:

The Committee noted that the application was in accordance with the Local Plan, that many of the reservations held by Members were not material Planning reasons for refusal and that the Reserved Matters stage of the development would provide further opportunity for scrutiny. When the third-party consultations were raised, the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development assured the Committee that they had been taken into consideration and this was reflected in the report and supplementary documents. In response to concerns over the adequacy of some of the conditions, the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development advised the Committee that conditions needed to be robust and deliverable to avoid challenges in appeal or variation of conditions if they prove to be undeliverable.

Water, groundwater and drainage formed a significant point of discussion and concern for the Committee; these were material Planning conditions. Surface water was discussed and conditions which dealt with surface water and required drainage (34-39) were noted. Groundwater and foul water were debated:

- Groundwater- concerns were raised over the impact of the proposed development on the water table and water supply for the wider area; both potential dewatering and flooding were mentioned by Members. Members expressed a desire to see more information on the current and projected groundwater levels. The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development offered comment on the issue; the modelling work undertaken by Arcadis, the concerns of the local Town and Parish Councils (including the HR Wallingford report) and the approval given by the statutory consultees were acknowledged. Condition 39, and the amendments laid out in the supplementary document, was highlighted and the difficulties of giving precise data was explained. The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development informed the Committee that strategic management of groundwater was required on a wider scale and that both pre-commencement and post-development monitoring would be undertaken to ensure that groundwater was managed effectively. Mitigation measures would be put in place if the monitoring

indicated a need for such action. The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development reiterated that the District Council was not the responsible party for the management of groundwater. It was noted that there was no monitoring in place for Phase 1 but, in response to recognised local concerns and feedback from Members, it had been included in the Phase 3A application. The Committee requested that monitoring data be made available to both the Council and the public.

- Foul water- Members expressed concern over foul water drainage; in particular, the representations from the Swavesey Internal Drainage Board were discussed at some length. The Environment Agency's Sustainable Places Team Leader offered comment on the concerns. He informed the Committee that foul water drainage was the responsibility of Anglian Water and that they would manage the situation. Anglian Water had a responsibility to ensure that there was sufficient capacity to drain foul water through their network of treatment facilities and drains. The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development referred to condition 41 to reassure the Committee that foul water concerns had been addressed and that a Foul Water Drainage Strategy would have to be submitted prior to the commencement of development.

The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development informed the Committee that dialogue with the Town and Parish Council's, as well as the other consultees, would continue to ensure that the challenges around water were effectively managed across the site.

The Committee enquired as to the feasibility of a deferral of the application in order to gather more information. The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development advised that there was not a sound basis for deferral and stated that clarifying and securing all the requested information would be very challenging and the timescale in which the application could be brought back to Committee was uncertain. Members noted that it was important that the power to make the decision remained with the Committee and a deferral could potentially jeopardise this. The Chair gave the Committee an opportunity to propose a deferral, but no such proposal was forthcoming.

Prior to the vote, the Chair summarised, and the Committee reviewed the proposed amendments or additions to conditions if the Committee was minded to approve the application. These were:

- Condition 39 (Groundwater monitoring and water conservation for the Military Lake)- amended to make reference to a benchmark (39[i]) and; to specify ground water (39[iv])
- Condition 24 (Construction Environmental Management Plan)- amended to remove reference of the construction vehicle monitoring route (42[c]) and instead include the construction vehicle monitoring route as a clause in the s.106 agreement.
- The Committee agreed to limit the building heights in the 'Oakington Spur' to no more than two storeys.

The drafting of the wording of these conditions was delegated to officers, to be approved in conjunction with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee if the Committee approved the application.

The Committee considered a motion seeking to refuse planning permission. The Chair summarised the reasons for refusal articulated by some Members of the Committee. These were:

- Failure to comply with policy CC/7 (impact on water quality)
- Failure to comply with policy CC/9 (flood risk)
- The scale, parameters and heights of buildings was added as a reason for refusal

by 6 votes to 5 (Councillors Cahn, Fane, Harvey, Hawkins and Wilson voted against the addition of the reason for refusal)

The drafting of the wording of these reasons for refusal was delegated to officers, to be approved in conjunction with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee if the Committee refused the application.

By 8 votes to 3 (Councillors Deborah Roberts, Heather Williams and Dr Richard Williams voted against the application), the Planning Committee **approved** the application.

The approval was subject to the prior completion of a S106 agreement, as outlined in the report, and the conditions laid out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, as amended by the supplement to the report entitled "Amendment/update report – Phase 3A application". The supplementary report amended conditions 10, 12, 31 and 39 and also introduced conditions 69, 70 and 71. The approval was also subject to the changes to conditions agreed by the Committee.

5. 20/02142/OUT - Northstowe Phase 3B Station Road, Longstanton

The Chair, seconded by Councillor Deborah Roberts, proposed to defer the item. By affirmation, the Committee **deferred** the application.

The Meeting ended at 4.00 p.m.
