

## Orchard Park Action Plan – March 2009

Recommendations as agreed by Scrutiny Committee in December 2008. New columns added reflecting current position and completion/target dates.

	Scrutiny Recommendation	Action December 2008	Position March 2009	Completion/Target dates
1	Design Guide			
1a	The master developer or the council should produce a Design Guide, before the first planning applications are made; this should be formally adopted and then enforced when evaluating applications	Agreed and in hand for all future growth sites. In the future no planning applications will be approved before design guides/codes are in place.	The Urban Design Team are now working with New Communities to agree design codes/guides ahead of reserved matters applications. This is currently taking place at Trumpington Meadows.	<b>Dec 08</b>
1b	The Design Guide should set out an agreed programme for phasing the development, aiming for whole sections to be completed before moving to the next phase.	Noted and subject of current discussions on future growth sites. A phasing scheme will be secured via planning condition. However in reality a phase will not be fully completed prior to next phase commencing, as it is a rolling programme.	The phasing for Trumpington Meadows is following this approach. It must however be remembered that phasing is complex and to prevent one phase from starting due to another not being completed, could potentially hold up the delivery of affordable housing and this would be unacceptable.	<b>March 09</b>
1c	The Design Guide should spell out the approach to crime and safety design issues, encouraging joint working with police and the council's arts, sports and community development teams.	Agreed and will action as part of future design guides/codes including any other organisations delivering services on behalf of the council.	This is being implemented on all future growth sites as they come forward to the design stage phase. Trumpington Meadows is likely to be the first – provisionally by the end of 2009.	<b>Dec 09</b>
1d	The County and District councils should specify road and footpath materials that are attractive as well as durable and fit for purpose. Planning permission should require the developer to provide and maintain paths and roads to an adoptable standard where houses are occupied.	County to review materials that it will consider for adoption.	The County Council recommends the materials to be used in new developments within the Cambridgeshire Design Guide. (Produced by the County Council with support from Cambridgeshire Horizons and the City and District Councils).	<b>Jan 09</b>
		Planning permissions to secure appropriate finish by condition.	We require finishes to be specified by condition and use the Cambridgeshire Design Guide.	<b>Jan 09</b>

		Adoption is not something that can be required, but it will be encouraged.	A balanced approach will be applied to highways to ensure that where footpaths and roadways near occupied housing are used by construction vehicles, they are kept to an acceptable standard but otherwise adopted at the earliest opportunity once they are used for residential purposes only.	<b>Dec 08</b>
1e	Design aspects not covered in the main Design Guide should be the subject of subsequent design codes.	Agreed refer to City and SCDC Guidance on Design Codes, issued October 2007.	Design Codes are being produced for all growth sites.	<b>Dec 08</b>
1f	The Council should develop and use a scoring system such as at Huntingdonshire District Council, to assess large developments and inform the district-wide Design Guide	A new national indicator H6 requires councils to show the level of quality in new housing development according to building for life assessment criteria. We are looking into how we fulfill the requirements of this indicator and will put in place actions to address.	The new Joint Urban Design Team and planners are implementing the "Building for Life" checklist for all major developments. This also includes training and the appointment of an assessor by Autumn 2009.	<b>Oct 09</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Urban Design &amp; Enforcement</b>			
2a	Urban design expertise should be retained and used throughout the pre-planning, planning and construction stages at Arbury Park and future large developments	A new joint urban design team has been put in place with three full time officers normally based at SCDC from December.	Joint Urban Design Team in place and working on all growth sites to offer urban design expertise within the New Communities Team.	<b>Jan 09</b>
2b	The urban designer and planning enforcement officer should closely monitor the development at every stage, as resources allow.	Once the DevCon2 software extends to monitoring conditions it will be easier to pick up on the issues at each development and whether they are being followed. Current resources will not allow for close monitoring of all development issues. It may be necessary as at Cambourne to employ a full time monitoring officer negotiated through future S106 agreements in order to offer the monitoring needed.	It is not the role of an Urban designer to monitor specific construction compliance; this is an enforcement/building control issue. Resources are not available to allow for close monitoring of all developments at every stage although we are looking at ways of incorporating this within S106 agreements where possible.	<b>Oct 09</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Standard of Planning Applications</b>			
3a	SCDC should develop a stronger reputation via pre-application meetings that if proposals are not acceptable they will be refused without negotiation.	A protocol for pre-application advice is to be developed including making applicants aware through the agents forum and advice notes on the website. The approach to be adopted on each application will vary depending on the particular circumstances.	The pre-application advice protocol has been developed and is being publicised through the Agents forum and via the Council's Website.	<b>Feb 09</b>

<b>4</b>	<b>S106 Agreement</b>			
4a	S106 officers should provide a communication hub and actively ensure that work progresses in all aspects and in compliance with agreed trigger points.	An S106 implementation officer is being recruited to monitor all S106 agreements and trigger points. Currently at advertising stage.	A new S106 monitoring officer is in place. They are developing a new S106 database to inform and track all S106 agreements.	<b>Jan 09</b>
4b	The counting of occupations should be done (at least monthly) by only one party – preferably the planning authority, to avoid duplication – and then shared with parish, city, district and county council colleagues.	Currently undertaken by an officer within New Communities and shared with a wider audience than recommendation suggests. Will need to be monitored closely in case demand for the service exceeds the resources available.	Counting of occupations is completed by the new S106 monitoring officer and shared with all relevant officers and partners.	<b>Dec 08</b>
4c	S106 negotiations should invite timely input from all local stakeholders, whilst retaining probity and confidentiality of negotiations.	A new S106 officer has been appointed to work closely with the parishes and other stakeholders to develop S106 requirements. Proposals will then be shared as appropriate through relevant stakeholder groups.	New officer in place and working with Parish Councils and other stakeholders on S106 requirements/obligations in line with planning applications. Assisting Gamlingay in negotiating an additional contribution towards library facilities amongst other issues. S106 process improvements being implemented through close liaison with planning officers.	<b>Dec 08</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Phased Construction</b>			
5a	Large developments should be built according to a phasing plan, starting at one or two points, as appropriate for the size of development, then building outwards. The aim should be for residential streets and areas to be completed in phases so that new residents suffer minimum disturbance by ongoing building works. However, it should also be noted that phasing could have the effect of slowing down the rate at which affordable homes are built.	Agreed as a general principle and will be taken forward in discussions with developers. However each scheme will be addressed on its own merits and all relevant factors taken in to account in reaching agreement on phasing plans.	It is too early to agree phasing on all the growth sites at present, however phasing and delivery will be heavily impacted upon by current market conditions. Phasing discussions starting first at Southern Fringe imminently.	<b>April 09</b>
5b	Commercial and community facilities should be included in the first phase, with an information centre and community development officer being on-site as soon as properties are occupied, perhaps initially located in a dual-use community house.	All major schemes will have a community facilities strategy (including if necessary interim facilities) to inform S106 agreement negotiations including protocol for production of community development plan.	Currently reviewing community facilities across the district to set a council standard to take forward within community facilities strategies at new developments.	<b>May 09</b>

		Commercial facilities are market driven and SCDC has little control over the speed at which they come forward but will investigate options such as reduced rates and rent.	Reduced rents and incentives will be discussed with landlords as facilities begin to come forward. However SCDC is unable to insist on reductions if negotiations fail.	<b>As sites develop</b>
5c	These should be funded and put in place at the earliest stage and then reimbursed via the S106 agreement.	This would require SCDC and partners to make necessary resources available to forward fund. Options for funding to be discussed with Cambridgeshire Horizons.	Working on all sites to ensure that community (not commercial) facilities are in place as soon as possible. Funding already secured from Horizons for Northstowe. Negotiations on other growth sites is on-going.	<b>As sites develop</b>
6	Community Development			
6a	A community development plan should be produced in consultation with stakeholders, at a very early stage for each new development. It should be clear who has responsibility for delivery, monitoring and regular updating of the plan.	Agreed and being taken forward. Community Development Plan for Northstowe currently being drafted. Plans for other growth sites being discussed including timetables for production.	Draft Community Development plan completed for Cambridge Southern Fringe. Consultation ongoing with stakeholders for Northstowe to further develop the community plan to include community development.	<b>Oct 09</b>
6b	The work of arms-length community development staff should be agreed and managed via a partnership agreement. This should be reviewed quarterly as the number of residents grows.	Service Level Agreements in place to ensure compliance with conditions and partnership objectives. Flexibility and transparent monitoring is built in to agreements.	Currently reviewing SLA's to ensure more legal accountability and compliance and to link funding to phased performance targets.	<b>June 09</b>
6c	An early priority should be to arrange regular and varied community activities, bringing residents together in small and larger numbers until networks develop and become self-sustaining	Community development and other colleagues e.g. arts and sports are taking this forward. It is being monitored through partnership agreement/SLA on quarterly basis with ability for steering committee/trust to guide delivery of community development in response to residents needs	Continuing to take forward the actions agreed in December 2008.	<b>Dec 08</b>
6d	Another key service is the initial 'Information Pack', which should be supplied to new residents on moving in; inclusion of a current map should be a priority. A fuller 'Welcome Pack' should be supplied, preferably in person, within three weeks. These packs should provide information that is: timely*, concise, self-explanatory, accurate; and signposting any further sources of help. *For example information about local	This process is being piloted at Cambourne and will be rolled out in Arbury by the end of October. It will be a template for future developments. Final template to be used as foundation for packs to be compiled by on-site community development workers to deliver local relevant information for residents.	The project is working well at Cambourne. Further resources had to be obtained to complete the Orchard Park packs and these are now being updated to reflect current governance arrangements and include public meeting information ahead of circulation by end of March 09.	<b>Dec 08</b>

	surgeries may be needed on day one.			
6e	All the information should also be available electronically	Agreed and also on relevant websites e.g. parish councils and resident associations.	Cambourne information on the Council's website, with Orchard Park to follow at the end of March 09.	<b>March 09</b>
7	Environmental Health			
7a	Landscaping features, such as earth mounds, should be used where possible as a noise barrier; this eliminates the uncertainty about the location, timing and nature of buildings used as a barrier	Earth mounds are only possible where space permits. Greater consideration to be given to noise aspects at site allocation stage as is happening with 'NIAB extra'	We are taking this recommendation forward as and when the situation occurs on future growth sites.	<b>As sites develop</b>
7b	Noise readings should be taken before and after a barrier is erected, and on both sides of the road. Any expert hired by the council to verify the findings should be independent of the developer.	Agreed in principle however PPG24 does not recognise reflective noise or require an assessment of noise on existing communities, only the effects on the new development.	Monitoring of noise at Orchard Park is ongoing and further work is planned alongside the barrier in conjunction with Highways Agency works.	<b>Oct 09</b>
7c	The Highways Agency and developer should communicate and consult fully with the parish and district councils regarding any proposals to alter major roads adjacent to new developments.	SCDC is not the determining body on major road applications. We are usually consulted but we will write to the Highways Agency to request early involvement in all major road applications consultation.	County Council officers agree with the recommendation and expect that the County Council be consulted to consider the wider impacts on the local highway network. The County Council is happy to assist the local Councils in discussions with the Highways Agency and the public.	<b>Jan 09</b>
8	Governance			
8a	The Council should explore every means of securing funding for parish councils to protect them from the financial impact of supporting large new developments. Existing parish residents must not suffer long-term costs because large-scale development has chanced to fall within their boundary.	Funding may be secured by way of the S.106 agreement, if the request meets the terms of the 05/05 circular, and may be negotiated when set against all other priorities for funding. The costs for parish residents in the short term must also be offset against the ability of the parish to raise precept in the longer-term and any increased access to facilities.	This is being taken forward by the new S106 officer who has already been successful at Gamlingay, as well as adding pressure on a number of smaller sites. All Parish requests for Northstowe are being shared with the developers. Realism has to be kept in mind, as the developer is under no obligation to support those that are non-05/05 compliant.	<b>Jan 09</b>
8b	Governance arrangements for new developments should be settled as early as possible to enable early community facilities to be properly managed and to provide existing and new residents with a sense of a community identity.	On the smaller growth sites until there are enough residents to form a parish council the neighbouring parishes are asked for their support and funding can be requested through S106 contributions. If the development is large enough, for example, at Northstowe then other options can be	Governance is a complex issue as has been demonstrated at Orchard Park. Officers will continue to help new communities with management issues and aim to learn lessons from the Orchard park process. Discussions are already well underway at Northstowe and officers are working with	<b>March 09</b>

		explored, such as forming a development trust.	Haslingfield PC with regard Trumpington Meadows.	
9	Delays in Moving in			
9a	The S106 agreement should agree a process for accurately setting out building locations.	The new S106 officer will set out a protocol and include in all S106 agreements. There is an additional need for building surveyor resources to check the accuracy of these locations on the ground. A service-planning bid has been proposed for an additional building surveyor to help with this process. If the bid is unsuccessful then an S106 contribution may be required.	Protocol is being drafted, to be finalised with planning & legal. Service planning bid was unsuccessful. Officers will negotiate with developers to carry out this work via a S106 contribution where possible. The Trumpington Meadows development is securing monitoring resources through its S106.	<b>Oct 09</b>  <b>March 09</b>
9b	The Cambridgeshire Bus Team and other County Council colleagues should work closely with the planning authority to ensure the location of boundaries are agreed and observed.	Lesson learnt and planning procedures clarified with County Council team. Issues resolved and with help of action at 9a the problem should not be repeated.	The County Council continues to work closely with the District and City Councils. There are informal and formal processes for the sharing of information. When it became apparent that the CGB might be built upon, the County Council contacted the house builder to ask that they take action. An acceptable solution was found to take the CGB scheme forward.	<b>Dec 08</b>
10	Need a single point of Contact, Communication & Control			
10a	The council and the master developer should ensure that a mechanism is established from the outset to provide a regular forum for all stakeholders to raise and resolve concerns.	Mechanisms similar to the Orchard Park Action Group will be established for all the fringe sites and Northstowe subject to agreement with City Council. It is vital to build a consensus on the mechanisms for this with the City Council, as a pre requisite for completing this action. Initial meeting with City & County Council to be held November 2008.	There is agreement on setting up stakeholder forums for all the growth sites as and when they become necessary (depending on the stage of the development). OPAG is continuing at Orchard Park, There is a Joint Action Group (JAG) for Northstowe and recently officers have begun discussions with Haslingfield PC regarding Trumpington Meadows. A review is also taking place within New Communities to ensure we are consulting with all stakeholders equally at all developments.	<b>March 09</b>
10b	This forum could be led by a local Member who would be regarded as the champion for the new development, ensuring that cooperation and communication between all	It will be for each group or forum to decide upon their chair. Use of officer time in the management of these groups will be an important point to consider. It may be that	Work is underway regarding member roles and how they can best engage in growth sites. The idea of champions is included in this.	<b>May 09</b>

	stakeholders was maintained. Such member champions should be considered for all new developments.	this workload be shared with the City and County Councils.		
11	Affordable Housing			
11a	Future developments should emulate the practice used at Arbury Park of involving a consortium of RSLs in planning and negotiations from the outset.	SCDC & Cambridge City Council have worked in partnership since the consortium selection to deliver affordable housing at Cambourne took place over six years ago. This method was replicated for Arbury Park. The process has evolved further into the Cambridge Challenge for 2007 - run and managed by the Housing Corporation with LA's being involved as partners rather than running the process. The process selected a Strategic Partner to deliver 3300 affordable homes across three major sites', which are Southern Fringe, NIAB and part of Northstowe. We would expect to learn the lessons from the Cambridge Challenge process and take this forward into future selections for other major sites.	Work is ongoing to identify the lessons learnt from the Cambridge challenge and identify suitable affordable housing mechanisms for the other growth sites E.g. Cambridge East.	<b>Dec 08</b>
12	Building Site Environment			
12a	The Council should negotiate via the S106 process that developers will register the site(s) on a considerate constructors scheme.	A joint considerate contractors scheme is being currently being investigated. Funding is being requested through the service planning process and if agreed developers will be encouraged to join this scheme via the S106 negotiations.	Funding for a joint scheme was unsuccessful. Developers will be encouraged to join the National Scheme through planning conditions as is currently being pursued at Trumpington Meadows.	<b>March 09</b>
12b	The master developer, or consortium should appoint an officer to monitor and oversee the development and be a point of contact for the consortium.	Agreed, however it is not possible to formally stipulate this. It may be built into planning process agreements used on larger sites or through a CAF system, similar to that used at Cambourne where information was fed to one lead officer.	A monitoring officer is being pursued through S106 negotiations at Northstowe. If successful this will be taken forward at other sites.	<b>As sites develop</b>
12c	Officers should explore means of ensuring that street trees are planted at an early stage, rather than at the end of the development.	Planting of street trees is agreed with the developer through planning conditions. They are usually planted at a point when they are unlikely to be damaged and within the planting season.	107 street trees have now been planted at Orchard Park. Planting is complex when it needs to tie in with the timing for the pavement surfacing and nearby building completion so as not to cause tree damage.	<b>March 09</b>

13	<b>Maps and Road Signs</b>			
13a	The successful road-naming process at Arbury Park should be used at future developments.	The process of the Parish Council providing a list of themes and names for use at the discretion of the SNN Officer is supported. This process may need to be modified for Northstowe due to its size and follow the Cambourne example but in principle the Arbury approach is supported.	Discussions taking place over the best way to approach street naming at Northstowe. Will be working with the City Council to agree a protocol for Southern fringe where streets go across boundaries.	<b>Dec 08</b>
13b	Officers should urgently explore methods for ensuring that road nameplates and current road maps are available for the first residents of a new development. These may include contractually requiring the master developer to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide road nameplates and locate them as guided by the County's Highways service</li> <li>provide simple, timely street maps</li> <li>deposit electronic plans with Section 38 agreements</li> </ul>	SCDC does not have resources to provide road nameplates and maps. We are reviewing whether this could be requested through S106 contributions from the developer. We have no resource to provide mapping for new developments. Signs are to be located in accordance with guidelines from the SNN Officer and not the County Council	Officers are reviewing the need for a protocol to be included as a side agreement with developers regarding responsibilities for nameplates. It is not possible to condition this or require a contribution s through S106 funds since it is fundamentally a local authority function.	<b>As sites develop</b>
14	<b>Primary School</b>			
14a	When a school is built to serve a large housing development it should be located at the centre of the site with safe walking access from all directions and adequate road crossings.	To be adopted as a guiding principle for future master plan and design code work.	The County Council seeks to site all new schools within major new development at locations central to its catchment area and with good pedestrian and cycle access from all directions. This approach is being pursued for all the growth areas.	<b>Jan 09</b>
14b	A phasing plan for the development should provide for the school to be fully ready for use as soon as the first residents move in.	The school was open to serve the very first children on the development and this is the plan for all other developments.	New primary school(s) are often funded through Section 106 Agreements and the County Council negotiates the inclusion of appropriate triggers to ensure that land and funding is made available when needed so that the school(s) will be open on time.	<b>Dec 08</b>
14c	Planning considerations for a school should ensure an optimum physical size that meets statutory access requirements and yet will not overburden the school budget. The building design should also fit the architectural context of the location. The	Cambridgeshire County Council in discussion with Head of Joint Urban Design is developing design protocol for future schools, which will necessitate a design brief for each school site. This will accord with the site-specific design guide/code.	The design protocol has been developed in partnership with County, City and SCDC. It is currently being distributed by the Head of Joint Urban Design for implementation.	<b>March 09</b>



	outdoor space should provide a stimulating environment for playing and learning out of doors.			
14d	The County Council should limit initial reception class intake to new schools and phase increases in admissions in line with forecast in-catchment pupil numbers. This would ensure that new schools grow at the same rate as the development and can accommodate all in-catchment pupils as they arrive. This would aid community cohesion.	County are looking into the mechanism for restricting the size of the reception class to match the anticipated demand from the catchment area to ensure that the school grows at the same rate as the development.	The County Council could limit initial reception class intake to new schools and phase increases in admission in line with forecast in-catchment pupil data to ensure that new schools grow at the same rate as the development. However, it is not possible to limit children from outside the development attending the school if there are places available.	<b>Dec 08</b>
15	<b>Health Facilities</b>			
15a	The PCT (NHS) should work with relevant surgeries to communicate with incoming residents as soon as a large development begins. Relevant surgeries may not be the nearest, but one more easily reached by public transport.	SCDC will work with the NHS to provide suitable services for new residents, for example by providing an outreach surgery in school or community centre.	We are working with the NHS and other partners to agree on surgery provision at the growth sites.	<b>As sites develop</b>
16	<b>Utilities</b>			
16a	Utilities providers should be fully consulted at regional spatial strategy planning stage; not just regarding costs but also feasibility and timescales.	Discussions to take place with Regional Spatial Strategy colleagues regarding level of consultation with utilities providers.	Action unchanged from December.	<b>As sites develop</b>
17	<b>Foul and Surface Water Drainage</b>			
17a	The District Council's on site planning monitoring officers should alert Anglian Water at an early stage, of any concerns they notice regarding construction of foul and surface water drainage systems*. This would reduce the delay in their adoption later in the process. *It must be clear that Anglian Water retains responsibility for monitoring and adoption.	Within limited resources SCDC officers will advise Anglian Water of any concerns they have in relation to the construction of foul and surface water drainage systems. We cannot monitor the works on behalf of the water authority since this is out of our remit, experience and resources.	Action unchanged from December.	<b>As sites develop</b>
17b	Where drainage adoption is delayed, the Council should keep residents informed as to who is responsible for dealing with any concerns.	The new communities team through community groups will aim to keep the local community abreast of all issues. See action 10a.	Officers have developed improved communications with residents in the growth areas to discuss such issues.	<b>March 09</b>