

## Cambridge Northern Fringe East AAP Update

### Background

- A1 Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, with support from Cambridgeshire County Council as a key stakeholder, started work on the development of the Cambridge Northern Fringe East Area Action Plan (CNFE AAP) early in 2014, in parallel with the later stages of the respective district wide local plans.
- A2 The initial stage, the Issues & Options Report, was informed by a number of studies and related background work primarily prepared in support of the respective draft local plans, but including locally specific information and constraints concerning matters such as odour.
- A3 The opportunities and constraints identified as a result of the background work informed the preparation of four Redevelopment Options and a further question (Q14) as to whether there are any alternative redevelopment options that should be considered e.g. include more residential development. The four Redevelopment Options suggested broad approaches as to how the area could be regenerated, namely:
- Option 1: Lower Level of Development.
    - *Creates an enhanced 'Boulevard' approach to the proposed new railway station, to provide a gateway to Cambridge.*
    - *Focuses on regeneration of areas of more easily available land, allowing existing businesses and the Water Recycling Centre to stay, whilst creating a major new area for businesses.*
    - *Could be delivered early, but does little to secure the wider regeneration of the area;*
  - Option 2: Medium Level of Development.
    - *Focuses on regeneration of areas of more easily available land, allowing existing businesses and the Water Recycling Centre to stay.*
    - *Includes new homes and a local centre near the proposed new railway station, to create a vibrant mixed use area around the gateway.*
    - *More comprehensive redevelopment improving existing areas south of Cowley Road, to integrate them into the Station area.*
    - *A new road north of Cowley Road to separate out industrial traffic from the main station access.*
    - *Option for Nuffield Road industrial area to change to offices / residential.*
    - *Could be delivered in the short to medium term;*
  - Option 3: Higher Level of Development
    - *Retains Water Recycling Centre but reconfigures onto a smaller site, with more indoor or contracted operations, subject to technical, financial and operational deliverability.*
    - *Opens up options for larger scale employment redevelopment and a mix of other uses.*

- *Delivery of the full option would be in the longer term.*
  - *The potential to phase redevelopment to achieve the objective of an early gateway to the proposed new railway station would need to be explored, whilst ensuring that the delivery of the full option is not prejudiced by piecemeal redevelopment.*
  - *Nuffield Road industrial area is proposed for entirely residential development, with existing industry relocated north of Cowley Road;*
- Option 4: Maximum Level of Development
    - *Water Recycling Centre relocated off site, subject to identification of a suitable, viable and deliverable alternative site being identified.*
    - *Frees up a large area of land for redevelopment, and the opportunity to comprehensively address the area.*
    - *Delivery of the full option would be in the longer term.*
    - *The potential to phase redevelopment to achieve the objective of an early gateway to the proposed new railway station would need to be explored, whilst ensuring that the delivery of the full option is not prejudiced by piecemeal redevelopment.*

A4 In addition, the consultation document sought comments on the following potential policy areas:

- Land Uses
- Places Making, Gateway and Building Design
- Density and Building Design / Heights
- Employment
- Housing
- Services and Facilities
- Transport
- Climate Change and Environmental Quality
- Development Management Policies
- Infrastructure Requirements
- Development Phasing and Delivery

A5 Consultation on the Issues & Options Report took place between 8 December 2014 and 2 February 2015 in accordance with the adopted City Council's Statement of Community Involvement 2013 and Code for Best Practice on Consultation and Community Engagement July 2011, and the South Cambridgeshire Statement of Community Involvement 2010. As part of the consultation, the Issues and Options Report was made publicly available and could be downloaded from the Councils websites. Public exhibitions were also held, as follows:

- Wednesday 10 December 2014: 1pm - 7pm St John's Innovation Centre, Cowley Road, Cambridge, CB4 0WS
- Thursday 18 December 2014: 4pm - 8pm. North Area Committee – Buchan Street Community Centre, Cambridge, CB4 2XF (Note Committee meeting starts 7pm)
- Wednesday 14 January 2015: 1pm - 5pm. Trinity Centre (Science Park), Milton Road, Cambridge, CB4 0FN

- Saturday 17 January 2015: 1.30pm – 6pm. Brown’s Field Youth & Community Centre, Green End Road, Chesterton, CB4 1RU
- Monday 19 January 2015: 2pm - 8pm Milton Community Centre, Cambridge, CB24 6BL

### Issues and Options Consultation Response

A6 A total of 71 individuals, organisations, companies and statutory bodies submitted a total of 1,316 responses to the consultation within the consultation period. Every registered comment received during the Issues and Options consultation, as well as a summary of each comment, is available to view on the Planning Policy pages of the Council’s website. In addition, an indication of the main remarks made against each question, with the exception of the redevelopment options (Questions 10 to 13), is attached as Appendix B of this report.

A7 In relation to the four redevelopment options, the number of responses received on each were as follows:

Option	Support	Object	Comment
1 – Lower Level	17	15	8
2 – Medium Level	13	19	9
3 – Higher Level	11	21	11
4 – Maximum Level	11	24	11

A8 A summary of the comments received on each option, as well as generic comments covering all four options is attached as Appendix C of this report. The main concerns for each redevelopment option can be summarised as follows:

#### Option 1

- Not the best, but deliverable
- Start small and grow (natural impetus)
- Odour zones are somewhat arbitrary
- Inefficient use of land/ not strategic
- Inconsistent with vision and development objectives
- Limits development potential released by infrastructure and connectivity investments
- Omission of residential is a failure
- Opposition to Household Waste Recycling Centre position in all options

#### Option 2

- Still not a strategic and ambitious vision – fails to delivery wider regeneration
- Good balance between delivery and ambition
- More balanced mix of uses than Option 1
- Support provision of heavy goods vehicle access
- Sacrifices commercial land for housing
- More likely to be deliverable than options 3 and 4
- Replacement locations needed for existing businesses
- Leaves significant area of under-used land

### Option 3

- Benefits from reduction of Water Recycling Centre, but concerns over deliverability
- Option too ambitious and will never happen
- Support for mixed use approach
- Maximises employment opportunities
- Imbalance between residential and employment
- Significant viability concerns

### Option 4

- Option should maximise housing and densities
- Not clear on new location of WRC which could constrain proper planning of site
- Concerned about viability and deliverability
- Imbalance between homes and jobs provision
- The delivery of this amount of development could achieve development principles
- Provides a more comprehensive view

A9 The responses received to the Issues and Options consultation enable a narrowing down of potential options for the purposes of testing probable environmental and infrastructure impact and the economic viability of the AAP proposals. Two refined options have therefore been formulated which are based upon Options 2 and 4 in the Issues and Options Report. At this stage it is important to emphasise that these refined options do not represent a recommendation of preferred development options, but set out approaches for the potential range of development in order to undertake the testing referred to above together with further conceptual urban design work that will inform the ultimate preferred development approach. These options are summarised below:

- **Option 2A: Medium Level of Redevelopment** – This Option includes modifications to the original layout contained in Option 2 on the Station/Chesterton Sidings area, and incorporates a higher density across the whole of the CNFE area. It continues to focus on the regeneration of areas of more readily available land, allowing the Water Recycling Centre and other existing businesses, where possible, to remain within the area, should they so wish.

The proposals would include:

- New homes and a local centre near the proposed new station, to create a vibrant mixed use area around the gateway;
- More comprehensive redevelopment improving existing areas along Cowley Road, to integrate them into the Station area;
- A new road north of Cowley Road to separate out industrial traffic from the main station access; and
- The option for Nuffield Road industrial area to change to offices / residential.

Subject to the outcomes of testing infrastructure and transport impacts and overall viability, this option could be delivered in the short to medium term and therefore it is appropriate to undertake further assessment and more detailed urban design.

- **Option 4A: Maximum Level of Redevelopment** - This Option modifies the original Option 4 to provide a more balanced employment and residential mixed use vision, primarily through a much higher mix of residential development in the AAP. The other considerations remain the same as Option 4 in the Issues and Options Report, but it relies on the Water Recycling Centre being relocated off site.

The proposals would include:

- Increased employment provision;
- A larger area set aside for residential development;
- A local centre near the proposed new station;
- The option for the Nuffield Road area to change to residential
- A new primary school;
- Segregated heavy good vehicle and station/residential access; and
- Reconfigured aggregates railhead and sidings.

This is a more complex approach and its full delivery would require a long term approach. Importantly, the potential to bring forward early redevelopment on parts of the AAP area on a phased basis will still need to ensure the comprehensive delivery of the full option is not prejudiced by piecemeal redevelopment.

#### **Options Assessment**

- A10 In order to progress the AAP, further assessment and testing of the two refined options will be needed to inform the choice of a final development approach for incorporation into the Draft AAP. Ultimately, the final development option is likely to be a modified version of one of the options.
- A11 **Transport:** The transport impacts of development at CNFE could, depending upon the chosen option, have considerable effects on the highway network in the locality, including the A14 and A10. This in turn, depending upon the ability and viability of mitigating impacts, could determine the amount of development that can take place at CNFE.
- A12 The County Council, as highway authority, with the support of the local planning authorities, have commissioned a wider transport modelling study of the A10 corridor between Cambridge and Ely. The assessment will identify the potential impacts of planned development along the route. In the case of CNFE, it is proposed that the two redevelopment options referred to above (2A and 4A) are initially assessed and then further work will follow to refine the options. It is anticipated that the results of the full study will be known in April/May 2016.
- A13 **Infrastructure and Delivery:** The Issues and Options Report also includes consideration of infrastructure and delivery matters. The refinement of the redevelopment options, as set out above, now enables work to proceed on assessing the infrastructure requirements that would result from the scale and nature of development for securing the delivery of such infrastructure. It is therefore proposed to jointly commission a Development Infrastructure and Funding Study to provide a greater understanding of the scale, type and costs of infrastructure and the impact on development viability of paying for the infrastructure. This assessment will be necessary to demonstrate the viability

of the proposals, the ability to fund infrastructure and satisfy the Planning Inspector examining the AAP that it is deliverable.

- A14 **Water Recycling Centre:** Anglian Water has commented that they do not object to the relocation of the WRC in principle but state that the funding to relocate the facility would have to come from the proceeds of redevelopment rather than Anglian Water customers. It is recognised that there is;
- considerable uncertainty regarding the viability of the relocation of the WRC;
  - further uncertainty and complexity inherent in finding a suitable alternative location for the WRC; and
  - complex technical measures to relocate an operational WRC.
- A15 Anglian Water further suggest that finding, funding and constructing a new WRC facility could take a minimum of ten years but state, in their response, to the consultation that, if this option is pursued, they would co-operate with the local planning authorities to identify solutions to these issues.
- A16. On the basis of the comments submitted by Anglian Water, a development option that includes the relocation of the WRC to another site away from CNFE needs to demonstrate that it is technically feasible, viable and deliverable and, on this basis, it is suggested that the development of Option 4A will need to involve further liaison with Anglian Water and other relevant agencies
- A17 **Further appraisals:** In addition to the above assessments, further work needs to be undertaken to assess:
- the implications of odour from Water Recycling Centre on nearby uses;
  - land contamination;
  - ecology impact and mitigation;
  - visual impact of the options;
  - noise impact and mitigation;
  - air quality; and
  - where necessary, other aspects which will be determined as the favoured option emerges.

### **Other ongoing work**

- A18 The Issues and Options Report asked how to deal with a range of key policy options covering aspects such as:
- densities of development,
  - employment uses,
  - housing mix,
  - provision of services and facilities,
  - place making and urban design; and
  - transport.
- A19 The outcome of the consultation, together with the requirement not to repeat policies that are included in other local plans or the NPPF, will now inform the preparation of any specific policies that will be required for the consideration of development proposals in the AAP area. Work will proceed on drafting such policies, having regard to the ongoing examination of the generic

policies in the respective local plans, the outcome of the A10 Transport Study and the Development Infrastructure and Funding Study and any other assessments as referred to above.

**Stakeholder Group**

- A20 A CNFE Stakeholders Group involving the local planning authorities, other agencies, landowners and promoters has been established to support the preparation and delivery of the CNFE AAP.