

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 28 September 2021
5.30 - 8.20 pm

Present: Councillors D. Baigent (Chair), S. Smith (Vice-Chair), Bick, S. Davies, Gawthrop Wood, Page-Croft, Pounds, Sargeant and Scutt

Executive Councillors: Thornburrow (Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport)

Officers:

Chief Executive (Cambridge City Council): Robert Pollock
Director of Planning and Economic Development: Stephen Kelly
Assistant Director: Paul Frainer
Planning Policy Manager; Jonathan Dixon
Engagement and Communication Lead Officer: Hana Loftus
Principal Planning Officer: Stuart Morris
Committee Manger: Claire Tunncliffe

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

21/37PnT Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Bond, Councillor Porrer attended as the alternate.

21/38PnT Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor Baigent	All	Cam Cycle

21/39PnT Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 June were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

21/40PnT Public Questions

The following statement was read out on behalf of Cambridge Councillor Copley:

Would the Committee and Executive Councillor change the boundary of the Eastern Gate Opportunity Area, to exclude both the North End of St Matthew's Piece, and the allotments between Harvest Way and New Street, which are of immense value as green spaces and for the physical and mental wellbeing of residents, on behalf of residents of those areas, and put forward a consultation to the public with these sites not specified within this opportunity area for development?

The Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport responded with the following:

The Council placed a high priority on the protection and enhancement of green spaces. The proposal to continue the Eastern Gate Opportunity Area in the First Proposals Plan, which includes the green spaces you identify, does not infer that the Council are proposing development for these spaces. On the contrary, the adopted Plan explicitly protects them, and the policy directions set out in the First Proposals show that it is highly likely that the Greater Cambridge Local Plan will do the same.

Reasons for saying this include:

- The green spaces you identify are identified in the Protected Open Spaces Policy in the adopted Cambridge Local Plan 2018, but are also included in the current Eastern Gateway Opportunity Area to ensure that this area is considered as a whole in the context of its redevelopment
- Proposing to continue to identify the Eastern Gate Opportunity Area in Policy S/OA: Opportunity Areas in Cambridge, to provide “a holistic approach to any future development that comes forward, to provide policy guidance for development that also improves public transport access and infrastructure delivery, and seeks improvements to the public realm”. As such, designation within an Opportunity Area does not infer development of the whole area.
- Policy BG/PO: Protecting open spaces states that the Local Plan will continue to include policies which identify and protect open spaces (such as the Protected Open Spaces in the adopted Cambridge Local Plan 2018), including village greens, parks, sports and recreation areas, allotments, community orchards and Protected Village Amenity Areas, and Local Green Space
- Also note that the Plan places a high priority on the protection and enhancement of green spaces. The green infrastructure proposals Policy BG/GI identifies area-wide strategic green infrastructure initiatives including to protect, enhance and expand allotments and community

growing facilities, and to support urban greening. Both initiatives would support the protection and enhancement of the spaces you refer to.

It was also noted there were opportunity areas within the current Local Plan being brought forward where the protected open spaces were included within the opportunity areas. During the development of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan it was important to clarify this and ensure it is understood that these areas remain protected.

A member of the public presented the Committee with the following statement: **What should the role be of local historians in the processes to create the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan?**" This stems from one of the reports you commissioned independent consultants to write - the Greater Cambridge Retail and Leisure Study 2021. In it, they wrote: "Cambridge city centre has always had an active nightclub scene, meeting the needs of residents alongside students from more than one University" P118

As a teenager in 1990s Cambridge I can categorically state that this statement was factually incorrect, there was a very limited night-time economy for young people.

Furthermore, the historical record showed that young people in Cambridge *literally had a riot* in 1985 at the derelict Cycle King warehouse on East Road - listed for demolition at the time, in the face of so many closures of music venues. (It resulted in police officers being put in hospital, and suspects hauled before magistrates). It proved to be the spark that led to the search for a site for a new venue which resulted in The Junction opening in 1990.

If expensive consultants cannot get Cambridge town's historical record right, what should the role be for the county's local history network? Is there scope for the council's joint planning team commissioning some refreshed historical studies and joint-funding some new local history publications - including those for the surrounding villages affected, to provide a more comprehensive and accurate historical background to your deliberations? This developing Local Plan did not deal with transport and leisure issue; the provision of leisure and sports facilities did need to be addressed as it was vital that these should be part of the Council's strategy.

I declare an interest as an unpublished local historian, a member of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society, a committee member of the Cambridgeshire Association for Local History, and a holder of a post-graduate diploma in historical studies from Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge

The Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport thanked the public speaker for their comments on the historic perspective of the retail consultants and had read the public speaker's local history blogs which were a benefit to the community.

On a wider note, an extensive evidence base had been prepared by consultants with relevant sector experience and had been reviewed by officers who had local knowledge to ensure that it is robust. Different evidence base studies placed emphasis on the recent and longer-term past, as appropriate to each topic to inform their findings.

The Plan was being informed by a strategic heritage impact assessment, and a baseline study had been published as part of the background documents.

In relation to planning for villages, the approach was also informed in part by Conservation Area Appraisals which specifically focus on their historic pattern.

The Council welcomed all comments highlighting issues to consider in the First Proposals and its supporting evidence, and would encourage everyone, including those with historic local knowledge, to contribute to the forthcoming First Proposals Consultation and future consultations, to make the plan the best it can be. The evidence gathering was a continuous process, any evidence submitted would be appreciated.

The Executive Councillor concluded that the pandemic had brought changes to the retail and leisure industry and the impact on residents which needed to be investigated.

The public speaker gave the following supplementary statement:

Expressed concern about the future of the retail area, the Grafton Centre. The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for that area of Cambridge required a 'refresh', especially with retail units closing. Was concerned the emerging Local Plan provided 'piece meal' expansion of the city and there would not be an opportunity to include leisure facilities such as 'concert hall or a swimming pool'.

The Executive Councillor acknowledged the future of the Grafton Centre was interesting due to the changes in retail brought on by the pandemic and planning law relating to changes to the Use Classes Order. However, this was an important area of retail which offered a different experience to the Grand

Arcade and was vital to the area. There may be possibilities for the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and other documents to be updated in the future to take account of these changes.

21/41PnT Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Preferred Options (Regulation 18) – For consultation

Matter for Decision

The First Proposals (Preferred Options) represented the next stage in the preparation of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan being jointly prepared by Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. It was proposed the public consultation would take place between 1 November and 13 December 2021.

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

- i. Agreed the Greater Cambridge Local Plan: First Proposals (preferred options) (Regulation 18) (Appendix A) for public consultation;
- ii. Noted the First Proposals Sustainability Appraisal (Appendix B) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (Appendix C) and agreed them as supporting documents to the First Proposals that would also be subject to public consultation;
- iii. Agreed the following supporting documents to the public consultation: (a) Topic papers for each theme (Appendix D) (b) Statement of Consultation, including the Councils' consideration of and responses to representations received to the Issues and Options consultation 2020 (Appendix E); (c) Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance (Appendix F); (d) Draft Duty to Cooperate Statement of Common Ground (attached at Appendix G) (e) Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix H);
- iv. Agreed the findings of the following background document that informed the First Proposals and was proposed to accompany the public consultation: (a) Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (Appendix I and errata at appendix J);
- v. Noted the findings of the following background documents that have informed the First Proposals and are proposed to accompany the public consultation (see Background documents to this report): (a) Greater Cambridge Local Plan: First Conversation (issues and options) (Regulation 18) data release published September 2020 (b) Interim Evidence published in November 2020 (c) New Evidence published August 2021; 6. Agree that any subsequent material amendments be made by the Lead Member for Planning Policy in Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, in consultation with respective Chairs and Spokes;

- vi. Agreed that any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes that do not materially affect the content be delegated to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning Policy in Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, in consultation with respective Chairs and Spokes.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable

Scrutiny Considerations

The Joint Director of Planning Policy and Economic Development introduced the Officer's presentation which outlined the first proposals and where the project was in the process.

Following a detailed presentation from the Planning Policy Manager and the Engagement and Communication Lead Officer, the following responses were given to Members' questions. The questions were taken under four headings:

Needs and Numbers

- i. Affordable housing (AH) was a key element to the Plan; it was important to maximise delivery of AH through the Plan.
- ii. If the number of homes calculated were not provided this could increase commuting into Cambridge as the jobs in the City increased and would put pressure on accommodation costs.
- iii. The job market in Cambridge was extremely successful which brought both benefits and disbenefits, increased commuting, a scarcity of housing for those working in Cambridge which impacted the rising cost of housing.
- iv. The Climate Change Study had stressed the importance of homes being located appropriately for jobs in the city to reduce the volume of long-distance commuting.
- v. A complex modelling exercise had been undertaken to quantify the growth of the job market; it sought to identify those sectors/jobs which would continue to draw people into Cambridge and who needed to be housed in locations that provided good access to those jobs. This would also address the quality of life issues which have been highlighted in the emerging Plan.

- vi. Noted the comment that on p345 the reference '200,000 vehicles crossing the boundary every day', should be 200,000 vehicle movements crossing the boundary every day.
- vii. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines sustainable development to include economic, social, and environmental considerations. Therefore, the emerging Plan needed to look at delivery of the government's definition of sustainable development which meant it did not just look at the housing need but had to look at the economic needs of the area for the Plan to be found sound.
- viii. The price/cost of workspaces in Cambridge had increased significantly which had an impact on small and local businesses as well as large companies.
- ix. Within the emerging Local Plan, a flexible supply of employment land had been allocated, whether for multinational or local businesses. It was important to ensure that small local businesses were not priced out of the market.
- x. Noted the comment there was an increased chance of achieving the goal of 40% affordable housing in the urban extension than adding new homes into new settlements.
- xi. Work had been undertaken to try to determine the trajectory of water consumption; a wider water resource management plan for the region is being prepared which was expected to identify long and shorter term measures for supplementing or changing the existing supply arrangements - in recognition of the impact upon the chalk streams that existing abstraction was having.
- xii. The Environment Agency were due to review the abstraction licences for Cambridge Water from the aquifer as part of the regional water planning process.
- xiii. There was a regional planning process to address water issues and a Water Resources Management Plan was due to be published next year. This timeline meant that Officers would be aware of the outcome of the process of that Plan before the more formal stages of the emerging Plan were concluded.
- xiv. While consideration had been given to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER), the emerging Plan did not seek to provide for the economic growth rates referred to in that plan but followed its recommendation and was informed by additional evidence considering the need for homes and jobs in the Greater Cambridge area;
- xv. Officers would advise what the split of the 20,000 office and industrial positions were from the 58,500 jobs created during the Plan period outside of the meeting.

Proposed sites and green space

- i. The definition of sites referenced as the 'edge of Cambridge' and the 'city of Cambridge' followed the Issues and Options Consultation which had categorised site by location. When viewing the digital map of the emerging Plan the locality of these sites would be clearer to the reader.
- ii. When viewing the Plan digitally the reader would be able to search by area.
- iii. With reference to the BioMedical Campus Policy S/CBC, noted the comment that the proposal submitted through the call for sites from landowners, from Jesus College, St John's College, Pembroke, and Cambridgeshire County Council.
- iv. The Plan identified an appropriate windfall allowance within the Cambridge area and South Cambridgeshire area; these figures had been determined by a housing delivery study.
- v. The annual monitoring report published by the Council highlighted locations of sites and anticipated sites which would be brought forward including windfall sites. The data which showed the completion of sites could be found through the annual survey. With this data it would be possible to undertake further tracking of assumptions around the windfall sites and the cumulative impact as it was important to understand the infrastructure needs.
- vi. Noted the comment there was no reference to cumulative impact under the banner of health and wellbeing.
- vii. Noted the suggestion the CBC Addenbrookes site would come under greater scrutiny for use of the green belt.
- viii. The issue of open spaces would continue to be looked at throughout the Plan process; it was important to get the right balance between off site contributions towards green open spaces
- ix. There was a policy proposal which would ensure a good level of self-builds would be provided.
- x. Noted the recommendation that the needs of Gypsy, Romany, and Travellers needed to be accommodated. Currently an assessment was being undertaken regarding this matter; permanent provision and / or temporary space would be investigated based on the needs collated from the results.
- xi. The delivery study explored issues such a market absorbency, market trends, and current issues in the area; these would be considered when determining if the sites could be delivered at a faster rate.
- xii. Central Government had a substantial stake in the two sites identified in the Plan for faster delivery. The Council's expected to engage with

Homes England on the matter of new/additional tenures and at ways in which more accessible housing could be delivered.

- xiii. The Housing Strategy would also explore the ongoing issues around the delivery of affordable housing and the build to rent properties.

Environmental issues – policies

- i. Noted the advice that it would be helpful to provide additional information on article 4 directions (which can add additional controls for changes of use that do not otherwise require planning permission) regarding retail centres, so the public have a greater understanding of the meaning of article 4.
- ii. Noted the suggestion the wording on the section regarding retail centres could be changed from Cambridge city centre and village centres to local centres within the city.
- iii. The people and place responsive design did highlight community engagement to inform design decisions and would look to develop this point further.
- iv. Believed the Plan did take a strong and innovative approach regarding visitor accommodation but noted the comments regarding better control of short term lets.
- v. Work would begin on the statement of consultation for the plan which would address community engagement.
- vi. The digital glossary would allow the reader to click on a word such as neighbourhood plan or article 4 and an explanation of the term would appear.
- vii. As part of the consultation, residents would be welcome to put forward policy suggestions to be carried over from the existing plan or new policies for consideration.

Resilience/ structures to support the plan

- i. Believed that through evidence and engagement work to date, the Council was in a good position to understand the infrastructure and collateral requirements required as part of the Plan process with those external agencies who would assist with delivery.
- ii. It was important to recognise the issues of working with external agencies, such as utilities companies, or external partnerships such as the Greater Cambridge Partnership, to ensure the growth strategy could be met by all involved or whether due to the level of growth had to be rethought.
- iii. Through the independent examination process the deliverability of the plan would be tested.

- iv. The emerging Plan related to several internal and external documents which could be used as an evidence-based document when speaking to Central Government.
- v. The 10% buffer included in the number of new homes to the year 2041 would allow flexibility and safeguarding of supply.
- vi. Officers would be exploring whether it was possible to seek agreement with Central Government for greater flexibility over issues such as the 5-year housing land supply (as Oxfordshire had done as part of the housing and growth deal for their area). This discussion could be progressed with government as part of the ongoing work surrounding the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework.
- vii. The Plan would be accompanied by a viability assessment. Such an assessment had been carried out at this current stage which had demonstrated that the proposals were reasonably viable. Policies and standards were developing which would be fed into the viability assessment for further work.
- viii. Noted the conversation around resilience from the utility companies, climate change resilience and the wish to expand on community resilience in the Plan.
- ix. Would investigate whether it was possible to take out the word 'options' from the title Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Preferred Options (Regulation 18) – For consultation.
- x. Noted the point that it needed to be clearer that approximately 11,500 homes were required for the new plan; 37,000 homes were existing commitments.

The Committee

Resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendations as set out in the Officer's report.

The Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport approved the recommendations and congratulated Officers on their efforts to produce such outstanding work.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

21/42PnT Creating a vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc - response to consultation and OxCam ARC Environmental Principles

Matter for Decision

The purpose of the report was to agree Cambridge City Council's response jointly with South Cambridgeshire District Council, to the Government's Creating a Vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Consultation for which the deadline for responses was 12th October. Also, for Cambridge City Council to endorse the locally led Environment Principles produced by the Arc Leadership Group.

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

- i. Agreed a joint response with South Cambridgeshire District Council to the Government's Creating a Vision Oxford-Cambridge Arc Consultation as set out in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report.
- ii. Endorsed the shared Environment Principles at Appendix 2 of the Officer's report hereto.
- iii. Supported the development of an Arc Environment Strategy which would provide for how the principles could be delivered.in the Officer's report.
- iv. Agreed to write to Anthony Browne MP and Daniel Zeichner MP requesting they support the Environmental Principles at Appendix 2 of the Officer's report

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable

Scrutiny Considerations

In response to Members' questions Officers said the following:

- i. Noted Members' assumption that rail would be electric and should be the only option.
- ii. As reported at the previous Planning and Transport Community meeting, the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport in consultation with Chair and Spokes had in response to East West Rail Informal Consultation Stage expressed their support of electric rail only.
- iii. Important to understand the environment principles had been formed by the local authorities and would be difficult for central Government to ignore if all local authorities were to approve them.
- iv. The consultation was aimed as a 'first conversation' with communities across the arc. This was not the primary channel for Local Authorities as there were work streams which they were being engaged upon.
- v. Believed it was important to put forward the Council's position in relation to the emerging Local Plan.

Councillor Bick proposed an additional recommendation:

- i. To write to Anthony Browne MP and Daniel Zeichner MP requesting they support the Environmental Principles at Appendix 2 of the Officer's report.

The additional recommendation was carried unanimously.

The Committee

The recommendations in the Officer's report were voted on separately by the Committee, the votes were as follows:

- i. The Committee **unanimously endorsed** the recommendation i as set out in the Officer's report.
- ii. The Committee **endorsed** the recommendation ii as set out in the Officer's report by **8 votes to 0**.
- iii. The Committee **unanimously endorsed** the recommendation iii as set out in the Officer's report.
- iv. The Committee **unanimously endorsed** the additional recommendation iv to write to Anthony Browne MP and Daniel Zeichner MP requesting they support the Environmental Principles at Appendix 2 of the Officer's report

The Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

21/43PnT To Note Record of Urgent Decision Taken by the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport

7a **** ROD Cambridge South Station Consultation Response

The decision was noted.

7b *** ROD Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure (LCWIP)

The decision was noted.

7c *** ROD Joint Response to the Bedford Borough Council Draft Plan (Regulation 18) Strategy Options and Draft Policies consultation

The decision was noted.

The meeting ended at 8.20 pm

CHAIR

