

Planning - Pre application Developer Presentation

30 March 2016

Member Briefing Note

Transport Briefing - West Cambridge Campus, Madingley Road

1.0 Purpose of Briefing

- 1.1 To update Members on progress of the applicant's pre application **Transport Assessment** and **Travel Plan** to inform a **new outline planning application**.
- 1.2 To explain initial considerations around **CRSM-based approach** to modelling transport impact of the development.
- 1.3 To explain the rationale for the alternative '**Adaptive Phased Approach**' to assess the transport impact of the development

2.0 Pre Application Site

- 2.1 The pre application proposal is for a masterplan review to inform a new outline planning application for the West Cambridge Campus, at Land south of Madingley Road. The site is a major new development for the University of Cambridge for academic and commercial research, totalling 66 ha in area. The proposed densified West Cambridge would have a total floorspace of **500,280 sq m** (by 2031). Phase 1 (2021) would provide **284,310 sq m**, composed of **167,159 sq m** of academic floorspace and **92,386 sq m** of commercial floorspace.
- 2.2 The extant 1999 masterplan has been partially implemented. This related to a scheme of **235,437 sq m** floorspace in total. The principal roads through the site have been implemented along with numerous key buildings and the East and West Forums.
- 2.3 The West Cambridge campus has been slow to develop, which has resulted in remoteness, isolation, lack of social facilities, high car dependency and little 'sense of place'. Car parking dominates the site and severs the public realm from buildings. The site suffers from a lack of facilities, although the sports centre has helped start to readdress this issue over the last 18 months.
- 2.4 See **Diagram 1** below for an indicative layout of the new masterplan proposals.

3.0 Background and Policy Context

- 3.1 The site area is wholly within proposals site 7.06 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006 and site M13 of the emerging Local Plan.
- 3.2 The Council has identified an overall strategic need for future employment growth across the city, including making more efficient use of existing employment sites. The University is supportive of this approach and is looking to intensify future development on this site.
- 3.3 The emerging Cambridge Local Plan supports densification of the site in principle, subject to provision of a revised site wide masterplan that takes an 'integrated and comprehensive approach to development'.
- 3.4 This places importance on ensuring that the amount of floorspace can be successfully accommodated in environmental terms. This includes design, impact on the green belt and setting of the City, amenity and transport impact.

4.0 Initial CSRM Transport Assessment

- 4.1 Following initial consultation with Cambridge County Council, it was considered that the Cambridge Sub Regional Model (CSRM) would provide a helpful tool for understanding the transport impact of the West Cambridge Development. CSRM is a modelling tool suitable for assessing strategic transport impacts and was used to assess the emerging Local Plan site allocations, as well as the previous 2006 Local Plan strategic site allocations. This also included subsequent outline and reserved matters applications, including the Southern Fringe and North West Cambridge.
- 4.2 Although some early work was undertaken on behalf of the developer using the CSRM, it was recognised that there is considerable uncertainty regarding a number of wider transport issues. This means that assessing the detailed transport impact of the development, which has a lengthy build-out period, is challenging.
- 4.3 These uncertainties include the timing of other developments in the area and potential transport mitigation measures that may accompany those; the potential impact of the A14 improvement on the A428 and Madingley Road corridor; the outcome of the ongoing work on City Deal options for the corridor, and what measures (if any) Highways England might introduce over the medium term to manage traffic on the M11.
- 4.4 The University suggested that the full development would have a relatively low impact and that any future congestion on the network would primarily be a result of wider growth in Greater Cambridge.
- 4.5 Officers contest that the impact is relatively low for West Cambridge, but consider that, because of the various uncertainties set out above, a revised

Adaptive Phased Approach to assessing transport impact would be more appropriate.

- 4.6 This approach has been accepted by the County Highway Authority at Alconbury Weald within Huntingdonshire District Council, which has enabled this development to progress. It is however at a relatively early stage of implementation.

5.0 Adaptive Phased Approach

- 5.1 The uncertainties over a range of issues mean that assessing the overall impact of the development based wholly on CSRM has some shortcomings. It has been agreed with officers and the developer team that an alternative 'Adaptive Phased Approach' would offer a pragmatic approach to assess the transport impact of the proposal through a number of key phases.
- 5.2 An Adaptive Phased Approach involves assessing smaller phases of the overall scheme within agreed parameters and an overall Transport Cap on mitigation measures.
- 5.3 This approach will enable assessment of an initial phase of development within a shorter time frame (key phase 1: 2021) whereby transport mitigation will reflect the transport situation within that particular phase. There is therefore less uncertainty regarding wider issues.
- 5.4 Development in excess of this agreed amount would be conditioned subject to the approval of transport assessments for later phases, together with agreement to the necessary transport mitigation required for each of those phases.
- 5.5 The main advantages of the Adaptive Phased Approach are as follows:
- Whilst CSRM is appropriate for assessing strategic infrastructure and broad development scenario impacts, assessing the detailed transport impact of an individual development such as West Cambridge may not be the most appropriate approach. This is partly because of the long build-out period, in a corridor where there are a number of transport uncertainties.
 - Adoption of an Adaptive Phased Approach could potentially enable an outline consent to be granted for the entire development.
 - Individual phases of the development will be agreed and supported with transport enhancement measures. This is subject to agreement of an overall Transport Cap which would set a ceiling on spend on transport that could be secured from the development across all phases.
- 5.6 The shortcomings of the Adaptive Phased approach are as follows:

- Potential under estimate of the ultimate costs due to the quality of information at the time the Transport Cap is agreed at the initial stage.
 - Difficulty in identifying the level of Transport Cap given all of the uncertainties previously identified regarding transport in this corridor.
 - Risk of delay due to resolution of later transport mitigation measures.
 - Need for a substantive level of clarity and certainty about phasing of the development and potential for multiple phases to come forward together.
 - Ability to address cumulative/incremental impacts.
- 5.7 Officers will be negotiating the required mitigation measures for key phase 1 mindful of the extant permission which exists for West Cambridge. This work will also include negotiating the overall Transport Cap that will set a ceiling on potential transport spend for key phases that will come forward *after* key phase 1.

6.0 Travel Plan Approach

- 6.1 Central to the overall transport assessment and travel demand strategy is the Travel Plan. This will support a mode shift away from single occupancy private car use to more sustainable travel options.
- 6.2 These measures include quality improvements for walking and cycling conditions and investment into delivering quality and effective public transport services. This will be targeted to where people live with four key bus service improvements.
- 6.3 An appropriate contribution to highway improvements and Wider City Deal projects will be made proportionate to each key phase.

7.0 Strategic Employment Growth

- 7.1 The proposed development involves a significant intensification of use on the site through to final completion in 2031. This equates to an increase of **248,272 sq m** of additional academic and commercial floorspace over and above the extant permission, to give a total overall maximum floorspace of **500,280 sq m**.
- 7.2 Through implementation of the additional floorspace it is estimated West Cambridge will provide approximately 14,000 jobs. At the present time there are roughly 4,000 jobs provided at West Cambridge.
- 7.3 For the initial key phase 1 of the development the University proposes a further **40,000 sq m** of academic and commercial development over and above the existing planning permission. The first phase of development will be assessed to 2021. This is considered appropriate by the County Highways Authority because there is more certainty on transport mitigation likely to come forward during the next five years.

- 7.4 The first phase of development provides a larger percentage of academic floorspace. Because jobs density is higher for commercial development, a larger proportion of jobs will be provided towards the end of the plan period. Officers consider this acceptable and consistent with the strategy for jobs and homes within the emerging Local Plan.
- 7.5 Officers have some doubt that the full build out of the revised West Cambridge masterplan will be completed by 2031. However, densification of the site will address the problems West Cambridge is facing, (see paragraph 2.3), as well as provide employment floorspace to assist with jobs growth beyond 2031.

8.0 Current programme

- 8.1 A number of pre-application meetings have taken place on the key topic areas and the parameter plans are evolving in draft form.
- 8.2 The University are carrying out the revised modelling for Key Phase 1 of the Adaptive Phased Approach. From this work a package of transport mitigation measures will be discussed with the County Highways Authority.
- 8.3 The University currently aims to submit the outline planning application **late April 2016**. Officers consider this ambitious given current number of unresolved issues.
- 8.4 The application would be likely to come to the City Planning Committee in **summer/autumn 2016** for determination, subject to resolution of a number of outstanding key issues.

Diagram 1:

Draft Indicative Masterplan (February 2016)

