

Item

**East Cambridge Development & Regeneration Project:
Masterplan for East Barnwell.**



To:

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing
Housing Scrutiny Committee 24/09/2020

Report by:

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Wards affected:

All

Not a Key Decision

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out work that has been carried out towards developing a masterplan for the East Barnwell area within Abbey Ward. This work has been supported by the One Public Estate programme.
- 1.2 Key aims of the programme are the delivery of additional housing and improved community facilities
- 1.3 An initial consultation exercise – the East Barnwell conversation – was carried out in the spring of 2020 alongside liaison with key stakeholders and analysis of the area.
- 1.4 Key issues identified in the East Barnwell conversation were:
 - Sustainability;
 - Traffic and Transport
 - Housing
 - Amenities
 - Open & Active Space

- 1.3 Attached as Appendix 1 is the Interim Report. This sets out an overview and a strategic direction. The next steps will be further engagement with stakeholders and consultation.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the progress on developing a masterplan for East Barnwell and the Interim report.
- 2.1 Approve the development of further engagement with stakeholders and the second stage consultation process.

3. Background

- 3.1 The One Public Estate (OPE) programme is an established national grant programme delivered by the Cabinet Office. Its aim is to fund collaborative projects between public sector organisations and third parties, with the objective of making better use of publicly owned land.
- 3.2 In December 2018, the Council's Housing Development Agency submitted a bid to OPE Round 7 for funding to cover the costs of a master-planning exercise focusing on the opportunities for development and regeneration in the East Barnwell area of the city.
- 3.3 The bid to One Public Estate was supported by Cambridgeshire County Council, the Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust and the Cambridge Academic Partnership (now owned by the United Learning group). Each partner had one or more sites within the East Cambridge Area which for which they wished to explore development options. OPE agreed to fund stage one of the project and Cambridge City Council was awarded £91,500.
- 3.4 East Barnwell was selected due to the work completed in 2018 by the Community Services Team, who assembled a series of Ward Profiles in that year, identifying the economic barriers and expected changes in each ward of the city. Abbey Ward, and especially the East Barnwell area, were found to have the highest levels of deprivation in the city and consequently was prioritised for regeneration proposals.

- 3.5 The City Council has substantial land holdings in the East Barnwell area – mostly connected to its housing stock but also including community, commercial and leisure facilities. The Council is seeking to bring forward a housing programme and as part of this regeneration proposal are required to deliver the additional housing. The work on East Barnwell is enabling a holistic place-based approach rather than site by site opportunistic. The aim is that housing growth will therefore be achieved along with other local improvements for those who live in this part of the City.
- 3.6 In addition, officers were working with the County Council to support the delivery of a new community facility and had identified a need through this work for a wider view of the opportunities.



3.7 The initial outline potential of a masterplan for East Barnwell for the purposes of the OPE bid were:

- Up to 400 new homes in the East Barnwell Area,

- Community facilities and infrastructure to the ward which would also assist in the delivery and successful integration of the 1300 new homes in the Marleigh development,
- Job creation resulting from the above, and
- Up to £30m in capital receipts for partner organisations.

3.8 This is not intended as a limit on the scope of the project. This was a starting point for what it intended to be a dynamic process and other proposals are likely to come forward. Partners will vary in their approach to priorities for development including the balance between provision of additional facilities and capital receipts and the use of those receipts. The broad aim of regeneration is also aimed at job creation and the successful integration of new developments.

3.9 The importance of consultation was noted and it is in nature of an exercise of this kind that the emerging masterplan will respond to the outcome of the consultation and also to the opportunities and challenges that are identified and the factors which affect these.

3.10 The resulting project, known as the East Cambridge Development & Regeneration project (ECCR), was initiated in May 2019.

4. Progress to date

4.1 Since its initiation, the ECCR has undertaken the following actions:

- Set up a governing board for the ECCR consisting of members from the City and County Councils and Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS trust.
- Appointed Carter Jonas to lead on the development of a masterplan.
- Completed a public engagement exercise in February 2020, titled the East Barnwell Conversation, with residents in the East Barnwell area.
- Commenced the consideration of potential development opportunities and issues across the East Barnwell area.
- Liaised throughout the above process with the Greater Cambridge Planning team.
- Liaised with the Greater Cambridge Partnership on emerging plans for the Eastern Access corridor within which the Newmarket Road and the Barnwell Road junction are critical.
- Liaised with the County Council through a pre-application process to develop a Statement of Principles for Local Plan allocated site R6 which is required to enable the Community Centre to come forward.

- An interim report has been prepared and is attached at Appendix 1.

5. Public Engagement

- 5.1 Public engagement was always considered key to developing plans for East Barnwell. Early discussion with local stakeholders indicated that a large volume of consultation work has taken place in the ward in recent years, and this has led to a sense of fatigue among residents, who have seen limited progress in regeneration efforts. Consequently, the first-stage engagement for the ECDR was described as the East Barnwell Conversation and asked residents a more open question about what they thought was missing from the East Barnwell Area and how it could and should be improved. This format enabled residents to make proactive suggestions about the future of the ward and discuss more broad issues facing the area, such as congestion and the limited provision of local amenities.
- 5.2 In the first stage, the City Council, alongside Carter Jonas and Snapdragon Consulting, carried out a period of community and stakeholder engagement during February and early March, 2020. In line with the Cambridge City Council's Statement of Community Engagement, the project team sought to consult with as many local residents and relevant stakeholders as possible to ensure the local community were involved with the planning process. In order to reach the widest scope of people, consultation was carried out digitally, using a dedicated project website with bespoke comment submission point alongside social media advertising.
- 5.3 Alongside the digital engagement strategy, the project team also organised and attended a number of physical stakeholder events working with local groups including Abbey People. Stakeholder groups and sites where these groups met, included the Romsey Mill Youth Group and the Abbey Volunteers Group and Abbey Stadium Seniors Lunch. The primary aim of the physical stakeholder events was to engage with a diverse range of people, particularly focusing on those who may be excluded from commenting online such as younger children and elderly residents. Unfortunately, due to the Coronavirus outbreak, 2 out of 7 of the stakeholder events had to be cancelled. In addition to the physical events and online consultation, residents were invited to write to the Council. The strategy was successful, with over 1100 website visits, over 65 comments submitted on the website and over 100 local stakeholders attending physical stakeholder events.

5.4 Key issues which emerged were:

5.4.1 Sustainability – An overriding issue covered in many areas including transport, housing, and open spaces.

5.4.2 Traffic and Transport – Delivering better and more accessible sustainable transport options particularly the delivery of better cycle facilities and better transport routes, and cheaper and more reliable public transport. By tackling these factors, traffic would be reduced in the area, making it a better, healthier place to live.

5.4.3 Housing – the need for more social housing, private housing and affordable housing of various sizes including the need for family homes and smaller homes for elderly residents down-sizing. Sustainable housing features were also regularly noted as a priority.

5.4.4 Amenities – There is a significant lack of youth facilities, retail/leisure amenities as well as restaurants/pubs and other vital community spaces. There is a sense that the local area does not fully serve the needs or interests of local people and that the community relationships are damaged as a result.

5.4.5 Open & Active Space – Throughout the consultation, it was clear that green space and wildlife were important to local people. Many were keen to see the local character retained, particularly the protection of local species and areas of beauty although respondents also recognised that not all green spaces can be protected as they are - some green spaces are under-used and could be remodelled or put to better uses.

6. Next steps

6.1 It has always been a premise of this process that it would not provide an additional obstacle to developments – such as the new Community Centre – coming forward. Individual landowners, including the City Council, may bring forward proposals for sites in their ownership.

6.2 The next steps for the project are to take forward consultation and engagement with stakeholders based on the interim report. In particular this will include:

- 6.2.1 Investigate further the aspirations and intentions of property owners in the area who may have intentions to bring forward developments or who own properties which may potentially enable development.
- 6.2.2 Develop the interaction with the emerging new Local Plan. Potentially, a key element in the new Local Plan that is still under consideration is the future of Cambridge Airport. This is beyond the scope of this study and liaison has focussed on the relationship with the existing Local Plan, but as the new Local Plan develops this will become an increasing factor.
- 6.2.3 Continue engagement with the Greater Cambridge Partnership on the Eastern Access Study.
- 6.2.4 Consider further the nature of housing required across the area, including any needs of specific demographic groups.
- 6.2.5 Further investigate the options for improved facilities for young people, for active open spaces and for improved green links across the area.
- 6.2.6 Investigate the contribution that the City Council's substantial land holdings in the area could make to driving change and improving housing, community, commercial and leisure facilities in the East Barnwell area.

8. Implications

(A) Financial Implications

The work completed on the ECDR to date has been funded from the OPE grant, reported regularly to the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough OPE partnership.

(B) Staffing Implications

The work of administering the ECDR has been undertaken by the HDA.

(C) Equality and Poverty Implications

The social and equalities issues faced by the residents of East Barnwell are the driving force behind the ECDR and are discussed in detail in Appendix 1.

(D) Environmental Implications

Sustainability has emerged as a strong theme in the feedback to date.

(E) Procurement Implications

Carter Jonas were selected through a mini-competition via the Homes England Development Partner Panel.

(F) Consultation and communication

The East Barnwell Conversation exercise was undertaken as part of the ECDR. Next steps will be liaison with key stakeholders in relation to sites within their control and further exploration of needs.

(G) Community Safety

Community safety will be considered in the development of the masterplan.

13. Background papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

14. Appendices

Appendix 1: East Barnwell Master Plan Interim Report

15. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Jim Pollard, Senior Development Manager, tel: 01223 – 457924, email: jim.pollard@cambridge.gov.uk.