

**CONSULTATION BY EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL REGARDING
A MAJOR PLANNING APPLICATION FOR A DISTRICT WIDE LEISURE CENTRE
AND ASSOCIATED TRANSPORT WORKS, LAND ADJACENT ELY RUGBY CLUB,
DOWNHAM ROAD, ELY (REF: 10/01020/FUM)**

APPLICANT: EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNTY COUNCIL DRAFT RESPONSE

To: Cabinet

Date: 22nd February 2011

From: Acting Executive Director: Environment Services

Electoral division(s): Ely South and West, Ely North and East, Littleport ,
Burwell , Haddenham, Soham and Fordham Villages,
Sutton, Woodditton

Forward Plan ref: N/a *Key decision:* No

Purpose:

To consider the County Council's response to the consultation by East Cambridgeshire District Council regarding the provision of District wide leisure centre and associated transport works, land adjacent Ely Rugby Club, Downham Road, Ely (Ref: 10/01020/FUM)

Applicant: East Cambridgeshire District Council

Recommendation: Cabinet is recommended to:

a) consider the issues raised by the planning application for provision of District wide leisure centre and associated transport works, land adjacent Ely Rugby Club, Downham Road, Ely (Ref: 10/01020/FUM)

b) delegate to the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning in consultation with the Acting Executive Director, Environment Services, the authority to respond to the consultation on basis of Cabinet's comments.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) is seeking the County Council's views as a statutory consultee on a major application for a leisure centre and associated works to serve the entire District on land adjacent to the existing Rugby Club, Downham Road, Ely. The County Council and the Ely Rugby Club both own land within the site.
- 1.2 The application and the accompanying documents can be accessed from the following link:
<http://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=externalDocuments&keyVal=LDH28LGG02300>
- 1.3 The leisure centre would be built on the northern side of the A10 on the edge of Ely; the land is currently used for grazing. Access would be from Downham Road, with an underpass for pedestrians and cyclists linking the leisure centre with Ely. National Cycle Route 11 could potentially be diverted through the underpass with the agreement of Sustrans.
- 1.4 The proposals include a six lane 25 metre swimming pool, a six court sports hall, a children's pool, a fitness area and car park; the centre would cover 6000 square metres. The scheme has been rated as "very good" under the BRE Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM).
- 1.5 There are a number of issues that over a period of time, the County Council as Local Highway Authority has raised with East Cambridgeshire District Council. These were discussed by Members of the non-decision making Growth and Environment Policy Development Group (PDG) on 18th January 2011. Members at that meeting confirmed their support for the principle of the development but noted that should the issues not be resolved, then the County Council should submit a holding objection on highway grounds whilst there was continued joint working to address those issues.

2. CURRENT POSITION

- 2.1 Since PDG considered this development in January, there have been a number of meetings between officers from the County Council and East Cambridgeshire District Council and with the agents appointed by the District Council to act on their behalf. These meetings have addressed a number of the issues originally raised by the County Council. In particular, it has now been agreed by East Cambridgeshire District Council that they will adopt the underpass that gives pedestrian and cycle access to the leisure centre.
- 2.2 On this basis, it is recommended that the Council responds to the consultation by supporting the principle of the development providing certain 'Pre-commencement conditions' are applied. These proposed conditions are as follows:
 1. That East Cambridgeshire District Council (as the applicant) will adopt the underpass. Reason – the need for the underpass is entirely related to the development and will carry maintenance liabilities which the County Council can not take on. To address this, the County Council requires that the underpass be built as a private structure under the highway with the appropriate structural approvals and agreements with the County Council.
 2. That East Cambridgeshire District Council (as the applicant) will produce a Maintenance Regime for the underpass for approval by the Local Planning

Authority in consultation with the Highways Authority prior to commencing any development. This should also include details of how planting along the verge for Downham Road south of the A10 would be maintained. Reason – this is needed to ensure that the underpass is kept in permanent good and useable condition and through management of the planting, to ensure casual surveillance of the underpass area from the road and to help ensure safety for users given that this is the principal means of access for pedestrians and cyclists .

3. That East Cambridgeshire District Council (as the applicant) will produce details relating to construction methodology of the underpass and associated traffic management for approval by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highways Authority prior to commencing any development. Reason – this is needed in order to minimise interference with the A10 during the construction.
4. That a plan for the management of waste during construction be produced for approval by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highways Authority prior to commencing any development.
5. That a Travel Plan be produced for approval by the Highways Authority prior to occupation of the development. Reason – to ensure that a full range of sustainable travel options for access to the site are provided.
6. That a Car Park Management plan be submitted for agreement with the County Council prior to the opening of the Leisure Centre and that the amount of car parking be agreed with the Highways Authority and that this is included as a planning condition. Reason – to ensure that parking can be controlled and ensure that alternative means of travelling to the Leisure Centre can be encouraged.
7. That the bus service provision proposals be revisited to ensure that the public transport proposal offers a sustainable and attractive alternative service to the car, and ideally as a minimum should provide a half hourly rather than an hourly service.

2.3 Detailed discussions on the points above are ongoing and prior to submission of the final response to East Cambridgeshire District Council, some of these issues may be further advanced than they are at present. Cabinet is therefore asked to delegate to the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning in consultation with the Acting Executive Director, Environment Services, the authority to respond to the consultation on basis that the principle of the development is supported subject to the application of conditions as noted in paragraph 2.2.

3. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

Resources and Performance

3.1 The resource and performance implications arising from this full application relate mainly to East Cambs District Council; as the proposed underpass would need to be adopted and maintained by them. As well as this, further clarification has been requested in relation to how a good level of bus service can be achieved for the Leisure Centre. Bus Route 19 within Ely currently only operates each weekday morning and this is a County Council contract service serving Cam Drive. Given that services under the Cambridgeshire County Council contract are currently under review, this issue needs to be factored in from the outset. The impacts upon the wider drainage network would also have to be fully evaluated.

Statutory Requirements and Partnership Working

- 3.2 The application proposals require the County Council to engage in partnership working with the East Cambridgeshire District Council as the local planning authority and as the developer. .
- 3.3 The County Council as the highway authority, the lead local flood authority and as a landowner will need to consider both the costs and benefits of the proposals. It is envisaged that this will help inform local decisions, so that costs and benefits are shared fairly overall.

Climate Change

- 3.4 No significant implications anticipated. However consideration should be given by the applicant as to how the underpass (given its low lying level) and the pumping system could be built to withstand potentially more extreme storm events with the onset of climate change and potential for more localised temporary flooding.

Access and Inclusion

- 3.5 The site straddles the A10 on the edge of Ely and is linked by an underpass for non-motorists; its position in relation to existing and proposed public transport services is fundamental to the successful delivery of the proposals. The design / enhancement of existing and new footways and cycleways and their overall compliance with Market Town Transport Strategy, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Equality Act are also considered to be significant considerations for both authorities.

Engagement and Consultation

- 3.6 The County Council is responding to the local planning authority as a consultee. A formal notification has also been served upon the County Council as an affected landowner. The Lead Cabinet Member and Local members will have been briefed by officers by the time Cabinet consider the application.

Source Documents	Location
Planning application for a District wide leisure centre and associated transport works, land adjacent Ely Rugby Club, Downham Road, Ely (Ref: 10/01020/FUM)	http://pa.eastcambsgov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=externalDocuments&keyVal+LDH28LGG02300