

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN: DRAFT PLAN July 2017

To: Economy and Environment

Meeting Date: 12th October 2017

From: Executive Director (Economy Transport and Environment)

Electoral division(s): St Neots East and Gransdens; Gamlingay

Forward Plan ref: N/A **Key decision:** N/A

Purpose: To consider and endorse the County Council's response to the draft Local Plan for Central Bedfordshire

Recommendation: The Committee is requested to:

- a) Endorse the response as set out in Appendix 1; and
- b) Delegate to the Executive Director (Economy, Transport and Environment) in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee the authority to make minor changes to the response.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Central Bedfordshire Council is preparing a new Local Plan and has published the Draft Plan for consultation during July and August. Following this the Council will consider the responses made to the consultation and publish the pre-submission local plan for a further consultation. Any objections and comments to this plan will be considered by the Inspector as part of the examination in public which is anticipated in the early summer 2018.
- 1.2 Central Bedfordshire is situated to the south west of Cambridgeshire and shares a boundary with South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire.
- 1.3 Key transport routes, such as the A1, A428 and the East Coast Mainline railway pass through Central Bedfordshire and play a major role in the strategic regional transport network.
- 1.4 This report summarises the key strategic transport issues arising from the draft Local Plan and the implications for Cambridgeshire. A detailed set of transport comments have been sent to Central Bedfordshire in advance of their deadline for responses and these are attached at Appendix 1.

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN

- 1.5 The Local Plan is making provision for between 20,000 and 30,000 new homes in addition to the 23,000 homes already committed as allocations in the current plan or with planning permission. Further work will be undertaken to establish an exact amount and location of development when Central Bedfordshire produce the Submission Plan for consultation in 2018.
- 1.6 The local plan proposes a number of options to deliver this level of housing growth through:
 - Creating new attractive villages;
 - Creating a new market town;
 - Expanding existing towns; and
 - Growth in existing villages, but only where services can support it.
- 1.7 A significant amount of this development will be dependent on improvements to strategic transport networks including the A1 and A428/A421 corridor, plus the development of critical new infrastructure, like the proposed East-West Railway and the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway.
- 1.8 The Plan proposes a number of strategic growth locations, two of which are in close proximity to Cambridgeshire and are therefore likely to have significant impacts on strategic and local transport networks.
- 1.9 Appendix 2 to this report contains the Local Plan Key Diagram indicating the proposed options for strategic growth locations and their relationship to existing and planned transport infrastructure.

Four new villages east of Biggleswade

- 1.10 This proposal is to develop a network of linked villages to the south of Sutton, west of Dunton and east of Biggleswade. They will comprise around 3,000 dwellings and 4.6ha of employment land and include an opportunity to contribute towards the delivery of the Biggleswade “Green Wheel” providing an extension to Biggleswade Common.
- 1.11 This development is dependent on improvements to the A1 and the local road network. Improvements to public transport links to Biggleswade train station will also be required.
- 1.12 The proposal could include a range of services and amenities, including retail and commercial; community and leisure facilities; open space; health and social care and a full range of educational provision.

New market town near Tempsford

- 1.13 This proposal is for a new market town in an area that partly reuses previously developed land at the old Tempsford Airfield. The new town will comprise 7,000 homes and a new science and technology business park.
- 1.14 The growth location option sits east of the A1, and to the north of Sandy. Tempsford village lies to the north and west of the site, and Everton village to the east. Full scale development here is dependent on improvements to existing transport infrastructure, such as the A1 and A428. It is also dependent on assumptions about the route of the proposed East-West Rail and a station at the new development will be critical to supporting this development. The new station will form an interchange between the new East-West Rail and the East Coast Main Line. It should be noted that a preferred route for East-West Rail, will not be established until the end of this year, with route options both north and south of Sandy currently under consideration.
- 1.15 The proposal could include a range of services and amenities, including retail and commercial; community and leisure facilities; open space; health and social care and a full range of educational provision.
- 1.16 Employment opportunities will be provided through a new science and technology/business park to maximise the opportunity for employment within the transport corridor between Oxford and Cambridge, as well as through the provision of infrastructure, including schools, shops and healthcare facilities.

2 STRATEGIC TRANSPORT ISSUES

- 2.1 The scale of growth along the A1 Corridor and combined with proposed growth at Wyboston in the Bedford Local Plan will have a significant impact on the transport network in Cambridgeshire. Therefore development in Central Bedfordshire should demonstrate that the impacts on the Cambridgeshire transport network can be mitigated, and we would urge that all new development proposed should take account of existing congestion issues and aim to promote travel by non-car modes.
- 2.2 Highways England has consulted on route options for an improved A428 dual carriageway between Caxton Gibbet and the Black Cat roundabout, forming part of the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway. Specifically any infrastructure proposals for the A428 corridor as a

result of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan should look to complement the A428 bus priority proposals being developed as part of the Greater Cambridge Partnership.

- 2.3 The new market town at Tempsford relies on the delivery of the East West Rail central section with a new station to serve the site, A1 enhancements, as well as improvements to the A428 between Caxton Gibbet in Cambridgeshire and the Black Cat. Given the long lead in times for much of this enabling infrastructure, it is considered that more detailed deliberation of the strategic infrastructure requirements and timings of these to support the proposed development is needed.
- 2.4 Neighbourhood planning consultation demonstrates that residents of Gamlingay in South Cambridgeshire have a strong desire for cycle connections between the village and Sandy Railway Station to be improved. The two Council's should work together to meeting this demand.
- 2.5 The East of Biggleswade Growth Location is also dependent on improvements to the A1 and the local road network. Improvements to public transport links to Biggleswade railway station will also be required. The Council supports the aim of improving public transport, walking and cycling links to Biggleswade railway station in order to maximise rail mode shares.
- 2.6 No information or detail has been provided on the nature and scale of impacts of the development on the road network outside of Central Bedfordshire, particularly on the B1040 and B1042 into Cambridgeshire.
- 2.7 The draft Local Plan acknowledges that development of the scale proposed in this location would require highway improvements to the local and strategic network. The County Council should therefore continue to work with Central Bedfordshire Council on transport matters as the Local Plan process progresses.

4. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

- 4.1 There are no significant implications for this priority. Any development may include employment opportunities for the local economy which may benefit Cambridgeshire residents and residents of the new development may seek employment opportunities in Cambridgeshire.

Helping people live healthy and independent lives

- 4.2 There are no significant implications for this priority.

Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

- 4.3 There are no significant implications for this priority.

5. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

Resource Implications

5.1 There are no further resource implications

Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

5.2 There are statutory risk or legal implications

Equality and Diversity Implications

5.3 There are no equality or diversity implications

Engagement and Consultation Implications

5.4 No further resource implications to detail at this stage.

Localism and Local Member Involvement

5.5 There are statutory risk or legal implications

Public Health Implications

5.6 There are no public health implications

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	N/A
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	N/A
Has the impact on Statutory, Legal and Risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan
Are there any Equality and Diversity implications?	No Name of Officer: Tamar Oviatt-Ham
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	N/A
Are there any Localism and Local Member involvement issues?	N/A

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	N/A
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Source Documents	Location
https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/draftplan2017	On-line

**Appendix 1 - Central Bedfordshire Local Plan: Draft Plan July 2017
Response by Cambridgeshire County Council (separate appendix)**