

Environment and Green Investment Committee

Date: 8 September 2022

Time: 10.00am – 1.00pm

Venue: New Shire Hall

Present: Councillors L Dupré (Chair), N Gay (Vice Chair), A Bradnam, S Corney, P Coutts, S Ferguson, I Gardener, J Gowing, R Hathorn, J King, C Rae, M Smith and G Wilson (substituting for Cllr Milnes)

85. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Councillors Milnes (Cllr Wilson substituting) and Tierney.

Councillor Gay declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Darwin Green item as a Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, as Christ's College was part of the North West Cambridge Consortium of Landowners involved in the development of Darwin Green.

Councillor Wilson declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Waste PFI item as a former employee and current pensioner of the Environment Agency.

Councillor Hathorn declared a non-pecuniary interest as one of the Local Members for Darwin Green.

Councillor Bradnam declared a non-pecuniary interest as the Local Member for the Waste PFI item. She also declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Darwin Green item as a Member and former Chair of the Joint Development Control Committee, and advised that she had attended briefings on the Darwin Green development at an early stage. She also advised that she was a substitute Member of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Planning Committee.

86. Minutes of the Environment & Green Investment Committee 7 July 2022 and Action log

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

Officers provided verbal updates on two Action Log items.

With regard to item 50, which related lobbying BEIS regarding the Agricultural Grant scheme, officers advised that there were many tensions on land use, including nature recovery, food sustainability, landscape recovery, water management, natural capital solutions, carbon mitigation and renewable energy. The Council had a number of workstreams looking at some of these areas, and there were clearly both tensions and possible synergies between these potential land uses. It was therefore proposed to close

down this ongoing action to reflect that there were now multiple workstreams on potential land use rather than just Renewable Energy through the Agricultural Grant Initiative.

In relation to item 49, construction materials prices, it was confirmed that there was still significant volatility in the costs of construction materials and other elements such as technology and energy prices, which were having a considerable impact on projects currently being planned and delivered. The Committee and the Green Investment & Utility Advisory Group were updated where costs were changing significantly. It was agreed to close down this Action Log item.

87. Petitions and Public Questions

No petitions or public questions were received.

88. Darwin Green Phases Two and Three Development Site, Cambridge Road, Impington, Cambridgeshire (Planning Reference 22/02528/OUT)

The Committee considered the County Council's response to the planning application for Darwin Green Phases 2 and 3.

Presenting the report, officers set out the background to the planning application, including the size and scope, location, its allocation within the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, and relationship to the developments of Darwin Green Phase 1 and Eddington, and the County Council's role as a statutory consultee. A briefing had taken place for County Councillors in the summer, and the application was due to be considered by South Cambridgeshire District Council's Planning Committee later in the year.

Officers summarised the main issues, which were covered in Appendix 1 to the report:

- Digital Infrastructure – BT Openreach would be providing Broadband to the site, and officers had requested layouts and plans of ducting at the detailed stage, which would be done through a planning condition;
- Education – it had been established with the applicant that there would be a two Forms of Entry (2FE) Primary School on site, including two Early Years classrooms. Developers would provide the land at nil cost and also a capital contribution to construction costs. Land and a capital contribution would also be provided by the developer to deliver a secondary school. In addition, childcare provision would be delivered throughout the site via both private and voluntary sectors. A contribution would also be sought towards SEND and Children's Centre services, with SEND provision likely to be in the primary school, and Children's Centre provision in Darwin Green Phase 1;
- Flood and Water – The Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) had not raised an objection, but they had flagged up a number of issues including a request for more detail on how the drainage strategy would work, and relocation of the drainage pond;
- Library and lifelong learning services – contributions had been requested for the Darwin Green library, to be built shortly;

- Strategic Waste – contributions would be sought for enhanced facilities at Milton Waste Recycling Centre;
- Transport – a holding objection had been lodged by the Transport team pending assessment.

The Democratic Services Officer read out comments from one of the Local Members, Councillor Edna Murphy (Bar Hill), which are attached as Appendix 1 to the minutes. It was noted that Councillor Murphy had also declared that she was a resident of Windsor Road which was very close to the development, and the cycle path to link to Windsor Road was specifically mentioned in her submission.

Officers made the following responses to the points raised by Councillor Murphy:

- Regarding transport to school, the strategy from the outset was for each site in the North West Quadrant to have their own primary schools, with a secondary school at Darwin Green. This would reduce the need for travelling. The Education Authority needed to balance the need for opening a school early to achieve the placemaking benefits of community facilities, against whether there would be the requisite number of children in the development to ensure viability. Generally though, early opening of primary schools was favoured by the Council, as this had a positive impact on communities;
- With regard to the issue of Early Years and Nursery provision, the primary school would provide two Early Years classrooms, supplemented by general childcare provision, delivered through the Section 106 agreement and through the private and voluntary sectors. The Councillor's concern appeared to be what would happen if the private and voluntary sectors failed to deliver, and she had suggested that additional provision in the primary school could counter this. However, officers commented that this would be challenging, as they could only request what was needed. Officers agreed to discuss this with their Education colleagues;
- In terms of children having to cross Huntingdon Road, the intention was for Darwin Green and Eddington developments to be self-sufficient in terms of primary provision, but ultimately parents could choose to send their children to other schools. In relation to Eddington largely catering for the children of post-graduate families and the phasing of admissions in year, it was observed that all schools kept an element of headroom for in year transfers;
- With regard to water, the report set out how the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) had raised a number of queries regarding the maintenance of water courses which were being used within the site. The Flood Risk Assessment had indicated that there was a risk of flooding if there was a failure of the pumps on the site, and the applicant had been advised that the flood risk needed to be managed on site;
- In terms of water supply, sites had been allocated in the previous Local Plan, and the assumption was that water supply had been secured through Anglian Water;
- Officers agreed to follow up with South Cambridgeshire District Council the provision of both a supermarket and GP services, and provide written feedback on those points.
Action required;
- With regard to community facilities versus placemaking, the Council always sought to ensure community facilities were established at an early stage. An update from SCDC

confirmed that a temporary community building would be provided for the early stages, which would be followed in subsequent phases by a permanent building.

In response to the presentation:

- A Member clarified that the Eddington development, whilst including some provision for Girton graduates, was not primarily for graduate students, but was designed to accommodate key workers including post doctoral workers. There was provision for a new Cambridge college in the second phase, subject to funding. Eddington School was run by University's Faculty of Education, and had an Excellent Ofsted rating, so was an attractive option for local families. It was noted that Eddington School opened at an early stage of that development and as a result had probably diverted pupils from other areas;
- A Member stressed Councillor Murphy's point about health provision, both GP and dental surgeries, and commented that this was vital when existing services were already stretched. Clarification was required about when and where health provision was being planned;
- It was agreed that officers would provide a written response to Councillor Murphy which would be copied to Committee Members. Action required;
- A Member asked what was being done to mitigate the impact of the Darwin Green development on neighbouring communities. Officers advised that in the context of this Planning Application, they were constrained to those issues where there was a potential direct impact on other communities resulting from the development, such as flood risk.

Officers gave the following responses on the Highways issues raised by Councillor Murphy:

- confirmed that there was a signalised junction at the entrance to Darwin Green Phase 1, albeit on west side of road. Additional facilities as part of Darwin Green 2 and 3 had not been considered;
- In terms of connectivity, there was an obligation for a link to Windsor Road to be provided as part of the Darwin Green Phase 1 development. Darwin Green Phases 2 and 3 would include a north-west link through to Thornton Close. Those were the only links that could be guaranteed, as those were the only locations controlled or owned by either the developer or the County Council;
- In terms of open space lighting, this was only usually provided in specific circumstances e.g. on cycleways in urban areas. In most open spaces, lighting conflicted with biodiversity objectives. Solar studs could be installed, but a capital and maintenance sum would be required from the developer for this, as it was not an adopted highway;
- With regard to the comment on 20mph speed limits, all new streets were designed with the assistance of the Council, to restrict speeds to below 20mph, through horizontal deflection rather than speed humps, i.e. road layout and landscaping.

It was noted that Local Member Cllr Cox Condron had been in touch with officers and would not be making representations at the meeting.

Speaking as a Local Member, Councillor Hathorn made the following points:

- highlighted the work undertaken by Think Communities in the adjacent Orchard Park development to generate income from sports pitches and community centres to pay for other facilities. However, there was a tension, as those facilities should be available for free to the community;
- noted the tensions arising from Darwin Green being geographically located in two local authority areas i.e. Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). For example, a Country Park was planned for the SCDC part of the development, but the majority of residents would live in the Cambridge part, so what model would be used to generate revenue to maintain that park? She further noted that the Country Park was not referred to at all, but it was in the AQMA (Air Quality Management Areas) and planting in the country park could be used to mitigate the impact of the A14;
- observed that there were cables for Broadband, but there was no mention of any mobile mast;
- in terms of biodiversity, asked what measures could be taken to ensure measures were taken e.g. planting, to help in terms of streetscape and avoiding potential heat islands.

Local Member Councillor Rae endorsed Councillor Murphy's comments and raised the following specific points:

- pressure needed to be put on the developer to secure access to the land for the Thornton Close link;
- stressed the issue with the phasing of school places, especially for families arriving in October;
- highlighted the importance of ensuring developers stick to their commitments for the provision of community facilities, especially buildings that could be used for community activities. She commented that there had been a lot of "back peddling" by Barratts in relation to Darwin Green Phase 1.

Officers reassured Members that they would take back Local Member comments to Greater Cambridge Partnership colleagues, and gave the following responses to the points raised by Councillors Hathorn and Rae:

- The Country Park would be subject to a separate application for approval of Reserved Matters, and the issues raised would be fed into that process. The noise mitigation for the A14 would be addressed through landscaping/landforming, with a limited amount of fencing;
- Broadband – any overground or underground infrastructure details would be subject to requested planning conditions. However, in discussing this point, it was acknowledged by officers that whilst permitted development rights already exist for certain telecommunications infrastructure, that may come forward at a later date on this site, they agreed it is always better to plan it in (including the space for it) from the outset;

- Issues raised about biodiversity, streetscape and microclimate would be captured at the Quality Panel, and officers outlined the type of measures that could be incorporated;
- Noted the clear direction with regard to the Thornton Close link;
- Noted the points about phasing of school admission, and agreed to discuss these with Education colleagues;
- With regard to SPAG (Strategic Parks and Greenspaces), it was noted that this was not a statutory function. However, there was considerable input by SPAG, especially in the emerging Local Plan, and the Natural and Historic Environment Team had been consulted on matters such as ecology and archaeology, so are able to build in comments from SPAG where appropriate.

In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that a 20mph speed limit was outside the planning process, but would be included as part of a wider review of 20mph zones by the County Council. The Chair urged officers to take a joined up approach to be taken on this matter.

Arising from the report:

- A Member queried why no contribution was being requested for post-16 education. Officers advised that whilst there would inevitably be increased demand for post-16 places resulting from the development, but owing to surplus capacity across the whole post-16 sector in Cambridge, Education colleagues did not consider mitigation necessary;
- Whilst noting that climate change impact was being picked up in Reserved Matters, a Member commented that he would prefer to see something specific in the outline planning application response, to highlight the importance the Council attaches to these issues, especially flooding, water supply, etc. Officers advised that when house types and Reserved Matters come forward, there would be requirements for houses to meet current Building Regulations requirements for energy consumption, insulation etc. The new phases of Darwin Green would also be subject to Building Regulations which were more stringent on these matters. It was noted that the Climate Change team were building their capacity in order to review major planning applications in greater detail in terms of climate change implications, and there was also a strong policy direction coming through from the Greater Cambridge Planning Service about how to accommodate and retrofit existing buildings which would use gas heating initially, but would need to have sufficient space for air source heat pumps in future. The Member commented that he would expect the Council to be stressing that every house should have solar panels. Another Member advised that it was likely that in the near future, it was likely that Building Regulations would require solar panels on all new properties.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Endorse the consultation response to the Darwin Green 2/3 planning application as set out in Appendix 1: and
- b) Delegate to the Executive Director (Place and Sustainability) in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee the authority to make minor changes to the response.

89. Key Performance Indicators – Environment & Green Investment Committee

Members received a report setting out a draft set of proposed performance data for the Committee. They were reminded that the Council had adopted a new Strategic Framework and Performance Management Framework in February 2022, which specified that each Policy and Service Committee should set its own outcomes, identifying its own Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and track progress quarterly.

A workshop was subsequently held where Committee Members had explored potential KPIs. The proposed KPIs from that workshop were set out in the report. The appendix to the report set out how proposed performance data would be presented, and it was stressed that this was for information only.

A minor correction was noted to Indicator 150a (p69), where the heading should read '*The overall Cambridgeshire recycling, reuse, composting and recovery rate (12 month rolling total)*'.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) review and agree the proposed additions to/removals from the Environment and Green Investment Committee Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set;
- b) agree proposed Strategic Key Performance Indicators (SKPIs) for Strategy and Resources Committee.

90. Environment & Green Investment Committee Agenda Plan and Training Plan and Appointments to Outside Bodies and Internal Advisory Groups and Panels

Members considered the Committee agenda plan. The Democratic Services Officer advised that the Northstowe item was being deferred from October to December 2022, and that the Annual Carbon Footprint report would also be considered at the December meeting.

With regard to appointments, the Clerk to the Conservators of the River Cam had asked the Council to confirm its appointment to that body, as their governance procedures required the appointment to be made in three year terms, and the current term expired in December 2022. It was agreed that the current appointee, Councillor Bradnam, would be appointed.

There had been an approach by South Cambridgeshire District Council to appoint the County Council Local Member, Councillor Firouz Thompson to the Northstowe Delivery Group. It was agreed to confirm this appointment.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- i. Note the agenda plan
- ii. confirm the appointment of Councillor Bradnam to the Conservators of the River Cam;
- iii. confirm the appointment of Local Member, Councillor Firouz Thompson, to the Northstowe Delivery Group.

91. Exclusion of Press and Public

It was resolved unanimously that:

the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following item contains exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and that it would not be in the public interest for this information to be disclosed - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

(The meeting briefly adjourned)

92. Waterbeach BATc Update

The Committee considered an update on the Waterbeach waste processing facilities.

It was resolved, by a majority, to agree the report recommendations.

Questions to consider at EGI 8 September 2022 wrt Darwin Green development

1 School provision (section 2.4 in the paper)

1.1 Currently children in Darwin Green are having to travel long distances to get a school place so it is important to bring forward the school builds asap. This will help with 'placemaking' but also reduce car travel/improve health. Can these plans be made clearer?

1.2 Rather than have a separate space for a commercial nursery, could space within the primary school be provided intended for use by a commercial provider? This would reduce the chances of a commercial nursery ceasing business and then the site used for some other purpose. Additional nursery places are as important as school places.

1.3 There is a general problem with schools now located on either side of North Huntingdon Road – ie Girton and Eddington. The Eddington community consists of University staff and students (particularly post graduates) and the Eddington school has been built for them. But there is a problem. They arrive throughout the year and not at the time when school places are allocated. Hence Eddington is substantially filled with children of Girton residents, and the Girton school has places for Eddington residents. This means that there has been a large increase in children and parents crossing Huntingdon Road, but without adequate crossings to make it safe (leading to more parents opting to drive their children rather than let them walk or cycle). This must not be allowed to happen with Darwin Green schools, or at least the timing of school place allocation and which residents require these places be factored in to traffic calming/proper crossings in North Huntingdon Road.

2. Water (ref section 2.5 of the paper)

2.1 There needs to be more clarity about issues relating to water – both flood risks and also longer term sufficiency. There needs to be a of the impact of this development not in isolation but in the context of the huge amount of development that has happened in a relatively short time – Eddington, Darwin Green, infill developments and of course the A14 scheme. There are real concerns in Girton about flooding risk, and a planned invert under the Oakington Bridge is scheduled to address this. Will the current development have an impact on flood risks? Also given the overall levels of development, are water supplies going to be sufficient for the longer term?

3. Amenities more generally (ref section 2.10 of the paper)

3.1 A resident of Darwin Green has complained that they still had no supermarket. When is this planned to be built?

3.2 NHS provision – what is happening about getting decent NHS facilities eg GP surgery. There is currently an expectation that there will be one in the new Eddington development, to which presumably Darwin Green residents will be linked to, but getting traction with NHS there is proving difficult, so cannot be assumed to be in place. What are the plans for NHS and dental facilities for Darwin Green residents?

3.3 Community facilities vs placemaking services – the physical provision of decent community facilities is critical, and probably more value for money than staff in the medium and longer term. There are many groups in Cambridge and Girton too looking for venues to conduct community activities and there are fewer available over time, so more provision of physical spaces would be welcome. Unlike places like Northstowe, where more placemaking services are needed, Darwin Green is effectively infill and there are already significant community activities underway which could engage if space was provided.

4. Transport – specifically cycling and walking (ref section 3.5 of paper)

4.1 Path linking Thornton Road Girton through Darwin Green to Windsor Road

We have heard that the information relating to the pedestrian network and other modes of travel remains fundamentally as presented at the consultation event and www.darwingreenconsultation.co.uk

However, we have been told *‘some of the points of connection are subject to further discussion with the authority and will require an agreement from any third party landowner who needs to agree to this. Alternative routes have been discussed with the authority, should such agreement not be forthcoming, and are satisfied that the proposals’ strategic approach to the movement of residents and visitors remains robust and comprehensive.’* The committee paper also is quite vague about any cycling opportunities.

This seems very woolly and not strong enough – in fact a massive opportunity missed if we are not able to secure this route at this time. It should be possible to agree this with the landowner prior to going ahead. We desperately need more cycling and walking connections between north Cambridge, Girton and beyond (eg to Oakington, Histon etc) – it is a travel to work route increasingly used and also much travelled by children going to IVC for example. It will be really difficult to secure this route at a later time. Please can it be considered how to ensure the cycle route can become a reality in the scheme.

4.2 Country park – lighting paths

It will be important to ensure that paths in the country park are lit because Girton children in particular use this to cycle or walk to get to IVC or (in due course) the new secondary school. When lighting or cycle paths are initially installed there needs to be an adjustment to the maintenance capital programme, or a developer contribution, to ensure it can be maintained properly.

4.3 20mph provision – this would be important to secure from the outset.

Cllr Edna Murphy
Bar Hill Division