



To: Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth:
Cllr Sian Reid

Report by: Director of Environment and Planning

Relevant scrutiny committee: Environment Scrutiny Committee 23/06/2009

Wards affected: All Wards

REVIEW OF THE ORCHARD PARK DEVELOPMENT AND LESSONS TO BE LEARNT FOR FUTURE MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS
Not a Key Decision

1.0 Executive summary

- 1.1 A motion was passed at the Council meeting in September 2008, that the Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth should bring a report to Environment Scrutiny with regards to the review South Cambridgeshire District Council has carried out of the Arbury Park (renamed Orchard Park) development. The findings of South Cambridgeshire's Scrutiny Review are particularly important given Arbury Park's location at the edge of Cambridge, its proposed transfer to Cambridge City Council and the opportunity it holds for learning lessons for the other major developments planned at the fringes of Cambridge.
- 1.2 Due to the pressures of work, it was only possible to take an initial report to Environment Scrutiny Committee in January 2009. At this meeting it was decided that the second more detailed report should avoid a box ticking exercise of areas of work already completed by South Cambridgeshire's Scrutiny Review, and to focus primarily on transport issues which weren't covered in any detail in the Scrutiny Review.
- 1.3 The second more detailed City Council Report relating to Orchard Park is provided at Appendix 1. The purpose of this report is to use Orchard Park as a case study to improve future work, rather than to highlight any blame. A number of interviews have taken place to inform the report and a lot of information has been collected.
- 1.4 The report sets out a number of lessons to be learnt for future major developments. In some cases these lessons are already being addressed in the planning of the urban extensions, and this is reported

in the conclusions of the report. The report also identifies issues in relation to the possible transfer of Orchard Park to the City Council.

- 1.5 In line with the Council Motion, representatives from South Cambridgeshire District Council, the County Council, the Orchard Park Community Council, the Joint Urban Design Team, the Major Developments Team, the developer and others that have been interviewed, have been invited to attend the Committee meeting.

2.0 Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- 2.1 To agree the findings of this report relating to the Orchard Park development, and that it be used to inform the work of the City Council in relation to the planning of the urban extensions around Cambridge, and the transfer of Orchard Park to the City Council if the boundary change is implemented.

3.0 Background

Purpose of Report

- 3.1 At the full Council meeting in September 2009, the following motion was passed:

‘The Council notes that South Cambridgeshire District Council are conducting a scrutiny review of the South Cambridgeshire Arbury Park development, and that they will publish a final report at the end of September.

Arbury Park's adjacency to Cambridge particularly Kings Hedges and Arbury, its proposed transfer to Cambridge City Council, and the opportunities it holds for learning lessons for other fringe developments, make it a very important development for Cambridge.

The Council asks the Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth to bring a report to Environment Scrutiny in January 2009 or earlier which

- outlines and reviews South Cambridgeshire's findings
- identifies proposals to address weaknesses identified in the development as soon as possible and prior to any transfer to the City Council
- evaluates the development against the Quality Charter
- identifies lessons learnt for future developments

The developer, the joint development control and urban design teams, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, Histon and Impington Parish Council and other Arbury Park organisations including the Action Group will be invited to attend and contribute to the discussion at Environment Scrutiny Committee.'

- 3.2 Pressures of work prevented a full report in January 2009, and therefore an initial report was taken to Environment Scrutiny Committee outlining:
- The main findings from South Cambridgeshire District Council's (SCDC) work
 - The current position
 - Outline of any further work SCDC are planning
 - Next steps
- 3.3 At the Committee meeting the Coordinator of the Cambridge Cycling Campaign raised concerns that South Cambridgeshire's Scrutiny Review made no mention of transport beyond a street mapping exercise, and highlighted several problems for cyclists in this area. The discussion amongst Members resulted in the decision that the second report should:
- Exclude a box ticking exercise of areas of work already completed
 - Focus primarily on transport.

Content of Report

- 3.4 The second more detailed City Council Report relating to Orchard Park is provided at Appendix 1. The purpose of this report is to use Orchard Park as a case study to improve future work, and it is not intended to highlight any blame. A number of interviews have taken place to inform the report, including officers and Members from the City Council, representatives from South Cambridgeshire District Council, the County Council, the interim Chair of Orchard Park Community Council, the master developers (Gallagher), the Community Development Officer for Orchard Park and the Cambridge Cycling Campaign (a full list is provided at Appendix 1 of the Report itself). The report is based upon the information made available at the time from the large number of contributors. All of the contributors have been invited to attend Environment Scrutiny Committee and take part in the discussion, as required by the original Council Motion.
- 3.5 The Council Motion asked for an evaluation of the development against the 'Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth'. The report has been organised around the 4 'Cs' of the Quality Charter, Community, Connectivity, Climate and Character, in order to aid this

review. Following the steer from the January Environment Scrutiny Committee, the main focus of the report is Connectivity, although it was felt useful to include other issues which have arisen as a result of the information collection exercise. In particular there are several issues around the implementation of the development and in relation to community facilities.

- 3.6 The report provides background information about issues raised as a result of the interviews and other information gathered, and then identifies lessons to be learnt for future major developments. In total 42 lessons have been identified and these are summarised in a table in the conclusions of the report. This table also contains a column setting out the current position in the urban extensions and where these lessons are already being addressed or could be addressed in the future.
- 3.7 In addition, the report highlights possible issues in relation to the transfer of Orchard Park to the City Council if the boundary review is successful. These are also summarised in the conclusions.

4.0 Implications

- 4.1 The report identifies lessons to be learnt for future major developments and issues in relation to the transfer of Orchard Park to the City Council. Both of these could have implications in terms of financial / procurement, staffing, equal opportunities, environmental, or community safety issues. The lessons to be learnt should mostly have beneficial effects including environmental and community safety improvements in new developments. However, they could lead to more staff time, which would have financial implications. The report highlights that the transfer of Orchard Park to the City Council is likely to have financial implications in relation to some service areas.

5.0 Background papers

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth
- Arbury Park Scrutiny Review Final Report October 2008
- SCDC Scrutiny and Overview Committee Report 4th December 2008 – Agenda Item 7: Response to Arbury Park Task and Finish Group Report (includes Action Plan)
- Cambridgeshire Design Guide for Streets and Public Realm (2007)
- Cycling in New Developments (2008), Cambridge Cycling Campaign

6.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Review of the Orchard Park Development and Lessons to be Learnt for Future Major Developments

7.0 Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

Author's Name: Nancy Kimberley
Author's Phone Number: 01223 457384
Author's Email: nancy.kimberley@cambridge.gov.uk

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