

**Draft Meeting Note – Co-op for Sustainable Development Member Board
09 October 2017**

Attendance

Organisation	Councillors	Officers
East Herts DC	Cllr Linda Haysey Cllr Robert Brunton	Liz Watts Claire Sime Kevin Steptoe
Epping Forest DC	Cllr John Philip Cllr Chris Whitbread Cllr Nigel Bedford	Alison Blom-Cooper Derek Macnab David Coleman
Essex CC	Cllr Wagland Cllr Kevin Bentley	David Sprunt Rich Cook Jamie Carswell
Harlow DC	Cllr Danny Purton	Paul Macbride Graeme Bloomer
Herts CC	Cllr Derrick Ashley	Jan Hayes Griffin
Uttlesford DC	Cllr Susan Barker	Philip Bylo
Broxbourne	Cllr Paul Seeby	Martin Paine
Garden Town	N/A	Paul Jarvis (ARUP) Sarah Pullin

1. Apologies

Jeremy Dagley, The City of London

Cllr Helen Coomb, Redbridge

London Borough of Waltham Members & Officers

2. Draft notes of meeting of 18 September 2017 – including review of action points

Water Cycle Study – This is being progressed through consultants and will cover the Garden Town. Harlow officers are leading on this and will share with relevant colleagues. **ACTION:** Harlow officers to circulate Water Cycle brief to relevant officers ASAP.

Harlow officers are seeking 'a letter of comfort' from the Environment Agency – the Council is proceeding with the Study 'in good faith'.

Cllr Haysey noted that Hertfordshire CC completed some Water Cycle Study work earlier in year and highlighted the need for the Garden Town work to tie in with that work.

EFDC are writing to the Environment Agency to notify that they do not intend to undertake a Water Cycle Study and would, therefore, like to discuss with Harlow officers beforehand to check that the EDFC letter and the Water Cycle Study brief do not contradict/conflict.

ACTION: Harlow and EFDC officers to meet prior to finalisation of Water Cycle Study Brief and EFDC's letter to the EA.

FEMA work – Hardisty-Jones to provide a report back / presentation at the November Co-op Board meeting.

Housing – to be covered under Agenda Item 4.

Gypsies and Travellers – nothing to note.

3. Broxbourne Transport Strategy presentation –

Presentation given to the Board by Martin Paine, Planning Policy Manager at the Borough of Broxbourne.

4. Discussion on response from Board on DCLG Consultation on Housing Methodology

Following agreement at the September Co-op Board meeting, Jonathan Lee of ORS was appointed to prepare a response to the government consultation – ‘Planning for the right homes in the right places’. A draft response was received and circulated to the Board this afternoon, meaning the officers and members had not had sufficient time to properly look at and consider the paper.

The paper argues that the approach set out within the government consultation is too simplistic and fails to take account of local circumstances. It argues that the approach taken within the SHMA is robust and that the LPAs do not agree with any figures above those set out in the SHMA. CS advised that she would take and collate comments from the Board and pass them on to Jonathan Lee at ORS, for preparation of a final response.

Cllr Wagland requested that an executive summary be added to the consultation response. Cllr Wagland also expressed concern that some of clarity of argument has been lost and requested that the message be made clearer – a more succinct response would be better and more effective at getting the message across.

GB stated that there is a need to make clear that the methodology proposed in the Government consultation is not appropriate.

Cllr Philip advised that EFDC will also respond separately to the consultation and will be pushing hard against as it would have huge implications for the District given the significant increase in the housing number that implementation of the proposed approach would result in.

ACTION: All to review the draft consultation response paper and get back to CS with comments

ACTION: CS to coordinate comments and go back to Jonathan Lee and agree a final version of the consultation response.

5. Update on HIF Bid

DS informed the group that the HIF bid was submitted for the second Stort crossing and first part of the north-south Sustainable Transport Corridor. The bid was a joint bid, submitted on time, and was led by Hertfordshire CC. Many contributed to the preparation of the bid, including developers. A decision is now awaited, and is expected sometime before Christmas, but the decision/announcement date is not known.

If successful, there will be a requirement to build a full business case within six months of the announcement, which is a tight timescale. There is a need to agree a new governance structure to work-up the business case and to carry the work forward. This was noted by the Board.

LW advised that there is a lot of work to do on preparing the business case, meaning there is a need to start some of the work now. The Board agreed that work to develop the business case can commence now (ahead of the funding announcement).

6. Highway Access arrangements for Strategic sites North East of Harlow

Cllr Purton outlined need for certainty around access arrangements to some strategic sites in Harlow and EFDC Local Plans, given the stage at which the Plans are at, to ensure that they are deliverable.

DS distributed and presented a position statement paper relating to the Harlow East site owned by Miller Homes. DS explained that in order for the site to come forward, access from the site to Gilden Way needs to be achieved alongside the existing protected sustainable transport route through the New Hall development from the site. As part of the highway modelling work carried out for a new J7a on the M11, the model was used to evaluate possible options for connection to Gilden Way. The conclusion of the modelling was that three vehicular accesses to the site would be required from Gilden Way. More detail was provided in the meeting paper circulated at the meeting and appended to these minutes.

DM asked whether hospital related movements (if the hospital was relocated to this site) would be off-peak and would therefore allow for some movement in the potential housing numbers that could be accommodated. DS and chair commented that hospital employees generally travel at peak hours.

It was suggested that a conversation could be had with the hospital to look at a change in working hours to allow staff to travel at non-peak times, which would help with the modelling and the housing numbers that could be accommodated.

DS advised that ECC could carry out modelling work, but at this stage has not been asked to do so. DC reported that there is a meeting next week between Harlow and EFDC officers relating to the East Harlow site.

7. Update on MoUs

- a. Mapping the impacts of growth across the wets Essex / East Herts HMA on Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation

ABC – officer group meet regularly with The Conservators and Natural England. Survey to understand recreational impact on forest is taking place in half term. Awaiting confirmation that Redbridge want to join group.

- b. Princess Alexandra Hospital / Health

Cllr Purton advised that Harlow needs to agree Regulation 19 Local Plan publication at Cabinet in the next 6 weeks and the hospital relocation is essential for the Plan's housing numbers, as the hospital site is currently included as housing allocation. Harlow are currently unable to get a definite answer from the NHS on the hospital's relocation. Harlow is working on assumption that a new facility will need to be provided elsewhere and the site can therefore be released for housing. Cllr Purton asked the Board if there were any objections to the assumption that Harlow are working on. No objections were raised.

Cllr Bentley agreed that it was appropriate to work on this basis and to collectively work together as authorities to identify a location that best serves the people the hospital exists for. Cllr Wagland agreed with this.

JH-G noted the need to develop an MoU.

DC explained that hospital have expressed that the preferred option is a relocation, but that they would not be in a position to identify an alternative for some time.

- c. Employment

Consultant, Stuart Hardisty, is coming to the next Board meeting – discussion of item postponed until November meeting.

- d. Update of Objectively Assessed Housing Need – West Essex/East Hertfordshire Housing Market Area

Cllr Philip requested that Harlow Council removed its objection to EFDC Local Plan.

8. Feedback from East Herts Examination

First week of hearing sessions has taken place and is going well so far. Inspector opened Thursday's sessions by stating she considered the spatial strategy to be sound. The Inspector has suggested increasing the windfall figure, which will give more flexibility.

9. A.O.B.

Cllr Purton proposed that the Board should have more discussions about issues that are difficult to agree on and requested that officers produce a list of things that have so far not been dealt with, to be included on future Board meeting agendas.

ACTION: Officers to develop list to include on future Board meeting agendas.

Cllr Haysey agreed there was a need for this, but suggested that this should wait for the appointment of the Project Director who should be responsible for picking up and leading on those issues.

Cllr Purton stated that the issues are known and a list could be developed in preparation for the Project Director's appointment.

Cllr Philip reiterated the request and importance of Harlow removing its objection to EFDC's Local Plan. Cllr Philip stated that this had been ongoing for a long time and withdrawal of the objection was required as a matter of urgency, and before the November Board meeting. Cllr Philip asked if Harlow Council was going to maintain its objection to EFDC sites.

Cllr Purton advised that the reason for the objection related to affordable housing, as Harlow is unable to deliver the level of affordable housing that is needed.

GB advised that this is an issue for officers to address. Cllr Philip asked officers to deal with this at their Duty to cooperate meeting on 13th October.

ACTION: Officers to address the issue of Harlow's objection to EFDC's Local Plan, with a view to removal of the objection.

Cllr Wagland suggested a mediator be used to assist as and when required, where there are more difficult decisions and contentions. Cllr Wagland expressed concern over the prospect of the Project Director being used to fill the role of arbitrator.

Cllr Purton requested that the Chief Executives think about the prospect of using a mediator for more contentious/difficult issues.

ACTION: Chief Executives to discuss the possibility of using a mediator to help with contentious issues and difficult decisions.

10. Date of next meetings

- a. 13 November 2017, 6.30pm - Harlow Council Chamber
- b. 11 December 2017, 6.30pm - Harlow Council Chamber

Appendix A

Harlow East – Miller Homes

ECC Highways Position Statement

Background

This site is situated to the East of Harlow immediately to the east of the current New Hall development and to the southeast of Gilden Way.

In order for the site to come forward access from the site to Gilden Way needs to be achieved alongside the existing protected sustainable transport route through the New Hall development from the site.

As part of the work associated with the provision of M11 J7a, highway modelling work has been carried out. The same model has been used to evaluate possible options for connection to Gilden Way, as reported in Technical Note 5 (TN5) which was released on 5th October.

The conclusion of this modelling is that 3 vehicular accesses to the site are required from Gilden Way which would be located, from east to west:

- at the new J7a link road roundabout on Sheering Road, which will provide access to the north-eastern area of the site;
- a middle junction at Mayfield Farm; and
- a further access at the HDC Nursery site, which will provide access to the western area of the site.

The basic junction designs used in the study are for modelling purposes only but their points of connection are considered optimal and deliverable. However, it could be expected that the developer may put forward alternatives.

Constraints

The number of vehicles turning right into the East Harlow site is one of the key constraints on the network as this is likely to result in delays to general traffic travelling east to west along Gilden Way and the J7a link road, particularly at roundabout junctions. While traffic leaving the site can be regulated (ie with traffic signals), it is more problematic to control the traffic arriving at the site, particularly its point of access.

If high levels of right-turning traffic choose to arrive at the site at the easternmost junctions this is likely to have the most impact on the J7a link road, and is likely to result in westbound traffic tailing back onto the M11 itself ('High levels of right-turning traffic' are considered to result from less than one-third of the overall East Harlow development). A number of different junction designs and configurations were modelled, but none prevented the westbound queueing traffic issue.

While it was found that an internal site layout which enables ready vehicular access through the site would help to minimise the right-turning issue, it would be down to driver choice as to which site access was used, with no means of enforcing higher use of the westernmost access junction to enter the site.

It was concluded that the scale of development on the East Harlow site would need to be reduced by around 5-600 homes assuming current levels of sustainable travel. However, if much better levels of sustainable travel can be achieved on the site, in line with proposals for the Garden Town, this may enable the full development to be delivered.

Other matters, not directly a highways issue include:

- How to prevent development traffic from using Churchgate Street; in the model it was assumed that only minimal frontage development would use this route, or that Hobbs Cross Road could be closed to all through traffic in the vicinity of Felthames.
- How the route through to the nursery site can be achieved taking into account that this requires access through third party land. If the developer cannot achieve access by agreement with the landowner, then this could be achieved as in other instances through CPO. This access is key to the delivery of the southern part of the site and particularly for it to come forward early in the plan period.
- Some highways discussions have been held with the developer, but it is suggested the 3 authorities HDC/EFDC and ECC meet jointly with them to discuss a way forward. In this respect it is suggested that the TN5 be released to them to enable this constructive discussion to take place.

In addition to the above there remains 3 other matters that will impact on the development

- The location of any re-located Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH)
- The location of employment land, particularly to the north of the new M11 J7a junction
- The positioning of any new secondary school within the overall site

No work has to date been carried out on the first of these, but 3 options exist, one to replace around 5-600 homes at Harlow East with the PAH, or to place it in addition to the existing homes north of the new junction link road (this latter option is considered unlikely to be deliverable due to the impact on the M11, but needs to be modelled to confirm). The 3rd alternative is for the hospital to be located at Gilston. A brief to do this is with EFDC, but has not been commissioned at present.

The location of employment land in wider Harlow has yet to be tested on the model, so the impacts of providing additional employment land at M11 7a would need to be considered in that context. A request to do this is awaited from the Garden Town authorities as this will impact on overall outcomes in terms of ability of the network to deal with this impact. In respect of a site north of the new junction link road this would appear at this stage to be unlikely to be deliverable with the difficulties in achieving the full numbers of homes at Harlow East. However, this needs to be fully tested.

The location of the proposed secondary school within Harlow East does not adversely impact on the highways network, however in terms of maximising sustainability it would be logical to locate this closer to the centroid of the overall development.

Recommendation

To note the position statement