



Sustainable Development Panel

16:00 to 17:40

14 September 2021

Present: Councillors Stonard (chair), Giles (vice chair), Carlo, Davis, Everett, Grahame, Hampton (substitute for Councillor Maxwell), Lubbock and Oliver

Apologies: Councillor Maxwell

1. Declarations of interest

There were none.

2. Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2021, subject to item 3, Declarations of Interest deleting “Anguish Educational Foundation” and the brackets because Norwich Consolidated Charities is sufficient.

3. East Norwich Masterplan Progress Update Report

(Martyn Saunders (director of planning and regeneration, Avison Young) (the lead consultant) and Anthony Benson (Allies and Morrison) attended the meeting for this item. Tracey Coleman, East Norwich project manager, was also in attendance.)

The planning policy team leader presented the covering report which provided an introduction to the emerging masterplan and the consultants’ progress report appended to the report at Appendix A. Members were advised that a more detailed report of engagement to date was available on the council’s website¹.

Martyn Saunders and Anthony Benson gave a power point presentation on the East Norwich Masterplan. (A copy of the presentation is available on the council’s website.)

During discussion the consultants, together with the planning policy team leader, answered members’ questions on the emerging masterplan and engagement.

Members were advised that there had been a good spectrum of people attending the public engagement events, and that metrics (such as age, sex, ethnicity, post codes) had been collected. Consideration had been made to arranging events on site, outside school holidays and weekends to ensure engagement from a wide profile of

¹ www.norwich.gov.uk/ENMasterplanEngagementStage1

people. Members considered that Carrow Abbey was an attractive venue but it required a journey to attend and there was concern that the residents of Bracondale could be overrepresented. It was important that potential residents from areas of deprivation were represented. It was suggested that the next round of consultation in October could include venues in Lakenham and Thorpe Hamlet. The consultants offered to talk to the officers about alternative venues. Members noted that continuity was an advantage and that the arrangements had been made to hold the next session at the Abbey but considered that there were community centres that could be suitable venues as well and that the objective was to engage as many people as possible. Members also considered that public engagement should target the residents of Trowse and the primary schools in Lakenham and Trowse, which would be affected by the impact of the East Norwich development. The panel considered that there needed to be a balance so that “everyone had a voice” and supported the development.

A member said that she was concerned that connectivity between the sites and new highways access to the site would put additional pressure on the existing road network, specifically Yarmouth Road and Thorpe Road. Members were advised that the consultants were looking at all options and evidence of congestion would be taken into account, for instance at Carrow Bridge and the inner ring road. The masterplan for the site could not solve transport issues for the city as a whole and would make the best use of existing infrastructure and provide it where needed. The chair pointed out that the project board was working in partnership with the county council and that other highways schemes could be brought forward separately. A member referred to the emerging principles of the masterplan and said that there needed to be good rail and bus services to the site to minimise the need for new roads to be created and commented on the noise generated by traffic on the bypass which would be unpleasant for future residents. Members were advised that the masterplan would indicate the delivery of housing and employment for families but would not be dependent on massive infrastructure investment. Instead, the emphasis would be on efficiency and having the most appropriate infrastructure to connect the sites up and to link into the wider highway network.

A member asked whether improvement works to Trowse rail bridge would be part of the masterplan. The consultants noted that Network Rail is a member of the East Norwich Partnership and that its consideration of the proposed improvements is running parallel with the masterplan process. The consultants’ emphasis was on drafting the masterplan so it does not preclude the final Network Rail decision on twin tracking. In response to a member’s question about the potential for using the old Trowse station as a rail stop, the consultants noted that conversations were underway, but that it was unlikely that trains would stop there because of the proximity to Norwich station. The improvement works to the underpass at Carrow works and extension of the riverside walk would provide connections for cyclists and pedestrians across the site.

In reply to a members’ question on flood risk, the consultant explained that the Environment Agency would be consulted on concerns that sea levels were rising faster than predicted because of climate change.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) thank Martyn Saunders and Anthony Benson for the presentation;

- (2) note that the draft East Norwich supplementary planning document will be considered at cabinet on 10 November and that a meeting of the panel will be convened to provide members with an opportunity to comment.

4. 2019-20 Annual Monitoring Report

The planner presented the Annual Monitoring report (AMR) which monitors the objectives of the Joint Core Strategy for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, and had been delayed in part due to the submission of the Greater Norwich Local Plan.

The chair thanked the planner for the excellent covering report. He pointed out for clarity that paragraph 1.8 of the AMR referred to the city council's support of the Northern Distributor Road (NDR) during the period 2019 to 2020 and did not reflect the council's current position.

During discussion members considered that planning policy for affordable housing needed to be robust and that viability assessments and methodology needed to be open and transparent. It was noted that there needed to be wider discussions to bring forward more affordable housing both within the council between housing officers and planners and with our neighbouring district councils (Broadland and South Norfolk).

In reply to a members' comment, the chair said that the city council's representatives took every opportunity to promote sustainable development, transport and energy efficiency measures at meetings of the Greater Norwich Growth Board and the Greater Norwich Development Partnership. Members also noted that planned development in partnership with the neighbouring authorities, through the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the emerging Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) sought to prevent urban sprawl and provide new housing in socially cohesive communities.

Discussion ensued on the monitoring of data and trends. Members noted that the new policies under the GNLP would be used to monitor waste and recycling more efficiently. Panel members noted that the impact of the pandemic would also affect trends and indicators going forward. It was also noted that some of the large sites in the emerging GNLP would affect the balance of housing distribution, including rural clusters.

A member referred to the statistics of people who were killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents and suggested this was less than rural areas because of the introduction of 20mph speed limits in residential areas of the city. There was a tendency outside urban areas for cars to drive faster and overtake other vehicles, increasing the risk of serious accidents.

The panel noted that data for 2019-20 missing in Table 3.17 (To encourage the development of healthy and active lifestyles) on page 30 of the AMR, could be due to government data not being available or being discontinued. However, members considered that some of this data was widely available and asked that this could be taken up with the Greater Norwich Development Partnership team.

RESOLVED to note the contents of the 2019-20 GNDP Annual Monitoring Report.

CHAIR