



Chelmsford Garden Community (CGC) Delivery Board Minutes: 24 February 2025, Waterhouse Room

1) Welcome and Introductions

- Nick Eveleigh (NE), Chief Executive, CCC (Chair)
- Cllr Stephen Robinson (SR), Leader of Chelmsford City Council
- Cllr Rose Moore (RM), Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development, CCC
- Paul Brookes (PB), Director of Sustainable Communities, CCC
- Jeremy Potter (JP), Spatial Planning Services Manager, CCC
- Karen Short (KS), Principal Planning Officer, CCC
- William Stanley (WS), Senior Planning Officer, CCC
- Graham Thomas (GT), Head of Planning and Sustainable Development, ECC
- Billy Parr (BP), Head of Network Development, ECC
- Rosa Etherington (RE), Project Director (Planning), Countryside L&Q
- Olly Buck (OB), Director, Ptarmigan Land
- Olivia Dickie (OD), Assistant Development Director, Ptarmigan Land
- Viktoria Oakley (VO), Strategic Land Director, Greycoat (Halley/Oaktree Development)
- Alison Jennings (AJ), Senior Partnership & Business Development Manager, Homes England (Virtual)
- Claire Burnett (CB), Interim Head of the South-East, Homes England (Virtual)

Apologies

- Cllr Lee Scott (LS), Cabinet Member for Housing, planning and Regeneration, ECC
- Jon Kenny (JK), Development Director, Strategic Land- Greycoat (Halley/Oaktree Development)

2) Minutes of Previous Meeting and Actions

26.11.24 - Minutes agreed and to be placed on the website.

Infrastructure Table updated.

3) A12 DCO/Strategic Highway Matters including National Highways Holding Objection

BP set out to the Board a timeline for understanding if the Government would be providing funding for the A12/DCO scheme. The National Highways budget next year is expected to be confirmed in June 2025 with the individual projects to be funded set out in September 2025.

OB provided the Board with an update on a recent meeting held between the applicant's transport consultants and AECOM who have been commissioned by National Highways to undertake modelling work on the alternative interim solution for Boreham Interchange proposed by the consortium.

OB noted that National Highways had been positively engaging in the process of reviewing the interim proposals presented and had indicated that the modelling showed that the alternative option would result in less queuing on the A131 but might possibly lead to additional queuing on the surrounding road network. A further meeting was scheduled for 26th February between the developer's transport consultants and AECOM to discuss how to resolve the additional queuing on the nearby roads. Further meetings with ECC and CCC would be held at a later date.

The consortium indicated that if National Highways were to conclude that the interim solution was acceptable then they might be able to withdraw their holding objection. The cost of the works (approx. £3.3 million) would then need to be factored into the IDP.

BP noted that even if National Highways were happy with the proposal, there might still be an impact on the local highway network, and this could result in a requirement for additional mitigation to overcome any identified harm.

JP welcomed the positive discussions with National Highways but noted that the focus of the City and County Councils was on the complete delivery of the approved DCO scheme. JP also raised concerns regard any potential impacts that the alternative mitigation scheme would have on viability.

SR asked GT if he could arrange a meeting with ECC cabinet members, MPs and Ministers to discuss the impact of non-delivery of the DCO scheme and the impact upon the soundness of the Local Plan. Action: GT agreed that he would discuss the matter with Cllr Scott.

BP noted that Colchester City Council would also be writing to Matthew Pennycook MP (Minister of State for Housing and Planning) to reiterate the importance of the A12 corridor

and the delivery of the entire DCO scheme; it was agreed that this letter could be shared with Board members subject to Colchester City Council being happy to do so.

VO noted there would be a correlation with the devolution agenda and the strategic role of the A12 as the key strategic route through Essex. JP acknowledged this and the importance of the A12 within Essex.

GT proposed arranging a meeting on site with ministers to show them the development; this idea was welcomed by the Board, but it was acknowledged it might prove difficult to facilitate given demands on minister's time.

4) Strategic Education Matters

GT provided an update and set out to the Board that an agreed position had been reached for the temporary education costs of £9.9million; an education strategy needed to be prepared for inclusion within the planning applications and the PFA; it would also need to form part of the viability assessment and the IDP.

VO confirmed that QUOD (the consortiums education consultants) were drafting this document for the consortium and that this was expected with the consortium later in the week; once reviewed the document would then be submitted to ECC and CCC for review.

JP noted the importance of the cross-valley route between CGC and Broomfield and the crucial role that this link would play in delivering a connection between the two settlements as well as delivering a safe route to Chelmer Valley High School from the development; reference to the route was to be included within the Education Strategy. JP noted that CCC had acquired land adjacent to Back Lane and Belsteads School for woodland planting, which could encompass part of this route and hopefully aid in its delivery; this would also mean the byway could be left untouched.

5) Strategic Health Matters

KS informed the Board that CCC had held positive discussions with the NHS ICB on the proposed healthcare provision for CGC and it had been agreed that two facilities would be provided within CGC with a smaller facility (which could potentially be retained as permanent centre) provided at Great Belsteads Village Centre (Zone 1) with a larger facility provided at the Park Farm Village Centre (Zone 2). CCC were still waiting on the NHS ICB to advise on the size of financial contribution to address issues arising from the time period between the two facilities coming on stream and how this would be utilised together with justification for

the requested acute healthcare contribution. Once these final two matters were agreed then the final healthcare costs could be factored into the IDP.

NE, BP and SR agreed to raise the outstanding matters with senior management at the NHS ICB at the next One Chelmsford Board scheduled to be held on 7th March 2025.

6) Community Stewardship

JP confirmed that CCC had commissioned David Alcock of Anthony Collins Solicitors and Mark Patchett of Community Stewardship Solutions to undertake a further piece of work in relation to community stewardship. The brief that the consultants were working on had been reviewed by the consortium.

KS provided further detail on the work being undertaken and noted that CCC had asked the consultants to review the existing Stewardship Statement and the governance model. An inception meeting had taken place. An asset schedule was being progressed which considered future ownership, management and maintenance of assets. The consultants, along with ECC and CCC, had also met with the Chelmsford Garden Community Council to gain an understanding of their experience of existing stewardship arrangements operating at Beaulieu and Channels. The consultants were expected to conclude their work by the end of March 2025.

OB asked if the consultants would consult with the consortium before concluding their work. JP confirmed that the consultants would be contacting the consortium to seek their views.

7) Update on Viability, CIL recycling, HIF, PFA & IDP

OB updated the Board that there had been significant progress on these matters since the last meeting. Discussions had progressed to consideration of the last few items, which required confirmation before the final viability and IDP baseline position could be confirmed. The consortium was working towards an end of March deadline to bring all matters together. RE noted that the IDP would include matters that the consortium did not necessarily agree to but which they would include within the document to show how much these would cost if they were to be included to prevent a worst case scenario position.

JP noted that CCC had discussed the potential for recycling CIL monies to help fund infrastructure within CGC. JP has asked the consortium to provide infrastructure and housing projections so that the delivery of housing and infrastructure is understood.

JP confirmed that the CCC Cabinet would need to formally agree to recycle CIL within CGC. CCC legal advisors are currently reviewing the governance position in relation to CIL recycling; this would be set out for the consortium once the advice had been reviewed.

8) Planning Application Zones Updates

KS provided an update on each of the individual planning applications:

Zone 1 - Discussions on these applications now focussed on the last few matters (detailed highways elements, employment, health provision) but good progress is being made.

Zone 3 - CCC officers and the developer team recently met on site to discuss the alignment of the heritage corridor between Peverels and Park Farms. A way forward was agreed on site and amended plans are to be provided. The applicant has also recently provided draft amended drawings in relation to other outstanding matters including landscaping; these are currently being reviewed. Housing matters on Zone 3 remain outstanding.

NRDR - Amended plans have been provided in relation to the landscaping and SUDs basins; these are currently being reviewed.

Zone 2 - Amendments were received in November 2024. Consultee responses have been received but some remain outstanding including the ECC corporate response.

KS noted that alongside the individual planning applications work had been ongoing between all parties to agree the planning conditions for all six applications. Discussions remain ongoing in this respect.

JP sought clarification that the NRDR would be built as one piece. VO confirmed that this would be the case but that the construction of the road is dependent on planning permission being forthcoming for Zone 3. VO also noted that construction timescales for the road would likely be between 12- 18 months and that this would therefore not match up with the CNEB delivery timescales of March 2026.

BP raised the matter of the timeline for delivery of the NRDR and the need for Grampian conditions. VO noted the consortium had received KC advice on this matter and would be happy to share a note if helpful.

9) Timeline to Planning Committee

JP confirmed if all the other strategic and zone specific matters could be resolved then CCC would in a position to refer the Zones 1 and 3 and NRDR applications to Planning Committee, if the National Highways holding objection were lifted. No date for a Planning Committee had yet been confirmed.

JP asked if the PFA could be updated as the most recent document was dated 2023. VO was concerned about asking lawyers to update the PFA at present as this could become a distraction from other matters that needed to be concluded first. RE noted that she would need agreement on matters including viability before the PFA drafting could be further progressed.

GT asked if the matters that are causing delay could be set out so that CCC and ECC could look to work towards resolving those as soon as possible.

10) Pre Submission Chelmsford Local Plan (Regulation 19) Update

JP noted that the City Council were currently consulting on its Pre- Submission Regulation 19 document; the consultation closes on 18 March 2025. JP asked that if the consortium could make their comments known as soon as possible.

RE confirmed that Vistry's planning agent was reviewing the document and would be providing comments.

11) Production of a Risk Register

JP noted that other Garden Communities within Essex have created a risk register to help understand the risks before and after committee. The Board agreed that this would be helpful to clearly identify the issues at CGC. JP happy to start work on a draft ready for circulation.

BP asked if a communications position could be agreed in order to assist the Council's in responding to queries.

12) Infrastructure Updates

- Chelmsford NE Bypass (CNEB) & Beulieu Park Station
- White Hart Lane Downgrading Scheme
- Beaulieu Health Centre
- Beaulieu Sixth Form Centre
- Channels Nursery

BP updated on the CNEB. All enabling works and works on the silt lagoons now complete. Octavius had been appointed as the contractors and were on site completing earthworks. ECC hopeful that Phase 1a would be complete by March 2026.

BP also provided an update on Beaulieu Park Station. The station remains on schedule to be delivered in 2025. An Entry into Service meeting had been scheduled for 25th February 2025, during which consideration would be given to when the station could potentially open and become operational.

SR asked if a fare detail could be arranged, for those travelling between Chelmsford station and Beaulieu Park Station as this would aid road capacity issues. BP agreed to raise the matter with Network Rail and Greater Anglia.

RM asked for information on bus timetabling and fares. BP confirmed that this was not yet agreed.

KS noted that the White Hart Lane crossing scheme was progressing well and would provide a controlled at grade crossing over White Hart Lane that would facilitate provision of a route between Springfield and Beaulieu via the Neighbourhood Centre. The works were expected to be complete by 29th March.

KS noted that the Beulieu Health centre was complete; CCC had requested confirmation of the intended provider and anticipated opening date from the NHS ICB, but no response had been received. RE advised that Vistry were gravely concerned that the intended operator might pull out due to issues agreeing the lease. RE agreed to provide further information to PB so that the matter could be raised with the NHS ICB at the One Chelmsford Board meeting on 7th March. Post Meeting Note: RE provided PB with further information on the issues with Beaulieu Health Centre to aid discussions on 7th March.

WS provided an update on the progress of the Beaulieu Sixth Form Centre and Channels Nursery. The sixth form centre was granted planning permission in November 2024; pre-commencement conditions had been discharged, and initial works had commenced. The Academy were hopeful that the centre would be open in September 2025 for the new

academic year, but this would be dependent on the build-out. The Channels Day Nursery was also under construction and making good progress; the provider was hopeful of completion and opening later in 2025.

13) Garden Communities Programme

Homes England

AJ noted that Homes England supported the Councils and consortium's position in relation to the delivery of the A12 DCO, recognised its importance in relation to housing delivery along the corridor and had continued to raise the matter with Ministers.

AJ also acknowledged the position on stewardship; recent work currently being funded by Homes England.

AJ noted the concerns raised in relation to healthcare provision and that this was a common issue across the country. AJ happy to provide a list of private providers if discussions with the NHS ICB did not progress.

AJ happy to explore examples of other Garden Community experiences of Healthcare provision should NHS ICB dd not progress

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Homes England Affordable Housing Programme underway but had not yet been funded.

AJ noted the appointment of a new CEO; much of their time was being taken up with devolution related matters.

NE extended an invite to the new CEO to visit Chelmsford and to see Chelmer Waterside. Action: AJ agreed to pass on this offer.

14) Any Other Business

VO informed the Board that Greycoat and Oaktree had launched a £250 million development partnership with Homes England which was intended to help deliver major developments across the country.

15) Date of Next Meeting

To be arranged – meeting to be arranged in April 2025.

Chelmsford Garden Community Team

28 February 2025