

Chelmsford Garden Community (CGC) Delivery Board Minutes



10am 27 September 2022, Council Chamber

1. Welcome and Introductions

Cllr Stephen Robinson (SR), Leader of Chelmsford City Council
Cllr Mike Mackrory (MM), Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development, CCC
Nick Eveleigh (NE), Chief Executive, CCC
David Green (DG), Director for Sustainable Communities, CCC
Jeremy Potter (JMP), Spatial Planning Services Manager, CCC
Karen Short (KS), Principal Planning Officer, CCC
William Stanley (WS), Senior Planning Officer, CCC
Gemma Nicholson (GN), Planning Policy Officer, CCC
Natalie Hayward (NH), Principal Planning Officer, ECC
Cllr Tom Cunningham (TC), Deputy Cabinet Member for Economic Renewal,
Infrastructure and Planning, ECC
Alison Jennings (AJ), Senior Partnership & Business Development Manager, Homes
England
Rosa Etherington (RE), Associate Director (Planning), Countryside L&Q
Olly Buck (OB), Director, Ptarmigan Land
Viktoria Oakley (VO), Strategic Land Director, Greycoat (Halley/Oaktree Development)
Jon Kenny (JK), Development Director, Strategic Land – Greycoat (Halley/Oaktree
Development)

Apologies

Andrew Taylor (AT), Group Planning Director, Countryside Zest
Cllr Lesley Wagland (LW), Cabinet Member for Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and
Planning, ECC
Graham Thomas (GT), Head of Planning and Sustainable Development, ECC

2. Minutes of previous meeting and actions

28.7.22 - minutes agreed and to be placed on the website.

Actions table updated.

3. Planning Framework Agreement (PFA) Update

A presentation was given that covered items 3 to 5 on the agenda.

A combined legal Planning Framework Agreement (PFA) is being produced to deal with the strategic matters, including co-dependant infrastructure, stewardship, standards that cover the whole GC area. The developer consortium has appointed Town Legal to complete the draft PFA. Joint meetings are taking place with CCC and ECC every other week. Comments on draft Heads of Term have been provided by CCC.

All parties to meet on 19th October to discuss the first draft PFA. Targeting final draft version in December.

RE has confirmed that there is still one landowner that cannot sign the PFA, but can provide written confirmation that Countryside/L&Q are providing the infrastructure on their behalf. Lawyers Dentons and ECC Legal Services are still looking into the issue. RE has shared with the Council a legal agreement document for Countryside/landowner and Halley Development regarding the RDR2 delivery. Details of options agreement will also be shared in due course which outlines that the transfer of any land required for infrastructure can be provided ahead of Countryside buying the land, to ensure the land is available for the delivery of the infrastructure.

All parties will still have to sign S106 agreements once the planning applications come through. Consortium seeking to reassure CCC and ECC that obligations will be met.

4. Masterplan (DFD) and IDP Update

Comprehensive comments provided by CCC and ECC to the Developer Consortium. Key items to be addressed include:

- Village Centre Locations and 15-minute neighbourhoods
- Movement Framework (Active Travel)
- Townscape and Residential Density
- Planning Approval Process and Outline Applications
- Approach to Design Code
- Stewardship
- Sustainability

Joint recommendations from CCC and ECC to be provided to the Consortium.

The Developer Consortium are making updates to the masterplan following the comments on the masterplan consultation. Key meetings are ongoing. IDP inputs are continuing and joint meetings with Gerald Eve are taking place.

Targeting committee for DFD and IDP – 3rd November subject to changes being made.

Movement Framework - Consortium have been looking at the movement network including bridleway networks and the connections with Beaulieu and Channels. CCC are keen for a walking and cycling hierarchy for the movement network to be established and to ensure that active travel links are used for both on-site and off-site connections, with a particular emphasis on improving active travel to the hospital and city centre.

RE mentioned that the Consortium are producing a wider plan for key destinations/connections which will be discussed with officers at a future pre-application meeting and could be incorporated within the DFD.

Sustainability and Energy – meeting with CCC, ECC and Developer Consortium consultants to discuss in more detail. Future Homes Standard 2025 (Zero Carbon Ready) to be met in initial phases. Further commitments to RIBA 2030 standard or embodied carbon and future homes to achieve higher standards and be in line with Government 2050 target. CCC/ECC are seeking to aim high and push further and faster with sustainability standards for the Garden Community rather than simply following Building Regulations.

Consortium are exploring the opportunities for neighbourhood connections with the EDF Energy Longfield Solar Farm DCO given its proximity to the Garden Community.

Stewardship – discussions have been held with the Consortium and the Council's consultants, both individually and a joint discussion on 20th September. General recognition that some current models do not include the residents/community enough in the decision-making process. Countryside putting forward a proposal for other developers to consider. Further discussions planned for mid-October with CCC and ECC. Aiming for a strategic approach that all parties are aligned to. A blended approach to funding is likely, but consultants are still forming a view at the moment.

NE noted that consideration is needed for the replacement of items in the future – such as play areas etc. and how people in affordable housing manage any charges. It is important that people are not seeing that they are being charged twice and the accountability for the delivery of services is present.

5. Planning Application and Delivery Strategy Update

PPA negotiations are concluding. CCC is currently considering a draft and confirming funding for staff resources. Aiming for a joint PPA with CCC and ECC. ECC to provide further update.

Four applications will be submitted:

- Ptarmigan – Hybrid application for 1,500 units (Zone 1)
- Countryside/L&Q – Hybrid application 3,500 units (Zone 2)
- Halley – Hybrid application for circa 1,100 units (Zone 3)
- Halley – Full application for Northern RDR (RDR2)

Whilst planning applications will be submitted by each individual applicant, collaborative working is still ongoing between the whole developer consortium, such as delivery of the northern RDR (RDR2) with technical drawings currently being produced. The scoping opinion on RDR2 has been submitted. Halley is holding a meet with local residents to discuss the detail of the access arrangements for RDR2 and the implications for Domsey Lane.

Consortium is working with Tri-connex – a multi utilities connections company that specialise in strategic sites, this includes water and power connections etc. looking at capacity and need, including future needs for EV charging and considering the change from gas to electric. UKPN agreement for reserving power capacity is being sorted.

Zone 1 – up to 1,500 new homes, innovation hub and primary school. Delivery of the discovery park in the early phases to assist with the biodiversity net gain. Gateway with pedestrian bridge over ERW. Illustrations shown for the active travel routes and secondary mobility hub.

Stage 2 masterplan provides more detail for each of the zones. Each part will come forward as part of the planning application for the relevant zone.

Target Submissions for planning applications:

- Ptarmigan – mid-October
- Countryside and Halley – mid-December

Countryside and Halley Public Engagement expected to include:

Workshops – 28th September and 12th October

Consultation expected to go live on 10th October until 14th November

Zoom Q&A – 19th October

Whilst planning applications will be submitted, Ptarmigan noted that they will not be pushing for determination ahead of the consideration of the DFD and IDP at Committee.

Consortium expressed a wish to see a Project Delivery Group set up for all parties to meet on a regular basis once individual planning applications are submitted. The group would include representatives from CCC, ECC, Ptarmigan, Countryside L&Q and Halley to discuss cross-party matters, and as and when other house builders come onboard, they could also attend.

Zone 2 – Countryside L&Q targeting mid-December for submission, detailed pre-app discussions have taken place covering a range of topics including minerals and implications for phases, education and sports provision. Further discussions to take place on the masterplan, parameter plans, movement and employment. Advice being sought from Savills to undertake a further review of the employment allocation at Beaulieu Exchange and the wider site needs.

SR questioned whether due to the increase in the housing figure, there would be increased employment provision to ensure the target of one job for every home is still met. OB suggested an employment working group be set up to discuss with relevant parties.

Zone 3 – Halley Development – 1,100 units, meeting with Sport England for sport provision within the discovery park north, workshops for access, pre-app meeting later in the week, joint consultation with Countryside as outlined above.

Actions

- **Natalie Hayward to chase GT re: PPA discussions**

6. Infrastructure Update

The bridge for the RDR has been moved into place over the railway line and A12 slip road. The second part of the bridge is likely to go over on 8th October.

Beaulieu Keep, Countryside has won a Housing Design Award for 2022; this is the second award for the Garden Community following Channels (Phases 3c, 3d & 5 – The Home Group) in 2021.

The infrastructure schedule has been updated.

7. Garden Communities Programme – Homes England

Changes at central government means that Homes England are awaiting on any policy changes and implications. No updates on future GC bids at this stage.

8. Review of Chelmsford Local Plan

The Local Plan is out on consultation until 20th October. The consultation sets out five different spatial strategy approaches including extensions to the Garden Community. Further information can be found at: <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-local-plan/local-plan-review-2022>

9. Any other Business

16th November – Inward Investment Day at ARU.

Two Garden Community Shadow Parish Council meetings have taken place. Andrew Wright from the Channels Residents Group is the chair; it was agreed that the Council will meet with the Consortium later in the year.

Any future meetings which require teams attendance / hybrid arrangement - please let William know in advance, otherwise it is assumed they will continue to be in-person. Meetings could also be held at the Garden Community/Channels.

10. Date and time of next meeting

- To be arranged