

Salt Cross Garden Village AAP Examination - Request for comments on additional work GreenTEA¹ 30 March 2022

Salt Cross (Infrastructure) Phasing Report (SCPR) by AK Urbanism

General comments

Eynsham residents' main concern is the impact on already stretched local services, transport and infrastructure and the proposed phasing gives cause for concern- although it also of concern that the phasing is ultimately in the hands of the developer. Notably (as set out below) the timing of the primary school, underpass and the uncertainty about healthcare will inevitably lead to more pressure on Eynsham's services and roads until at least 2031, in addition to the pressure of the West Eynsham development.

It is vital that as much as possible is settled at this stage and that the infrastructure which affects Eynsham is brought forward.

Scope of the SCPR

We note that the programme runs until 2040 in 6 phases.

The definition of infrastructure in this report is narrow, as defined in AAP Appendix 5. It excludes services such as energy, but does include water and waste.

SCPR does say at 3.7 *"This report only addresses the above items; i.e. the Key Infrastructure. The councils will of course seek to ensure that all other necessary infrastructure and financial contributions are addressed in any future section 106 agreement(s)."* Excluding other elements of infrastructure risks insufficient scrutiny and enforcement in the long delivery programme.

Energy

We note that the previous Eynsham Area Infrastructure Delivery Plan (July 2020) did include energy in some detail at 5.7. 5.7.1 "OXIS noted that SSEN's draft feasibility study concludes that the growth of housing as suggested by the Local Plans and the anticipated increase in employment cannot be supplied by the existing distribution network without reinforcement." Although the SCPR reports that grid reinforcement offsite eg at Bicester might be sufficient, it is not conclusive. As the move to electrify heating and transport accelerates and demand increases, some clarity on future electricity supply capacity as key infrastructure would be pertinent. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (July 2020) also mentions at 5.73 that the Oxford Energy Strategy Delivery Plan highlights the role of Project LEO² and at 5.74 "Unlocking grid constraints is intended to reduce the need for additional and costly network upgrades to support increasing demand." This is highly pertinent to Eynsham as the Eynsham Project LEO Smart and Fair Futures³ innovation project is developing a Zero Carbon Energy Action Plan to help accelerate the transition to net zero. As the 'golden thread' of the AAP is climate change, we are surprised and disappointed that there is no mention of this opportunity to unlock grid constraints and decarbonise local energy. We are concerned that the clear principles and ambition could be lost, as well as opportunities, for example, for site wide innovative low carbon technologies in the proposed phasing as the site is split up.

Biodiversity

Eynsham also has a strong nature recovery network⁴ and we believe that the response to the climate and ecological emergency should be seen together as a key element of infrastructure. Given

¹<https://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/org.aspx?n=GreenTEA>

² <https://project-leo.co.uk/>

³ <https://project-leo.co.uk/case-studies/eynsham-smart-and-fair-futures/>

⁴ <https://nrn.nature-recovery-network.org/>

its fragility work should start on biodiversity net gain and nature recovery as early as possible in the tradition of Garden Cities. This has been well set out by Nigel Pearce.

Waste water (sewage)

We note that the useful table and diagram in Appendices 1 and 2 of the SCPR do not include water and waste.

On waste water (sewage) the SCPR says Thames Water proposes to provide a new gravity sewer in highway land along the southern boundary of the SCGV site, which will discharge to a new strategic pumping station (location to be confirmed) and that this will provide sufficient capacity for the development and for other developments to the west. In their response to the OPA TWA had said (August 2020) it had identified an inability of the existing sewage treatment works infrastructure to accommodate the needs of this development proposal. Eynsham residents are all too aware of the problems with sewage capacity, even before largescale development, and are not reassured by the contents of the SCPR.

Timing of facilities

Temporary provision for a community space and village trust in Phase/stage 1 is welcome, but no primary school is planned until 400 homes are occupied, which could lead to a lot of car journeys to a very full primary school. Does this take account of early completions elsewhere eg West Eynsham? Primary healthcare is undecided which is very worrying.

The underpass is in stage 2 when 700 dwellings occupied. So there will be many extra road journeys and risky crossings of the A40 until then- and there is still doubt over whether the underpass will happen. Also stage 2 for the cycle route to Hanborough Station, when 700 dwellings occupied- this is not until 2031. So Eynsham will see disruption to already stretched local services, transport and infrastructure and no benefit for around ten years: clearly earlier completion of this kind of infrastructure would be highly desirable.

Updated policies 13-17. The standards appear the same in the edited policies (eg number of car spaces, EV chargers, car free space).

Policy 14 On the cycle route to Hanborough Station, it clarifies that the section within the GV site is to be commenced in stage 1 and completed in stage 2 when 700 dwellings are occupied (2031!) but also includes a financial contribution to the section to the north of the GV. We assume the route is fully funded.

Policy enforcement will be key.