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**TITLE: CONSULTATION RESULTS ON SITE OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Committee: Strategic Development Committee

Date: 9 November 2010

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1.0 ISSUE

- 1.1 To consider comments received on the two Site Options Papers published in July 2010. The Options Papers looked at potential sites to deliver growth and infrastructure provision in the district up to 2025 – including housing, employment, retail and gypsy development and infrastructure for schools, health care and other services.
- 1.2 At the meeting of Strategic Development Committee in September 2010, Members resolved to review the Core Strategy. Comments on the Options Papers will fed into the Core Strategy review process.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended that:
- i. Members note the responses made by stakeholders and others in the community
  - ii. Members consider Officer comments on the responses, and make recommendations as appropriate
  - iii. Goodwin Farm in Swaffham Prior is not progressed as a gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople option, given the high level of community opposition and this Committee's September 2010 decision to set a lower interim requirement for sites
  - iv. Members indicate whether the other gypsy and traveller and travelling showpeople site options should be ruled out at this stage
  - v. The responses plus officer's comments and Member recommendations are used to inform the Core Strategy review, which will provide the Council's new Development Plan for the district.

3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

- 3.1 Two Options Papers were published for consultation in July/August 2010, following approval by this Committee on 15th June 2010. The Ely Options Paper focuses on sites in Ely Parish only, whilst the Site Allocations Options Paper looks at the rest of the district.
- 3.2 The Options Papers were produced as part of the Council's statutory plan for the growth of the district. The district is experiencing pressures for growth,

and the District Council needs to respond to this and manage this growth sensitively. Consultation with the public is a key part of the development plan process.

- 3.3 The Options Papers looked at the suitability, availability and deliverability of potential site options for the delivery of development and infrastructure, including:
- Housing development
  - Employment development
  - Town centre improvements and expansion
  - Need for new/expanded schools
  - Need for new/expanded health facilities
  - Need for transport and access improvements
  - Other infrastructure and service improvements
  - Sites for gypsies and travellers, and travelling showpeople
- 3.4 Details of the consultation responses received are discussed in section 4 below. The consultation responses will feed into the production of the Council's statutory development plan for the district – along with other results of other community consultation including the Ely and Soham Masterplans and emerging Littleport Masterplan.
- 3.5 At the meeting of Strategic Development Committee in September 2010, it was resolved to review the Core Strategy so that it integrates the Council's Masterplan work and reviews requirements for gypsy and traveller sites. This future plan will include site allocations and strategic matters in one document, in order to save resources and costs. Therefore separate allocation documents for Ely and the rest of the district will no longer be prepared. The timetable for the next stage of plan production has yet to be finalised (pending the Government's draft Localism Bill in November 2010) but it is anticipated that a draft plan containing a growth strategy for the district plus preferred sites is likely to be published sometime in 2011 for further consultation with the public.
- 3.6 The Options Papers were also accompanied by Initial Sustainability Appraisal documents, which identified and evaluated the social, economic and environmental effects of the potential options (and which we are required to carry out by EU and national legislation). Comments were also sought on these Initial SA documents.

#### 4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Consultation on the Options Papers involved extensive contact with landowners, developer, Parish Councils and the public through general publicity, direct emails/letters, meetings, exhibitions and Market Stall events. An on-line questionnaire was provided for people's comments, and attendees at Market Stall events were encouraged to vote on key issues highlighted on maps.

- 4.2 A summary of the number of responses received is set out in the table below. A significant number of responses were made on the Site Allocations Options Paper, with the majority of these relating to potential site options for gypsy and traveller and travelling showpeople.

<b>Consultation method</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>
Ely Options Paper	85
Ely Market Stall Events	71
Ely Initial Sustainability Appraisal	11
Site Allocations Options Paper	1200
Site Allocations Initial Sustainability Appraisal	690

- 4.3 Some of the key consultation results are discussed briefly below. Further details of responses are set out in the 2 documents attached as Appendix 1 and 2 to this report. When looking at responses, Members should bear in mind that many people/organisations respond to consultation events when they wish to object (rather than support). In addition, many of the questions had very low number of respondents.

### **Ely Options Paper**

- 4.4 A total of 85 people responded to the Options Paper – however, it should be noted that many questions elicited far lower numbers of responses (ranging from 20 on infrastructure to 45 or so on transport) as not everyone answered all the questions. Details are given in the bullets below. In addition a further 71 people made comments at the Market Stall events, on development options for Ely North and the Paradise area.

- 4.5 Some of the key results are summarised below:

- High level of support (88%) for implementing short-medium term interim measures to tackle congestion at the Ely Station level crossing, from a wide range of stakeholders [total of 41 respondents].
- High level of support (68%) for improving the Station Gateway area [total of 34 respondents], including the provision of a Transport Interchange.
- Respondents were broadly split (48% yes, 52% no) on whether Tescos should relocate to land west of Angel Drove Business Park [total of 29 respondents].
- Respondents were split on whether Waitrose carpark and The Grange should be redeveloped for retail uses [total of 38 respondents].
- Low level of support (24%) for the redevelopment of the Paradise area [total of 38 respondents to the Options Paper, plus 71 respondents to Market Stall events].

- Some support (58%) for further housing development at Ely North from respondents to the Options Paper [total of 31 respondents], but low level of support (29%) from respondents at the Market Stall events [total of 38 respondents].
- Respondents were split on whether sites off Lisle Lane should be redeveloped for housing – there were some concerns about loss of jobs in this part of Ely [33 respondents].
- Most respondents (64%) supported the provision of 2 new primary schools in Ely, rather than 1 larger primary school [22 respondents].

### **Site Allocations Options Paper**

4.6 A significant number of responses were received to this Options Paper. However, it should be noted that the majority of these (over 1000) related to site options for gypsy and travellers and travelling showpeople – and that relatively low levels of people responded to other questions (ranging from 7 respondents to Littleport questions to about 45 respondents to Burwell questions). The site option at Goodwin Farm in Swaffham Prior, in particular, elicited a very high level of response from the local community, with over 980 respondents objecting to the potential option. A further 690 responses were received on the Initial Sustainability Appraisal, with 678 of these relating to the gypsy site option at Goodwin Farm in Swaffham Prior.

4.7 Some of the key results are summarised below:

- High support (78%) for additional retail development in Soham to be provided through an expansion of the existing Budgens store
- Respondents split on whether the Eastern Gateway and land off Regal Lane in Soham should be developed for additional housing
- Some support (57%) for a new primary school in Soham to be located on land north of Kingfisher Drive
- Respondents generally very split on most site options for housing and employment, with broadly similar numbers of respondents supporting/objecting to potential site options across the district
- Very low levels of support for development of the gypsy and traveller and travelling showpeople site options across the district – ranging from 0.7% support for Goodwin Farm in Swaffham Prior to 36% support for expansion of the Wentworth Road site (see paragraph below for further commentary).

4.8 The responses indicate that there are some concerns from the public about the development of gypsy caravans on all of the sites – but particularly the site in Swaffham Prior. As set out in the recommendations it is suggested that

the Goodwin Farm site should not be pursued as an option, given the high level of public opposition. In addition, Members views are sought on whether the other gypsy site options should be further investigated, or whether they wish to indicate any site options which they consider are unsuitable and should not be identified as preferred gypsy site options.

## 5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The cost of preparing a new Plan for the district is already budgeted for. There are no direct additional costs arising from the consultation responses.

## 6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 Ely Area Action Plan Options Paper - Summary of Responses – circulated separately.

6.2 Site Allocations Options Paper - Summary of Responses – circulated separately.

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### **Background Documents**

### **Location**

### **Contact Officer**

East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy (October 2009)

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Site Allocations Options Paper (July 2010)

Ely Area Action Plan Options Paper (July 2010)