

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning  
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5<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

By Email:

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**NORTH EAST CAMBRIDGE AREA ACTION PLAN – Response to  
Regulation 18 consultation**

This response is submitted on behalf of Urban&Civic (U&C) by David Lock Associates (DLA). The opportunity to prepare a response to the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (NEC AAP) is welcomed. This response raises some general but important points about the APP and we hope that this form of submission is appropriate.

***Waterbeach Barracks and Airfield***

U&C is appointed as development partner and master developer on behalf of the Ministry of Defence (DIO) at Waterbeach Barracks and Airfield. Outline Planning Permission was granted in September 2019 and U&C is now progressing delivery of the redevelopment of the Barracks and Airfield for a new community, including up to 6,500 new homes. This consent relates to part of the wider Local Plan allocation for Waterbeach New Town. U&C is an important stakeholder in the wider development of the northern sector of the Cambridge Fringe and is committed to supporting the coordinated and comprehensive development of the city.

In the context of this consultation, there is particular significance attached to ensuring the coordinated development of public transport between NEC and Waterbeach, as well as the wider area and also in achieving the most effective solutions for the relocation of existing uses at NEC, including the Waste Water Treatment Works. Through this consultation response, U&C welcome the opportunity to reinforce the importance of strategic infrastructure projects across this part of the city, and the need to ensure effective connections and integration of Waterbeach New Town with NEC, as a gateway to the wider city centre.

Given the role of U&C as a significant stakeholder in the growth of northern Cambridge and the interrelationship, particularly from a sustainable transport perspective, between Waterbeach New Town and NEC, we would welcome further, early and ongoing dialogue with the Councils and other key stakeholders, to ensure continuing and effective co-ordination of all development and infrastructure across the northern sector of the Cambridge fringe.

In light of the above, our comments primarily seek to support the emerging AAP and the recognition it provides to the evolving

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infrastructure projects, and reinforce that these must continue to be integral to the ongoing development of the AAP.

### **Sustainable Travel in North Cambridge**

Cambridge is growing at pace and U&C endorses the efforts of all authorities, stakeholders and infrastructure providers who are currently involved in the multiple, prominent projects across the city and wider sub-region to facilitate and support this growth. This includes, importantly, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) and its work on delivering significant improvements along the A10 and the Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro (CAM) and the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) and the Waterbeach to Cambridge Public Transport Projects, as well as infrastructure schemes and investments provided by development projects themselves, such as at Waterbeach Barracks and Airfield.

These combined infrastructure projects represent a vital step change in the ability of Cambridge and its wider subregion to continue to sustain significant economic growth whilst operating effectively and efficiently. Together, they are critical in ensuring reliance on private vehicles is reduced and it is crucial that such projects align and work well together, creating a smoothly integrated sustainable transport system. These projects are all prominent in their own right and many are still at an 'options' stage of evolution.

The AAP has a key role in coordinating comprehensive development at NEC, particularly given the multiple ownerships, the complexity of the site and proposed development and the convergence of numerous infrastructure projects in this location. U&C support the preparation of the AAP to secure this coordinated growth and importantly, a cohesive public transport system and integrated sustainable travel. We have set out our key comments in this regard below:

**Mere Way Sustainable Travel Link** - U&C support the recognition in draft Policy 17 – **Connecting to the Wider Network** – for the Mere Way link. This is an important route being delivered by U&C as part of the Waterbeach New Town and it is vital that it is accommodated within NEC and that the development proposals respond positively to the route. U&C are currently progressing the detailed design of Mere Way for its implementation in accordance with the early trigger on its outline permission. With this detailed design underway, it is essential that ongoing work on the AAP takes into account the measures and design requirements of the route through the western component of the AAP area. We recognise that the figures / plans provided with the draft Regulation 18 AAP are diagrammatic, however, consider that there should be full regard to the accurate alignment of Mere Way as it passes through NEC. This is significant given the different ownerships at play and, whilst the route follows an existing Public Right of Way in this location, some minor works will be required to upgrade the route. The Mere Way scheme is understood to affect both the Cambridge Regional College ownership and the adjacent private landowners and therefore this should be reflected on any plans showing the route for transparency. U&C is happy to engage further on the details of the route in this location to assist in it being accurately represented.

**Waterbeach Greenway** – U&C also support the AAP's reference to the Greenway and approach to addressing its routing. This scheme has now secured funding and therefore it is necessary that the AAP continues to respond positively to it through subsequent stages of design and development.

**CPCA A10 Improvement Works** – the A10 improvement works are a nationally significant project which would have a substantial positive impact on traffic movements both across Cambridge and the wider area. The Milton Interchange is a key node on the Strategic Highway Network and there are planned improvements to this junction to increase its capacity. Whilst the extent of the works committed as part of the U&C Waterbeach development should not have a direct impact on the NEC site, it is important that the AAP remains cognisant of its relationship to this junction and the wider A10 improvement works, which are still in evolution stages, and ensures that it does not have a detrimental impact on any future works being achieved. Furthermore, given the recognised capacity issues of the Milton Interchange within the AAP, there is an even greater onus on facilitating an effective public transport network through NEC.

**CAM and Waterbeach to Cambridge Project** – Similarly, U&C welcomes the considerable recognition within the AAP to accommodating the CAM scheme, for which options are still being considered. Given the prominence of this project and its potential ability to transform travel

around Cambridge and the wider area, it is of utmost importance that the AAP remains flexible to accommodate any of the CAM options which may be pursued. U&C support Policy 19 and the intention to safeguard the necessary corridors and reinforce that the AAP should allow for the necessary evolution of the scheme. In the same respect U&C support the approach to the Waterbeach to Cambridge Project and the Cambridge North Transport Interchange in the AAP. The Interchange will be a strategic transport hub, facilitating effective connections between different sustainable modes of travel as they converge on north Cambridge from the wider area. Ensuring such a facility is well positioned and designed and thus, efficient to navigate, will be essential in encouraging use of public transport. Therefore, it is paramount that the AAP allows for this project to evolve alongside the related public transport projects which it may serve.

In this same context, we support the general policy position on Mobility Hubs also set out in Policy 19. As noted in respect of the North Cambridge Interchange, mobility hubs throughout north Cambridge will serve an important purpose in making public transport attractive and easy to use. This is essential in ensuring effective connections within the various growth locations of the Cambridge fringe, and also with Cambridge city centre and other key destinations, including key employment and education hubs. Such hubs should therefore be encouraged and provide for a range of facilities.

**Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) Relocation** – The AAP is obviously reliant on the re-location of the WWTW and U&C provided comments on the recent Anglian Water (AW) consultation on this specific project. In its response, U&C set out a clear position on the three site options, this was based around two of the potential sites being more constrained and raising a number of key implementation issues. Acknowledging that one site is considered to be much more practical from a delivery perspective, it is important for the Council's to continue to work with AW and support the selection and development of the relocation site, which U&C consider needs to be AW site option 3 as this is the least constrained and therefore will facilitate the AAP more effectively.

We trust that this provides a clear position and demonstrates our support for the general approaches in the emerging AAP. The Councils have clearly taken a very considered approach to preparing the AAP and recognise the critical considerations for taking forward this important growth area. It is essential that in subsequent stages of the AAP, such projects are continued to be given sufficient regard and necessary flexibility to achieve a well aligned and coordinated development and sustainable travel system for the city.

U&C welcome the opportunity for further dialogue with the Councils and please do let us know if you have any queries regarding this response.

Yours sincerely,



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