

## **Places for People/City and Provincial Properties**

### **East Herts District Plan Examination**

#### **Chapter 11 – The Gilston Area – Policies GA1 and GA2**

##### **Issue 3**

#### **What progress has been made on the funding and delivery of necessary infrastructure?**

##### **Overview**

1. PFP has clear and detailed plans for the delivery of the necessary infrastructure and is committed to funding it. From initial consultation back in 2009, the primary concerns of local people in terms of new development have related to existing infrastructure capacity and delivery of infrastructure to support the development. Consistently, issues relating to congestion/highways capacity, utilities and sewerage and, most recently, capacity of the Princess Alexandra Hospital have been the most commonly cited concerns. Whilst many of these are plan-wide issues, PFP has sought to demonstrate a commitment to the timely delivery of infrastructure that is essential to support the Gilston Area.
2. PFP/CPP's professional team has undertaken detailed work to understand the infrastructure requirements for the site, the timing and phasing of such infrastructure, and how it will be funded. The team have engaged in detail with infrastructure providers and utilities, and understand the permissions and decisions required for key items of infrastructure to be delivered. This work is at a significantly greater level of detail than is required at this stage of the Plan process to demonstrate that the site is developable as required by the NPPF.
3. PFP has a track record of delivery of housing and infrastructure, at scale, and of securing commercial funding to do this. As set out in paragraph 14.17 of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) (Ref no: IDM/001), PFP/CPP are committing to fund all necessary infrastructure on site. PFP/CPP will also provide the funding for both the Central and Second Stort crossings to support their delivery at a time that reflects the development requirements of the Gilston Area. However, as recognised in the IDP the crossings are strategic mitigation schemes, serving overall growth in the Harlow area of which Gilston forms part, and Section 106 contributions will be sought from other developments.
4. PFP recently worked closely with Hertfordshire and Essex County Councils (HCC and ECC) and other stakeholders to submit a bid for Housing Infrastructure Funding to facilitate the early delivery of the Central and Second Crossings, and the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Sustainable Transport Corridor linking to Harlow town centre.

##### **Funding and Delivery of Infrastructure**

5. The majority of infrastructure required to support the Gilston Area development can be provided on land owned by PFP/CPP, including site access, internal roads, strategic and local green infrastructure (including sports and play provision), and the full range of community infrastructure (including primary and secondary schools, sixth-form provision, nurseries, health centres, community centres, leisure centre and a place of worship).

6. On-site infrastructure is identified in the IDP (Ref No: IDM/001), and in some instances, in Policy GA1. Appendix H of IDM/001 sets out the infrastructure that is to be funded by PfP/CPP as part of the delivery of the development, working closely with EHDC and other key stakeholders. The timetable for delivery will be agreed as part of the application process.
7. Offsite infrastructure generally falls into two categories – utilities and transport/highways. In terms of utilities the main works include:
  - Sewerage: Thames Water have confirmed that Rye Meads and the existing waste water network will have sufficient capacity to accommodate the development up to 2036, after which point upgrades may be required. PfP/CPP will continue to engage with Thames Water as future capacity assessments are undertaken. Any capacity upgrades will serve wider growth in the area beyond that at the Gilston Area. PfP/CPP expect that an appropriate contribution will need to be made towards the costs of these works;
  - Electricity: The development can be served from the existing primary sub-station at Harlow West, distributed across the site via a number of new sub stations. Necessary costs have been included in the cost plan and PfP/CPP will continue to engage with UKPowerNetworks to ensure the works are implemented at the necessary time to support scheme delivery; and
  - Gas and Water: Connections can be made to the existing infrastructure around the site and no significant upgrade works are required to serve the development. PfP/CPP will continue to engage with the providers to ensure the connection works are implemented at the necessary time to support scheme delivery.
8. In terms of transport and highways, the transport vision for the Gilston Area, as set out in Section 5 of the draft Concept Framework, is based on a sustainable transport strategy. A key element of delivering this is the forming of a sustainable transport corridor between the site and Burnt Mill roundabout including improvements to the roundabout itself. This will link to the overall Sustainable Transport Corridor being developed as part of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town to link Gilston with development to the south of the town, as identified in draft Policy GA1 (I).
9. In addition, public transport improvements required to support the Gilston Area development will be funded by PfP/CPP, including bus services, pedestrian and cycle provision, and car clubs.
10. Detailed strategic highways modelling undertaken by HCC and ECC have informed the highway infrastructure requirements of the project. The evidence demonstrates that Local Plan growth in the Harlow area, including at the Gilston Area, can be accommodated with a suitable package of sustainable transport and highway improvements. The strategic highway interventions are:
  - New Junction 7a on the M11: Planning permission has been granted, funding is in place and the works are expected to commence this in 2018 and be completed by 2021;
  - Central (Eastwick) Stort Crossing: Improvements and widening of the existing river crossing are needed to address existing traffic conditions and to support wider growth in the Harlow/East Herts area, including development at the Gilston Area and will assist with the delivery of the Sustainable Transport Corridor. The crossing proposal is supported by

ECC and HCC highway authorities. PfP/ CPP have designed the crossing, will secure its planning permission and will fund its full cost;

- Second Stort Crossing: This crossing is supported by HCC and ECC and provides an additional link across the River Stort linking to River Way towards the eastern end of Edinburgh Way and also providing a bypass to Pye Corner. PfP/ CPP have designed the crossing, will secure its planning permission and has included for its full cost within the development's cost plan. However, as identified at Paragraph 14.9 – 14.11 of the IDP, the infrastructure is also to serve wider development within Harlow and therefore other developments are expected to contribute to its funding. The timing for delivery of the crossing will need to be agreed as part of the planning application process;
  - The two crossings are located beyond the Gilston Area Site Allocation boundary. There are no current agreements in place with the relevant landowners for the two crossings although the great majority of the land required for the Eastwick Crossing is within the control of PfP, HCA and the Land Restoration Trust. Reasonable efforts will continue to be made to secure the land by agreement for both crossings, however, if agreement is not reached EHDC agreed in-principle, at a Cabinet meeting on the 21st September 2017, that they are prepared to use their Compulsory Purchase Order powers to secure the land required for the Second Crossing should that be necessary. PfP/ CPP are therefore confident the crossings can be delivered when required to support the Gilston Area development; and
  - There are a series of other highway improvements that are being promoted in Harlow by ECC, which focus on the A414 corridor and towards the town centre. Furthermore, local highway improvements are proposed within Hertfordshire including on the A1184 towards High Wych and Sawbridgeworth and at Amwell close to the A10. These junction improvements will be considered in more detail as planning applications for developments, including the Gilston Area, progress.
11. A technical note prepared by Vectos in response to the Momentum Transport Consultancy note on the Second Stort Crossing (on behalf of Roger Beaumont, Mary Pope and the Wentworth Stanley Family) is attached at Appendix 1. The Momentum note suggests that the Second Crossing is required ahead of the Eastwick crossing in order to deliver sustainable travel benefits. As the Vectos note indicates, this is not agreed, nor is it supported by the published evidence base. It is noted that Roger Beaumont, Mary Pope and the Wentworth Family have land interests affected by the Second Crossing. It is assumed that their promotion of the early delivery of the Second Crossing is driven in part by a desire to secure an early and potentially an enhanced value for their land holdings as and when that land is required for the delivery of strategic infrastructure.

### **Funding and Delivery of Development**

12. PfP and CPP have developed a comprehensive 'master-developer' financial model on a land value capture basis to ensure that the scheme is viable after the costs of the infrastructure and the cost of the land required for the crossings, and that the peak funding required is achievable.
13. Details of this financial model were provided by PfP/ CPP to EHDC and the content of such was used to inform the preparation of PBA's Delivery Study (Ref No: IDP/002).

14. PfP also has substantial experience in effectively managing the delivery and financing of large scale development which has been successfully achieved on their sites at Milton Keynes, Swindon and in the North East.
  
15. In summary, the infrastructure requirements for the delivery of 10,000 homes in the Gilston Area, have been identified in Policy GA1 and as stated in the IDP the majority is to be fully funded by PfP/CPP. Discussions are underway with the relevant statutory bodies and PfP/CPP are confident that all necessary infrastructure can be secured and delivered in a timescale to achieve the assumptions of the District Plan, if not earlier.

PM/Q10058 – 20.10.17



**APPENDIX 1 – RESPONSE TO MOMENTUM NOTE ON TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE  
REQUIREMENTS TO DELIVER THE GILSTON AREA**

## GA1: Gilston Area

### Response to Momentum Note on Transport Infrastructure Requirements to Deliver the Gilston Area

October 2017

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#### Introduction

1. This note has been prepared by Vectos, on behalf of Places for People (PFP) & City and Provincial Properties (CPP), in response to a technical note prepared by Momentum Transport Consultancy titled 'Transport Infrastructure Requirements to Deliver Gilston' (October 2017).
2. Within their note, Momentum refer to the following:
  - A414 Fifth Avenue Crossing (FAC) – Commonly referred to as the Central Crossing; and
  - Second Stort Crossing (SSC) – Commonly referred to as the Eastern Crossing.
3. For ease of reference, the Momentum acronyms, FAC and SSC, will be used within this response note. In addition, where reference is made to the Sustainable Transport Corridor this is abbreviated to STC.
4. It is important to note that policy GA2 refers to *"a new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian crossing either to the east of the existing crossing (connecting the A414 to the River Way), or to the west of the existing crossing (connecting the A414 to Elizabeth Way)"*. Therefore, whilst the eastern option is currently the preferred solution, it is not the only option for the second crossing.
5. Momentum are appointed by Sworders, who are acting on behalf of Mr. Roger Beaumont, who owns a proportion of the land required to construct the proposed SSC.
6. The primary purpose of the Momentum note appears to be to argue for the delivery of the SSC before the FAC.

#### Sustainable Transport Corridor

7. Before dealing with the key issues raised in the Momentum Report, this section summarises the approach taken to the STC as it relates to the Gilston Area. It is noteworthy that this approach has been developed in conjunction with Herts County Council and Essex County Council with whom regular meetings have been held.
8. The section of the corridor between Gilston and Burnt Mill roundabout will be delivered by PFP and CPP. This will link to the overall STC being developed as part of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town to link Gilston with development to the south of the town, as identified

in draft Policy GA1 (I). It is intended that the northern part of the corridor (between the Gilson Area and Burnt Mill) will contain a number of elements including:

- Segregated off-road footway/cycleways on both sides of the FAC linking the Gilson Area to the rail station and town centre and the existing network of routes within Harlow. The provision on the east side of the bridge will include a bridge over the A414 at the location of the Eastwick junction/access to Gilson Village 1. This will therefore provide for traffic free walking and cycling from the Gilston Area to Harlow;
- Dedicated bus provision to allow buses significant priority over general traffic and therefore providing for improvements in journey times and reliability for the existing community and new residents. The details of bus priority measures will be agreed through the planning application process. However, it is likely that dedicated bus lanes will be provided in both directions with advance stop lines on the approaches to the signals. This ensures buses have priority over other traffic but also allows general traffic to use the enhanced junctions at Eastwick and Burnt Mill; and
- Links to a new northern access to the rail station for sustainable modes.

9. All these elements require the FAC to be in place but do not require the SSC to be in place.
10. This solution is appropriate in the early part of the plan period in order to deliver the STC and alleviate existing congestion. As the number of homes and jobs, and therefore travel demand, grow during the plan period, the need for the SSC will crystallise. As set out in the IDP, the precise timing of the need for the SSC will depend on the pace of growth in the area.

#### **Momentum Report**

11. This note has focussed on the key relevant points within the Momentum report. It does not seek to address every point of disagreement.
12. The Momentum report wrongly seeks to argue that the SCC is required ahead of the FAC for the following reasons (para 1.6.24):
  - timely delivery of the STC;
  - the provision of required highway capacity; and
  - reducing construction impacts.
13. There is no evidence to support this argument and each of Momentum's points is dealt with in turn below.

#### Timely Delivery of the STC

14. The Momentum conclusions are based on a misunderstanding of the sustainable corridor proposals.
15. The report states at paragraph 1.6.5: *“Should the upgrades to the FAC be delivered ahead of the SSC they would prevent the delivery of the sustainable transport corridor from being delivered in time for first occupation.”* As set out above this is not the case and the STC can and will be delivered as part of the FAC.

### Highway Capacity

16. In considering this issue Momentum consider both the COMET modelling undertaken by Herts CC and the VISUM modelling undertaken by ECC.
17. In relation to COMET, the Momentum report suggests that the modelling shows that the SSC provides the required mitigation in the area whereas the FAC does not. Para 1.4.18 states *“The COMET model outputs indicate that the A414 approaches to the Eastwick roundabout junction were found to be operating at <80% V/C under the Forecast Year (2031). Do Something scenario, highlighting operational improvement at this junction and on the FAC as a result of SSC”*. This is not what the evidence shows for two reasons.
18. First, the modelling referred to by Momentum does not compare the network performance with and without the SSC. What it does is compare the network performance with the “do minimum” interventions against the performance with the “do something” interventions including both FAC and SSC. This is set out by Momentum themselves at para 1.4.9 (note the third bullet point refers to conversion of the Eastwick roundabout to signals but the actual scheme is “Existing crossing upgrade (dual carriageway), Scheme EH28 in document TRA.002 Table 1. Refer also to TRA.001 Table 3, ID 3).
19. Furthermore, the analysis does not attempt to undertake any phased analysis ie it does not assess the situation in, say, 2025 with just the FAC compared with the situation in 2031 with FAC and SSC. This is the more detailed modelling that will be undertaken as part of the planning application to determine the trigger points when infrastructure interventions become necessary.
20. Turning to the VISUM modelling, as Momentum state this does identify the effects of adding the SSC onto a network that already has the FAC in place (this is assumed although not explicitly stated in Technical Note 3). As is agreed the modelling demonstrates there are benefits to the SSC which is why PfP and the highway authorities are promoting the scheme and it is in the IDP.
21. However, at paragraph 1.4.38 Momentum state the following *“The results of the VISUM assessment indicate that the highway network performance improvements are shown when the SSC is in place (Phase 2), not when the FAC is in place (Phase 1) in isolation. Therefore, an approach to deliver the FAC ahead of the SSC would not mitigate the transport effects of the cumulative development in the area. On the basis it is considered that the proposed FAC alone will not deliver the required improvements to the transport network, it will not be cost effective and therefore will not be compliant with NPPF Policy 32 making it contrary to National Planning Policy. This cannot be ignored”*. These conclusions cannot be drawn from the analysis for the following reasons:
  - It is agreed that the SSC provides network performance improvements. However, Technical Note 3 does not seek to identify the network performance improvements of delivering just the FAC. Therefore, one cannot draw any conclusions on the relative merits of the FAC and the SSC.

- As with the COMET analysis, whilst it is agreed that both the SSC and the FAC are needed to cater for planned growth in the area, the modelling does not consider an interim year, for example 2025, when just the FAC may be in place but trip demand will be lower.

22. In conclusion, what the modelling referred to by Momentum shows is that the SSC provides additional network capacity over and above the FAC. That is not in dispute. What the modelling does not show is the beneficial effects of the FAC on its own, particularly at some interim point within the plan period when trip growth will be less than at the end of the plan period.

#### Construction

23. Finally, the Momentum report suggests that the SSC should come first because of the construction impacts of building the FAC.

24. The FAC will be constructed alongside the existing Eastwick Crossing, but will form a completely separate structure. Therefore, the existing Eastwick Crossing will be able to operate, with limited effect to its operation, during the construction period. There will, of course, be some effect on local traffic movement when the junctions at either end of the FAC are improved to accommodate the FAC. However, this will be managed to limit disruption.

#### **25. Summary and Conclusions**

26. PfP and CPP are committed to delivering a masterplan at Gilston that provides high quality sustainable transport solutions. A key element of this is the STC. The section from the Gilston Area to Burnt Mill will be provided early within the development to establish sustainable travel patterns from the outset.

27. This section of the STC, referred to as the FAC, will provide for segregated footway and cycle links (including a bridge over the A414) along with high quality bus provision including use of new infrastructure to provide dedicated bus lanes. To provide this the SSC is not required.

28. As growth in the Harlow area, including that at Gilston, proceeds there will be an emerging need for the SSC. Whilst the precise trigger for delivery of this infrastructure is still to be agreed with the stakeholders through ongoing assessment, there is no evidence that supports the suggestion that the SCC is required before the FAC.