

Classification: Part 1

Key Decision: No

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 30 January 2017

Reporting officer: Assistant Director (Planning)

Subject: Endorsement of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation's Implementation Framework

Purpose and summary of report:

This report gives context for the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation's Implementation Framework and seeks Cabinet endorsement of the document, which clearly communicates the EDC's direction of travel.

The Implementation Framework has been developed on the basis of consultation and input from this Council, Dartford Borough Council, Kent County Council, landowners, developers, statutory agencies, parish and town councils, business and the public.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet endorses the Implementation Framework as the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation's statement of ambition

1. Background

- 1.1 The Ebbsfleet Development Corporation's (EDC) aim is simple - to deliver the Garden City at pace, to a high quality and to maximise development potential at Ebbsfleet.
- 1.2 The Implementation Framework defines the long-term ambition for Ebbsfleet by identifying what kind of place Ebbsfleet will become by 2035. This has been developed based upon an appreciation of the aspirations of local people, as well as site-level opportunities and constraints.
- 1.3 The key elements of the Vision describe how the Garden city will be in terms of the place, its people and the council, with sustainable growth providing the means to ensure all residents can fulfil their potential. This is set out below:

Ebbsfleet in 2035

Where London meets the Garden of England, on the banks of the River Thames, Ebbsfleet exploits its strategic location to continue the tradition of great place-making in the UK; combining the best of urban and rural living and building on the ethos and pioneering spirit of Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian planned communities to deliver a new benchmark for 21st century development including up to 15,000 high quality new homes.

Ebbsfleet is recognised as a place to do business, capitalising on its role as a European high speed rail hub 17 minutes from Central London and two hours from Paris, and benefiting from its proximity to Bluewater and junctions with the M25 motorway and the A2. Up to 30,000 people will work in a green, modern environment around the International Station, which is becoming a magnet for economic growth and a destination of choice for investment and innovation.

Building on the unique landscapes inherited from its industrial legacy where gorges, bridges, tunnels and clefts connect former chalk quarries, Ebbsfleet promotes its identity as a healthy and dynamic place which is seen as a prime destination for recreation and leisure in Kent.

Ebbsfleet embraces its neighbouring communities and towns to create a new civic community connected by modern public transport systems, offering a diverse range of opportunities to live, work and play for people of all ages, backgrounds and incomes. The delivery of well-designed and well-served neighbourhoods, workplaces, schools and town centres ensures that residents enjoy a high quality

of life, with easy access to everything they need for healthy and successful lives.

2. Involvement

- 2.1 As the document says Gravesham BC has been involved with the Implementation Framework as it has developed – giving input on several drafts and hosting events for Members and the public.
- 2.2 The development of the Implementation Framework has included a number of public and stakeholder events, and the draft document was available for comment prior to its finalisation. Appendix 2 of this report sets out the EDC's response to the Council's comments on the publication draft document. These comments were minimal as the Implementation Framework had already gone through a number of re-drafts as a result of input from the Council and others.

3. Endorsement

- 3.1 Finalisation of the Implementation Framework is a key milestone for the EDC as the publication of this statement of ambition gives clarity for all stakeholders of which the Council is just one.
- 3.2 When the document was first considered by the EDC, there was a desire by the EDC at the time that it be adopted by the Councils as a Supplementary Planning Document to be hooked under area policies within the Dartford BC and Gravesham BC Core Strategies. Unfortunately, that had to be discounted as an option because of the challenging timeframes set for production of the document and the scale of evidence that could be made public. Some of the evidence is restricted because of commercial confidentiality and this includes a number of thematic reports which have more detail on what the EDC wants to do, where and by when. The report is supported by the baseline Ebbsfleet Garden City Development Report from 2015, which is in the public domain as it is available from the EDC's website.
- 3.3 Cabinet is not being asked to formally adopt the document and rather Cabinet is being asked to endorse this document as the EDC's public statement of intent. When the draft Implementation Framework was more ambiguous about the Lower Thames Crossing and the role and status of Bluewater, which is a specialist out of centre comparison Regional Shopping Centre, officers thought a continual endorsement of the document might be more acceptable to Members but this is no longer the case.

3.4 As the document is not a Supplementary Planning Document its role in decision taking is not clear. A material planning consideration is one which is relevant to making the planning decision in question (e.g. whether to grant or refuse an application for planning permission). The scope of what can constitute a material consideration is very wide and so the courts often do not indicate what cannot be a material consideration. However, in general they have taken the view that planning is concerned with land use in the public interest and so there could be instances where the document would be considered a material planning consideration albeit the weight to be afforded is likely to be low.

4. Financial implications

4.1 None going onwards as the Council is just endorsing the document. However, it should be noted that development of the Implementation Framework has had a considerable cost for the Council in respect to officer time. The EDC Board has been involved throughout this process too and so the Leader's time as an EDC Board Member should also be noted. The officers from the Council have been involved with developing the specification for the commission, evaluation of the tenders, interviewing consultancy teams and commenting on multiple drafts as well as supporting the EDC in its events and consultation activities.

5. Risk

5.1 None

6. Background Papers

- http://ebbsfleetdc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Ebbsfleet-Implementation-Framework-Public-Draft_small.pdf

IMPLICATIONS**APPENDIX 1**

Legal	None
Finance and Value for Money	None
Risk Assessment	
Equality Impact Assessment	Screening for Equality Impacts
	Question
	a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer. No
	b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer. No
	<i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i>
Corporate Plan	
Crime and Disorder	N/A
Digital and website implications	N/A
Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults	N/A

APPENDIX 2

Gravesham Formal Engagement // EDC Response (v2)

	<i>GBC Comment</i>	<i>EDC Response</i>	<i>Framework amendment</i>
1	Request the Lower Thames Crossing Options are not shown within Framework.	EDC have taken on board GBC's concerns with regards to referencing the Lower Thames Crossing Option C, and is now referenced in the Strategic Transport plan which necessitates the inclusion of all local strategic transport projects.	
2	Concern that Western Cross will be developed as large format retail park.	<p>EDC acknowledges this concern. The updated classification for the western cross area is for 'Mixed use (with residential)' to reinforce support for bringing Western cross forward in alignment with the original planning permission for an urban village.</p> <p>The area guidelines on page 107 establish the principle of 'four walkable centres in accordance with the planning consent'. A local centre is identified for Western Cross on page 110.</p> <p>EDC will continue to work to promote a mixed-use urban village within Western Cross.</p>	
3	Insufficient green infrastructure (ecological corridors and sports pitches) within Ebbsfleet Central and Eastern Quarry. Policy requires 33% of site area.	<p>The Framework provides in excess of 33% of the site area as green open space within Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet Central.</p> <p>EDC is continuing to work with Henley Camland to ensure the provision and location of open space</p>	

	<i>GBC Comment</i>	<i>EDC Response</i>	<i>Framework amendment</i>
		within the section 73 application for Eastern Quarry and the central area is compliant with Dartford and Gravesham policy requirements. We are awaiting written confirmation of the total area of green space.	
4	Ebbsfleet River Corridor – raised concerns that masterplan is not informed by a full topographical, hydrological and ecological habitat assessment.	Hydrological, topographical and ecological assessments to be undertaken as part of next phase of work to refine development approach to Ebbsfleet Central.	Insert clause on page 96: <i>‘Any re-alignment of the River Ebbsfleet is subject to detailed hydrological, ecological and topographical surveys and studies and developed in partnership with the relevant agencies.’</i>
5	Transport – absence of any transport modelling undermines any proposed changes to the road network within the Ebbsfleet Central area.	EDC is currently updating the transport modelling for the area, which will then inform subsequent detailed masterplanning within Ebbsfleet.	New line on Page 59 (Road hierarchy): <i>‘Any changes to the transport strategy and road networks as defined under current planning permissions within Ebbsfleet area is subject to verification through subsequent transport modelling.’</i>
6	Transport – parking requires a joint strategy and guidance document to be developed.	Pages 70-71 set out a high level strategy for parking that requires further development. The associated Delivery Strategy identifies the need to develop a more detailed parking strategy and guidance, which will also need to be cognisant of the lift and shift parking strategy EDC welcomes the suggestion to co-develop this document together with Gravesham BC, as well as	

	<i>GBC Comment</i>	<i>EDC Response</i>	<i>Framework amendment</i>
		Dartford BC and Kent County Council.	
7	Transport – freight routing requires further consideration.	EDC acknowledges the importance of a comprehensive approach to the routing of freight traffic, and a 'Freight Transport Study' is identified in the EDC Framework Delivery Strategy.	Additional line added to page 58 : <i>'Support the viable operation of local businesses and industry, particularly the strategic port facilities along the Thames embankment. The routing of freight traffic should be considered further in association with the relevant authorities, and programed into the detailed design of those roads and streets carrying key routes within Ebbsfleet.'</i>
8	Development Quantities	EDC will share the Ebbsfleet development model with GBC to inform GBC's development plan	