

CULM GARDEN VILLAGE DELIVERY BOARD
MINUTES of a meeting held on 14 July 2023 at 10.30 am
Meeting held at Phoenix House

Present – Board Members

Cllr Nick Allan, Kentisbeare Parish Council (online)
Cllr Queenie Broom, Kentisbeare Parish Council
Cllr James Buczkowski, Cullompton Town Council
Ian Harrison, Heart of South West Local Enterprise Partnership
Jonathan Hill, National Highways
Jamie Hulland, Deputy Director – Planning, Devon County Council
Stuart Jarvis, Principal Transportation Planning Officer, Devon County Council
Cllr Steven Keable, Mid Devon District Council (Chair)
Richard Marsh, Director of Place, Mid Devon District Council
James Turner, Lightwood Land, Landowner Forum
Eleanor Ward, National Highways

Apologies for absence

Andrea Davis, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport, Devon County Council
Rev Ed Hobbs, Stakeholder Forum
Steve Reardon, Cullompton Town Council
Catherine Turner, Homes England

Also present

Paul Brockway, Project Lead, Hyas Associates
Tina Maryan, Area Planning Officer, Major Projects Cullompton, MDDC
Ian Beavis, WSP (online)
Roger Hull, WSP (online)

1. Welcome and introductions

All present introduced themselves. There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes and Action Log from last meeting

The Minutes were approved and there were no matters arising. There were no matters raised on the Action Log.

3. Updated ToR

Revised Terms of Reference were circulated before the last meeting and Members given an opportunity to comment in advance of this meeting. Comments received:

1. Highways England should be referred to as National Highways
2. A sentence should be added to the effect that the Terms of Reference will not fetter the autonomy of Board Members or their organisations acting in a statutory role.

Action: ToR to be updated and circulated before the next meeting.

TM

4. Transport & Movement updates

Town Centre Relief Road

MDDC are hopeful that bidding for round 3 of the Levelling up Fund will open in the near future – an announcement before the summer recess is expected. It is vital to demonstrate a competitive benefit cost ratio and provide a compelling narrative that highlights the wider benefits to Cullompton. DCC would be leading on the next bid and were successful with the bid for Exmouth in the last round.

The high importance of delivering the TCRR is recognised and this had been raised at Audit Committee. The Garden Village project is at the stage now where planning applications are unable to progress due to the non-delivery of the TCRR. MDDC is continuing to engage with other organisations to continue to explore alternative funding schemes.

Train Station

Network Rail is continuing to progress through the PACE stages, although the date for opening the new station is now expected to be September/October 2025, rather than May as originally envisaged by Network Rail. MDDC wants to see positive progress and to try to claw back some of the slippage time. It is expected that the final business case will be submitted to DfT this year. MDDC expect an update in the next couple of weeks.

Mobility Hubs

Joint work with Somerset Council has identified mobility hubs as an integral part of a sustainable movement strategy. Mobility hubs are a relative new concept and can include a number of community functions to help reduce the need to travel. The current project is investigating what these might look like for the Garden Village. Stage 1 of the project setting the strategic picture and how a network of hubs might work is complete. Stage 2 will be looking in more detail at hubs for the new train station, the town centre, and 3 hubs within the Garden Village. The work should be completed in the Autumn and will inform the wider transport approach, including at J28.

5. Transport & Movement – M5 J28 work update

Ian Beavis of WSP (consultants working on the Strategic Outline Case for funding improvements to J28) presented a series of slides on the project, including the process, findings to date, long list of options and next steps.

The Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road (CTCRR) has been included within the scope of the Strategic Outline Case work for submission to DfT (anticipated to follow the Large Local Majors Fund process) for the time being until the funding position is clearer on LUF3 (or other funding options). This is to make sure that it is not precluded if no other funding solution is achieved. DfT are aware of the scheme and DCC updates them on a quarterly basis.

The process of putting together a business case and then bidding to DfT for funding is prescriptive and needs to include a range of options from minimal low cost to those with greater capacity for increased traffic. All options will be assessed for their performance against strategic, financial, social, environmental and commercial criteria during the next stages of work, as well as their deliverability. It is expected that different options will score

differently against key criteria, which will also be weighted to reflect varying degrees of significance to delivery of the overall objectives.

A current range of shortlisted options were presented showing different concepts with varying capacities and active travel solutions. These include options from improving east to west movement, freeing up junction capacity, to entire new junctions. More detailed assessments will be undertaken as the project moves through the next stages of work, which includes modelling of expected future capacity needs.

Costs are significant for all options as it is a very constrained area especially in terms of flood plain and proximity to the railway. The length of new connecting roads to the existing highway network that are required varies between options and will also be a factor in assessing costs. The costs include an allowance for inflation to mid-point of the construction period, contingencies and risk, which also vary according to the scale of the scheme.

Part of the ongoing analysis is updating the highways modelling which considers the existing capacity of Junction 28 (and related caps on development as set out by the adopted Local Plan policy position). The technical modelling approach and its results are still to be finalised and then agreed between MDDC, DCC and National Highways. This process will provide evidence to show how much development, from a technical highway perspective, could be allowed relative to the timing of delivery of the CTCRR and J28 improvements. Cullompton Town and Kentisbeare Parish Councils have expressed clear views that any development east of the M5 requires the up-front delivery of the CTCRR.

Technical stakeholder workshops are planned take place over the summer with wider engagement on emerging outcomes in the autumn/winter of 2023. There was a request at the Board to consider what of the emerging information could be made public at this stage. This was to look to enable local communities to be better informed about the ongoing work and progress on what is a key local issue.

Action: Consider publishing a J28 transport work summary/update to inform communities of the continuing work on J28.	PB/RM
Action: Provide and update on work progress to September Board	PB/WSP

6. Project Overview & Delivery Plan update

The Project Delivery Plan and Risk Register were circulated before the meeting.

There is a need to further refine the timescales set out in the Delivery Plan, particularly in respect of the TCRR and J28, which will be reviewed when the position on the programme is clearer.

The new Risk Register identifies the top 5 risks to the project and reflects MDDC's Corporate Risk Register. Both see delivery of the TCRR elevated to the highest risk.

There is ongoing developer interest in East Cullompton, and the Project Team are working collaboratively with them. Local Board Members will have seen the recent public consultation by one of the developers.

It is hoped that it will be possible to bring a funding paper/information to the scheduled September Board meeting setting out the position/an update with regard to revenue funding (Homes England capacity funding) for the project, as well as, hopefully, an update on the LUF3 position.

The Communications & Engagement Strategy for the project is also being updated and will be brought to the September Board meeting.

Action: Update Delivery Plan and Risk Register for Sept Board meeting.	PB/TM
Action: Provide Funding position update to September Board	PB/TM
Action: Circulate updated Communications & Engagement Strategy for the project ahead of September Board	PB/TM

7. AOB & Close

National Highways pointed out that they are now seeking feedback on their Route Strategies and they would circulate a link.

<p>It was agreed that future meetings would be on the following dates. Meeting would start at 10am if online, or 10.30am if in person (to allow for travel time).</p> <p>Friday 22 September 2023 (location - online) Friday 15 December 2023 (location - tbc) Friday 22 March 2024 (location - tbc) Friday 21 June 2024 (location - tbc)</p>	TM
--	----

The Chair thanked all for attending.