

CULM GARDEN VILLAGE DELIVERY BOARD

MINUTES of a meeting held on 12 December 2024 at 10.30am

Meeting held via MS Teams

Present – Board Members

Cllr Nick Allan, Kentisbeare Parish Council

Helen Bone, Homes England

Cllr James Buczkowski, Cullompton Town Council

Cllr Simon Clist, Mid Devon District Council (Substitute Chair)

Cllr Andrea Davis, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport, Devon County Council

Richard Foord, MP

Fionnuala Lennon, Homes England

Richard Marsh, Director of Place, Mid Devon District Council

James Turner, Lightwood Land, Landowner Forum

Steve Reardon, Cullompton Town Council

Dominic Fryer, Danescroft

Stuart Jarvis, Principal Transportation Planning Officer, Devon County Council

Ian Harrison

Rev Edward Hobbs, Stakeholder Forum

Steve Havers, National Highways

Apologies for absence

Philip Courtney, Kingacre Estates, Landowner Forum

Jonathan Hill, National Highways

Jamie Hulland, Deputy Director – Planning, Devon County Council

Cllr Steven Keable, Mid Devon District Council (Chair)

Neil Woofenden, Kentisbeare Parish Council

Also present

Paul Brockway, Project Lead, Hyas Associates

Tina Maryan, Area Planning Officer, Major Projects Cullompton, Mid Devon District Council

Adrian Welsh, Manager Growth, Economy and Delivery, Mid Devon District Council

1. Welcome and introductions

Cllr Simon Clist, substituting for Cllr Steve Keable, chairing the Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and all introduced themselves.

2. Minutes and Action Log from last meeting

The Minutes and Action Log were circulated before the meeting. There were no comments on the Minutes and Action Log.

3. Transport & Movement updates

Town Centre Relief Road and cricket club relocation

Funding has been secured funding from Homes England and the Councils are in the process of finalising agreements which have been approved by DCC and MDDC Cabinets. The Councils are now progressing various workstreams to deliver road as quickly as possible. The first part of cricket club relocation – forming cricket square – has been completed with

support and input from landowners and promoters and Homes England. The Councils are making good progress on land acquisition, including the Tesco land. Detailed design is also being progressed which will be followed by delivery works. There is a tight timescale to achieve opening of the road in 2028.

M5 J28

A Strategic Outline Case has been submitted to DfT in relation to the junction upgrade, which is currently with DfT for consideration. This is very important to all at the meeting as the junction improvements are needed to continue delivery beyond the initial cap set in Local Plan. Timescales will continue to be refined as it is a major scheme. The Councils are hoping for commencement as quickly as possible to follow on from and tie into the town centre relief road. This is important for the town as well as new development.

Train Station

Everyone remains keen on the timely delivery of the station, despite the Restoring Your Railways programme being cancelled with the change of government. The project was at an advanced stage but has been left in a degree of limbo. Richard Foord and Gideon Amos are actively engaging at a national level, and Ian Harrison and the Authorities continue to engage at a local level. This is a key intervention to promote growth. It makes absolute sense to deliver the railway station to give people alternative travel options that are not car based.

Cullompton and Wellington stations were being promoted together through the Restoring Your Railways programme and have a strong business case. Together with large number of other rail projects, all have been put on hold. The government is reviewing all DfT transport projects to determine which ones might be able to go forward in the near term. These are subject to a short term comprehensive spending review covering the first 18 months, followed by a 3 year spending review. It is not known at this stage whether Cullompton and Wellington will be in the first tranche. If the programme had not been paused, delivery would have started early next year. The delivery agents at Network Rail are still on board. It would be possible to restart the design as soon as the green light is given for funding. Peninsula Transport have been asked to submit short term priorities, which included Cullompton and Wellington stations. Both stations are strongly linked to significant housing growth – a point we need to emphasise.

Richard Foord mentioned a discussion in the House yesterday. The Minister said he would talk to Lord Hendy about it. The Devon Metro Board meeting tomorrow gives another opportunity to discuss the way forward.

In terms of timescales, delivery of the Town Centre Relief Road in the first quarter of 2028 is plausible. To deliver J28 by 2030 would be tight timescale but the Councils are looking to get something committed and delivered as soon as possible.

4. Project overview & Delivery Plan

Sports hub

Diagrams produced to date represent an initial consideration which are planned to be developed through an ongoing options and feasibility study. Outputs from the study are not

ready to share. There is a meeting with consultants preparing the study next week, and once initial outputs have been considered, they will be the basis on ongoing engagement.

The sports steering group (clubs and governing bodies) are waiting for MDDC to go back to them with options from initial work. The governing bodies suggested the sports hub needed not only spatial options and feasibility, but also options for funding, governance and delivery. It is hoped that engagement can start early in the New Year, but at the moment the sport hub is still only viewed as an opportunity.

MDDC also wants to engage more generally, including with Kentisbeare Parish Council and Cullompton Town Council. A meeting has been set with Kentisbeare Parish Council for 17 January. MDDC has agreed to attend a full Council meeting at Cullompton Town Council but does not yet have a date confirmed for this. There will also be a briefing to the whole of MDDC's membership on 29 January. This briefing is separate to any engagement on current planning applications.

Project delivery plan review

The project delivery plan was circulated with agenda. Timelines currently shown for J28 are consistent with those reported by DCC through their consultation process. Further stages of process – Outline Business Case and Full Business Case - would both need to be successful before delivery.

Key milestones and dependencies and risk register

These documents were circulated with agenda. The risk register still shows items as red, but the risks have been moved down significantly and are moving in the right direction. Further progress towards delivery would show these as amber or even green.

Phasing and delivery strategy and strategic design code

Two associated pieces of work are being carried out: a Phasing and Delivery Strategy will set out what goes where, when and how. The Strategic Design Code is more quality focused and will add more detail to the masterplan and policy.

Both pieces of work are being delivered by consultants with a target date of spring next year for both. Completion of both documents is necessary before MDDC is able to move forward with decisions on planning applications.

5. AOB & close

Future meeting are to be:

20 March 2025 – 10.30 -12.30

20 June 2025 – 2-4