



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
& PETERBOROUGH**  
COMBINED AUTHORITY

**Agenda Item 4.1 – Appendix 1**

<b>HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No: 2.1</b>
<b>3 April 2019</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

**QUALITY CHARTER FOR GROWTH**

**1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1. To adopt the Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth principles to guide the Combined Authority's work in supporting new developments across the Combined Authority area. To adopt a strengthened set of principles covering the topic of cohesion, and to request that the Land Commission to explore how these principles can be implemented in the context of strategic sites.
- 1.2. This report supports recommendation 6 in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review to undertake a review of the Quality Charter for Growth.

<b><u>DECISION REQUIRED</u></b>	
<b>Lead Member:</b>	<b>Cllr. Lewis Herbert, Planning Portfolio Holder</b>
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	<b>Paul Raynes, Director of Strategy and Performance</b>
<b>Forward Plan Ref: N/A</b>	<b>Key Decision: No</b>
The Housing and Communities Committee to:  (a) recommend to the Board that it adopt the Quality Charter for Growth principles	<b>Voting arrangements</b>  Simple majority of all Members

<p>(including additions in Appendix 1) to guide it's work on new developments across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough;</p> <p>(b) recommend to the Board that it adopt a strengthened set of principles on cohesion as set out in Appendix 2</p> <p>(c) request the Land Commission to explore how the principles can be implemented on strategic sites;</p> <p>(d) explore with the Cambridgeshire Quality Panel how the additional principles on cohesion can be implemented in the Panel's work and;</p> <p>(e) work with the Quality Charter Steering Group to publish a refreshed Charter.</p>	
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## 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth ([https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/2950/cambridgeshire\\_quality\\_charter\\_2010.pdf](https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/2950/cambridgeshire_quality_charter_2010.pdf)) is a set of principles on how to raise the quality of new developments across Cambridgeshire (it does not cover Peterborough). It was produced in 2008 by Cambridgeshire Horizons and grew out of work on designing the new town of Northstowe. It set out the principles for achieving higher quality under four broad themes: Community; Connectivity; Climate; and Character. It is a non-statutory document that complements statutory plans – the aim was that it would summarise key principles in an accessible format without having to examine a mass of guidance or research. It drew from local expertise and learning from experiences elsewhere. The Quality Charter has a steering group with representatives of the five Cambridgeshire local authorities.
- 2.2. The Charter quite deliberately describes principles of quality growth and does not set minimum/maximum standards regarding aspects of quality in new developments. As many aspects of standards are set via Building Control and/or the statutory planning system this is the responsibility of government and local planning authorities in their planning and development management roles. As an example, all planning applications for major development and in sensitive locations are required to include a Design and Access Statement explaining how the proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting. Local Plans embody many of principles in specific local plan policies to guide development.
- 2.3. The aim of the Quality Charter for Growth is, however, not just about describing principles. It is also about inspiring innovation by promoting examples of what

works. A practical outcome of this is the Cambridgeshire Quality Panel. Administered by Cambridgeshire County Council but independent, the Panel offers a quality review process to developers. For a small fee (to cover administration and the Panel members time) the Panel appraises emerging masterplans and planning applications and offers advice on improvements to deliver quality in line with the Charter principles. The Panel includes housing specialists, architects, environmental and transport engineers. This process has been used successfully on large schemes, principally in the Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire and East Cambridgeshire districts. It is also used on Cambridgeshire County Council applications, such as all new school proposals.

- 2.4. Although Local Planning Authorities can and do have their own local design panels or equivalent, the views of the Cambridgeshire Quality Panel have been considered useful by those authorities that have used them as part of the planning application process. The annual report of the Quality Panel can be found here: <http://cambridgeshire.wpengine.com/document-library/> (under the Planning & Development tab).
- 2.5. The Combined Authority commissioned a review to examine what new evidence might have shaped quality principles over the last 10 years, and particularly how issues around inclusive growth and social cohesion were reflected. This review was later supported by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review that called both for a review of the Charter, and an audit of how completed developments had performed against the Charter principles.
- 2.6. The review has been completed and concludes that the four sets of principles remain as relevant now as then. Consultation with developers, planning officers, and the Quality Panel highlighted some areas where wording could be updated, but overall the principles remain a sound basis for encouraging higher quality in new developments. The Combined Authority's ambition is for the area to be a leading place in the world to live, learn and work. It is consistent with that ambition that the Combined Authority is an advocate for high quality development. The Combined Authority also has a direct role in new development through the Housing Investment Fund. Adoption of the quality principles therefore sends a strong statement of intent.
- 2.7. The review examined in some detail the approach to inclusive growth in new developments and building successful communities not just developments. It found a strong body of evidence (including local experiences) that creating successful communities not only requires good physical design of new developments but also support for the social infrastructure and aspects (building a sense of community, mental wellbeing, public 'sense of ownership and respect' for shared spaces as examples). Whilst the four existing sets of principles do touch on this (particularly the Community topic) the review highlighted that these might not be addressing the full range of opportunities. It examined the potential to improve quality through issues such as long-term management of social infrastructure. It noted that these are issues that extend beyond the physical and land-use aspects that are normally considered in planning applications for new developments. It recommends that the Charter should include more on this

cohesion aspect (Appendix 1). The review proposed a range of interventions that could support inclusive communities.

- 2.8. The Combined Authority's ambition specifically includes encouraging healthy, thriving and prosperous communities, and reduce disparities across the area. It is appropriate that it sets out a clear statement of intent regarding the need to promote inclusive communities as part of this quality agenda. The interventions suggested in the review have therefore been drawn together to form a fifth set of principles under the topic of "Cohesion". This is set out in Appendix 2.
- 2.9. The review did seek the views of members of the Quality Panel on their role in advising on inclusive communities and social measures. They felt that their work and area of expertise was concentrated on those quality aspects influenced by design of new developments and controlled by the granting of planning permission. In that context they did not advocate for an expanded range of inclusive/social cohesion principles as their current ability to fully engage/influence in that debate was limited. It is proposed that the Combined Authority work with the Quality Panel and public sector partners to examine how we can best deliver the quality principles regarding inclusive communities and social cohesion. This could include expanding the membership of the Quality Panel or a separate mechanism. It needs to be recognised that these interventions tend to focus on revenue-funded activity, which is challenging to control or release from new developments under the current planning system.
- 2.10. The Combined Authority notes that the recent take-up by developers of the Quality Panel appraisal process is broadly focused on the Cambridge economic sub-area (apart from Cambridgeshire County Council new school developments). This in part reflects the number of strategic sites that have come forward in this area, and the use of local design approaches elsewhere. However, views have also been expressed that financial viability issues on strategic sites might discourage land owners or developers from exploring the added benefit of the Quality Panel appraisal. It is suggested that the Combined Authority's Land Commission explore this issue of take-up with the Quality Panel and local planning authorities through the Commission's ongoing work on strategic sites. This would include a discussion with Peterborough City Council on extending the Charter to include its area.
- 2.11. It is proposed that the Combined Authority work with the Quality Charter steering group to refresh the Quality Charter in line with above and publish updated materials.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. There are no direct financial implications.
- 3.2. Any development using Combined Authority funding is already expected to deliver quality growth in line with the Combined Authority's current stated ambition, so use of the principles is not expected to impose any additional costs.

#### **4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. There are no legal implications. The Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth is a set of voluntary principles to encourage innovation in the quality of new housing developments.

#### **5.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. The Quality Charter for Growth encourages good design that understands and responds to the varied needs of across communities, promoting inclusive growth.
- 5.2. Adoption of the set of principles will influence the work of the Combined Authority as a direct provider/facilitator of new housing. This is compatible with the existing ambition to deliver quality development.

#### **6.0 APPENDICES**

- 6.1. Appendix 1: Existing set of quality growth principles, with proposed additions to Community section
- 6.2. Appendix 2: Proposed Cohesion set of quality growth principles

<b><u>Source Documents</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>
Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth	<a href="https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/2950/cambridgeshire_quality_charter_2010.pdf">https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/2950/cambridgeshire_quality_charter_2010.pdf</a>
Quality Panel	<a href="http://cambridgeshire.wpengine.com/document-library/">http://cambridgeshire.wpengine.com/document-library/</a>

## Appendix 1: Existing Charter principles (Community, Climate, Connectivity, Character)

Quality Charter 'Community' policies (with proposed amendments in bold text)	Comments on cohesion and recommendations from the Study
<p>CHARTER PRINCIPLES: Community</p> <p>"Places where people live out of choice and not necessity, creating healthy communities with a good quality of life"</p> <p><u>Introduction</u></p> <p>Many new housing schemes have suffered from high rates of turnover, aggravated by large numbers of homes being bought to let, which makes it harder for a new community to put down roots. As well as creating places that are active, inclusive, safe, and fair to everyone, the Quality Charter aims to create a better balance with a mix of house types and tenures. <b>This includes making provision for affordable housing across tenures, and supported/older people housing.</b> It also recognises that successful communities are made up of people from many different backgrounds but who benefit from the 'social capital' and the sense of wellbeing created through positive interaction.</p>	<p>Lifetime home provision and design for people with disabilities both physical and mental health, including dementia and integration of supported/older people housing within developments where provided – <i>Covered by Community 2 first sentence. Add to supporting introduction text.</i></p>
<p>Community 1 – Community involvement throughout the process is crucial, which means consulting with people who are going to move in, <b>have particular needs</b>, or are similar to the groups that are expected to move in. Resources have to be provided to facilitate this and to continue seeking the community's views as the settlement grows, acting upon these where possible, as well as engaging positively and creatively with neighbouring communities.</p>	<p>Effective support for new households moving into development, particularly low income families and households with special needs/disabled members – <i>suggested addition Community 1. See also Community 6 below.</i></p> <p>Include examples of creative Section 106 agreements that support community development and neighbourhood management company/organisation that involves residents. Also recommends strengthening the supporting text on how social capital and better Neighbourhood Management that can be agreed as part of the Section 106/planning permission – <i>to be addressed under the Cohesion section</i></p>
<p>Community 2 – Housing in all tenures should allow for changes in needs and lifestyle so that as people's circumstances and ages change, they can remain fully included in their neighbourhood. New forms of intermediate tenure and live-</p>	<p>That affordable housing including for affordable rent is provided in all developments, unless transparent viability assessment demonstrates otherwise, including social rent wherever possible – <i>clarification to Community 2.</i></p>

<p>work units should be actively promoted. Careful design (<b>taking into account future maintenance</b>) is needed so differences in tenure are not obvious, <b>and people have equal rights and access to the public realm irrespective of tenure.</b> Opportunities should be <b>provided for innovation and diversity</b>, for example space for people to set up cooperative and affordable forms of housing to be commissioned by local groups, as well as some self-build.</p> <p>Character 2 – An overriding masterplan should aim to provide the vision for the development, with neighbourhood design strategies and design codes establishing the qualities...</p>	<p>That people in new development have equal rights irrespective of their tenure and that development is permeable and not gated or sub-divided into zones and public realm and maintenance managed to consistent standards (recent examples in Cambridge where some green spaces have been reserved exclusively for market housing part) – <i>add clarification to Community 2.</i></p> <p>That all build is of equal quality and consistency in design standards – <i>covered by Community 2 and Character 2.</i></p> <p>Developers should be asked about the kinds of people expected to occupy the housing at different stages of development, such as where they are likely to come from. The introduction should refer to density level and tenure proportions where extra care is needed in both design and management to avoid potential conflicts – <i>Covered by Community 2 and Character 4 (Densities).</i></p> <p>Developers should be encouraged to make space for innovation and diversity, for example through making 10% of units available to self-builders and cooperative groups – <i>add text about innovation to Community 2 (specific targets would be a local consideration)</i></p>
<p>Community 3 – People should be encouraged to take active roles in the development and continuing management of their community and engage in local democratic processes. The establishment of appropriate forms of governance should be built into the planning of new communities from the early stages.</p> <p>Community 4 – The 'social infrastructure', such as health, education and leisure is just as important as the physical infrastructure of roads and utilities. 'Community hubs' should be provided in a phased, predictable and flexible way in line with population growth and demographic change, <b>with facilities available for the first residents.</b> Leisure and play facilities should be affordable to all residents.</p> <p>Community 5 - There should be a mixture of formal and informal green space, and interconnectivity between new and existing Green Infrastructure. It is important to consider function as well as</p>	<p>Community facilities in all major developments from the time the first 100 new residents arrive, and staff resourcing to develop the community, community organisation-led activity and on-site advice services for first two years, incl provision for all active faith groups, age ranges and needs incl disabled, isolated people and teenagers – <i>suggested text to Community 4.</i></p> <p>Include examples of exemplary schools and community centres, including co-location; including activities that draw different groups together and encourage sharing resources, such as Children's centres.</p>

location, for example, cemeteries and play areas.  Community 6 – Initial and ongoing community development support should be provided to ‘build your own community’ interim spaces to meet such as cafes and market stalls, as well as their IT equivalents.	
Community 7 – public spaces should encourage social interaction (which could include specific cultural activities) and support healthy lifestyles. There should be clear allocation of responsibilities for managing communal spaces and public realm. Activity and maintenance makes places feel safe, and increase the sense of well-being	Design to maximise community safety and minimise crime. – <i>covered by Community 7</i>  Provide examples of acceptable ways of providing for parking and waste storage that minimise the land take, for example by reducing private parking and adding electric charging points and secure bike parking.
Community 8 - Community (and other key) buildings should be designed to be flexible, and make use of the latest technology, for example, wired-up communities, and should support the widest possible community use.	
Community 9 - Spaces should be made available for local shops and services to set up <b>to meet a range of needs</b> , both to build a sense of community and to minimise car dependencies. This may include providing interim facilities or giving short-term rent subsidies.	Provision of low cost shopping within range of developments, and transport links to nearest supermarkets – <i>suggested text to Community 9 and covered by Connectivity 1.</i>
No relevant policy in the Quality Charter.	Require developers to employ local staff construction staff where possible, and upskill local teenagers and jobless as part of s106 agreements and conditions – <i>see Cohesion principles</i>

#### **Other principles of the Quality Charter (as existing)**

CHARTER PRINCIPLES: Connectivity  “Places that are well-connected enable easy access for all to jobs and services using sustainable modes”  New communities that are not linked to public transport force residents to rely on cars, and can also deny them the benefits of the natural social interaction that accompanies more sustainable travel modes. As well as helping to create places that are linked to effective public transport, the Quality Charter aims to minimise unnecessary car use (and hence congestion, pollution and CO <sub>2</sub> emissions) by ensuring that other modes are attractive and have primacy.
Connectivity 1 – Having public transport in place at the start of the development encourages people to get used to green options. New developments should be easily accessible by high



quality public transport systems. The quality of the experience, such as the Guided Bus route, will provide incentives to reduce car use.
Connectivity 2 – Public transport should integrate with existing transport systems, with frequent service and stops. Bus services should operate to high quality standards.
Connectivity 3 – Linkages with existing and potential employment opportunities should be recognised, and where needed developed or integrated with existing provision
Connectivity 4 – New developments should contribute to the wider environmental goals for the Cambridge area and enhance the feasibility of walking and cycling. They should provide opportunities to work close to (if not at) home for part of the time, with broadband and other network links and services.
Connectivity 5 – The streets, footpaths and other links on major urban extensions should be designed as a user hierarchy so that it is clear and obvious who and what they are for. Primacy should be given to walking, cycling and community transport.
Connectivity 6 – Easy mobility for all, including those using wheelchairs and pushchairs should be taken into account. This should involve targeted services, for example Dial-a-Ride, and ease of access to transport nodes.
Connectivity 7 – Bus stops should offer well designed waiting areas, providing information on services and local facilities, and should feel safe and overlooked.
Connectivity 8 – Parking management such as charges and the provision of car sharing/car clubs should be used to discourage unnecessary car use.
Connectivity 9 – Road design should include permeable surfaces. To avoid roads being continually dug up by services (water, power, communications, and waste) these should go in green space corridors or in distribution ducts.
<p>CHARTER PRINCIPLES: Climate</p> <p>“Places that anticipate climate change in ways that enhance the desirability of the development”</p> <p>Increasing attention is being paid to the environmental sensitivity of schemes, yet new settlements in the UK still lag far behind their equivalents in the Netherlands or Sweden, for example, in promoting healthier lifestyles, lower carbon emissions, and community wellbeing. Cambridgeshire is in a good position to demonstrate the feasibility of zero carbon housing, given its low rainfall and high levels of sun and wind for much of the time.</p>
Climate 1 – Major new developments should enable residents and workers to adopt sustainable lifestyles that minimise the use of energy and other resources, by reduced car use, for example. The new building regulations will not have their intended benefits unless the same kind of principles are applied to the whole of the neighbourhood, including transport.
Climate 2 - Environmental targets should be challenging and where possible go beyond the minimum standards so that new schemes act as exemplars. Where appropriate, each development could feature an exemplar element or area that will apply international best practice and that would demonstrate the marketability of new forms of technology or construction (especially those developed locally).
Climate 3 - New development should not be located in areas of unacceptable environmental risk, such as areas which are liable to flooding.
Climate 4 - Arrangements for sustainable waste management should be built into new developments to make recycling easy and unobtrusive, and encourage people to waste less. Developers and construction teams should minimise and manage construction and demolition waste.
Climate 5 - The utilities should be engaged in a collaborative design process to help promote energy and water conservation and the potential for as much local energy generation as possible.

Climate 6 - Public buildings, housing and neighbourhoods as a whole should be designed to anticipate climate change so they are capable of being upgraded and adapted easily and economically to minimise the resources used in both their construction and operation, and to cut down on air pollution.

Climate 7 - Biodiversity and wildlife should be encouraged through a network of green spaces and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). This should be done within a sub-regional strategic context. Surface water should be managed sustainably.

Climate 8 - Sustainable energy partnerships or trusts should be encouraged, for example, through education, marketing and schemes that help people cut energy use.

Climate 9 - Trees and planting should be used extensively to provide cooling in summer and to soak up rain, as well as to provide a landscape that encourages people to walk and cycle.

#### CHARTER PRINCIPLES: Character

“Places with distinctive neighbourhoods and where people create pride of place”

Despite a plethora of good design advice, many new developments are criticised for their quality. In part this is due to the use of unimaginative standard house types, and also to highway engineering, where concerns with safety and traffic movement have badly affected the look and feel of places. To create the clear identity for neighbourhoods that people prize, the Quality Charter will ensure that design, the use of good materials and public realm are priorities and recognises that a successful sense of place depends on residents personalising where they live.

Character 1 - The existing landform and features of the site, such as water and landscape and the relationship to existing settlements, should be used to create varied and memorable townscapes, including vistas, intimate local places, informal natural areas with windbreaks, ponds and waterways.

Character 2 - An overriding masterplan should aim to provide the vision for the development, with neighbourhood design strategies and design codes establishing the qualities and characteristics that will make the new places distinctive, and providing guidance and inspiration to the architects who will design the new neighbourhoods. It might include the use of competitions and the encouragement of smaller builders.

Character 3 - To ensure the successful realisation of the masterplan experienced and fully-skilled masterplanners should be retained for the duration of the project to ensure that the overall vision is maintained. Systems should be set up to ensure quality, such as design codes, and where possible the original design team should oversee construction and monitor performance.

Character 4 - Densities and massing should vary, with higher densities around local shops and transport nodes, to provide the full range of house types that are needed.

Character 5 - Creative thinking, simple designs – well built, using high quality materials and careful detailing – are often the most successful and durable approaches, particularly if the design allows space for the imaginative use of planting to enable residents to personalise their homes and enrich the biodiversity of their neighbourhoods. It is important to create a high quality public realm and, for instance, to apply the latest thinking on the design of shared surfaces.

Character 6 - Open space requirements should be integrated with buildings throughout the scheme. There should be a mix of private gardens, balconies and terraces, semi-private and public space depending on the development types.

Character 7 - The creation of good landscapes is as important as the creation of good townscapes. Different kinds of spaces should be provided to give character to the neighbourhoods and improve biodiversity, ranging from linear parks, squares and crescents to more intimate communal spaces looked after by adjoining properties or community trusts.

Character 8 - All buildings – commercial, residential, and public – should be flexible and adaptable, which means providing large enough spaces or space for appropriate expansion and changing lifestyles

Character 9 - Car and cycle parking, storage and waste recycling should be integrated within the design of the new homes. In higher density developments, where possible, car parking should be located in ways that mean parked cars do not dominate the street, for example underground or undercroft.

## Appendix 2: Proposed new set of ‘Cohesion’ principles for quality growth

### CHARTER PRINCIPLES: Cohesion

**“Places that are inclusive and designed with long-lasting support to enhance social cohesion.”**

#### Introduction

Creating successful communities not only requires good physical design of new developments but also support for the social infrastructure and aspects (for example building a sense of community, mental wellbeing, public ‘sense of ownership and respect’ for shared spaces). A quality new development will be designed for everyone, able to respond to different needs over time. Helping early residents to make connections and build a social inclusive community is important for their satisfaction and long-term quality of the new development. Whilst the development needs to have the right social infrastructure such as health, education and leisure, equally important is how this infrastructure is managed over time. This goes beyond the physical design aspects of the new development.

Cohesion 1 – Successful and cohesive developments are those that develop **‘social capital’** from the beginning, supporting the first residents onwards.

Cohesion 2 – Cohesive developments need visible and effective **neighbourhood management** and support. They will have planned how this is created/funded during the start-up phase and how it will evolve for longer-term management.

Cohesion 3 – There should be **equal standards** across the public realm in new developments irrespective of tenure or other issues. ‘Exclusive’ use of certain spaces or facilities for types of residents should be discouraged, as should design features that imply some sort of separation. Residents associations / development trusts should encourage wide participation to reflect the full range of residents and their needs, irrespective of tenure or other issues.

Cohesion 4 – Where schemes are of high density or focus on particularly vulnerable groups then social cohesion challenges can be increased (for example because of the increased interaction over more limited space or a lack of capacity). A more **active approach to managing shared space** should be considered, such as the use of ‘super caretakers’.

Cohesion 5 – In new communities there can be a lack of awareness or agreement over the norms of how the place will function. **Neighbourhood compacts** or covenants can be used to pre-empt issues of nuisance – for example use of shared space, or future changes that might undermine aspects of quality principles agreed during new development construction (subsequent converting front gardens for parking as an example).

Cohesion 6 – Making new developments feel an integral part of, or relate to, existing/nearby communities can be a challenge. This can particularly be the case where the new development is attracting many residents new to the area. Quality developments will **grow the sense of community through those with local connections**. The use of letting policies to encourage local moves is one potential response.

Cohesion 7 – New developments can have a **wider impact on cohesion** and integration with the local area. For example, the construction and maintenance phases of developments can support cohesion through encouraging local employment, apprenticeships and training.

Cohesion 8 – One way for a new development to be more inclusive is if it is brought forward by the community itself. These **community-led interventions** could range from self-building areas through to community proposals for larger new developments. For example, Community Land Trusts are one mechanism that has been explored in Cambridgeshire.

Cohesion 9 – The design principles enabling residents to adopt more sustainable lifestyles can also offer benefits to creating inclusive and socially cohesive communities. By thinking about the opportunities for residents to take greater control in '**self-supporting**' neighbourhoods, through allotments, shared energy schemes and other community-led provision then the sense of community is strengthened. This involvement needs to support the participation of all residents, whatever particular needs they might have.