



CARLISLE
SOUTH

GARDEN CITY EXPRESSION OF INTEREST



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FOREWORD



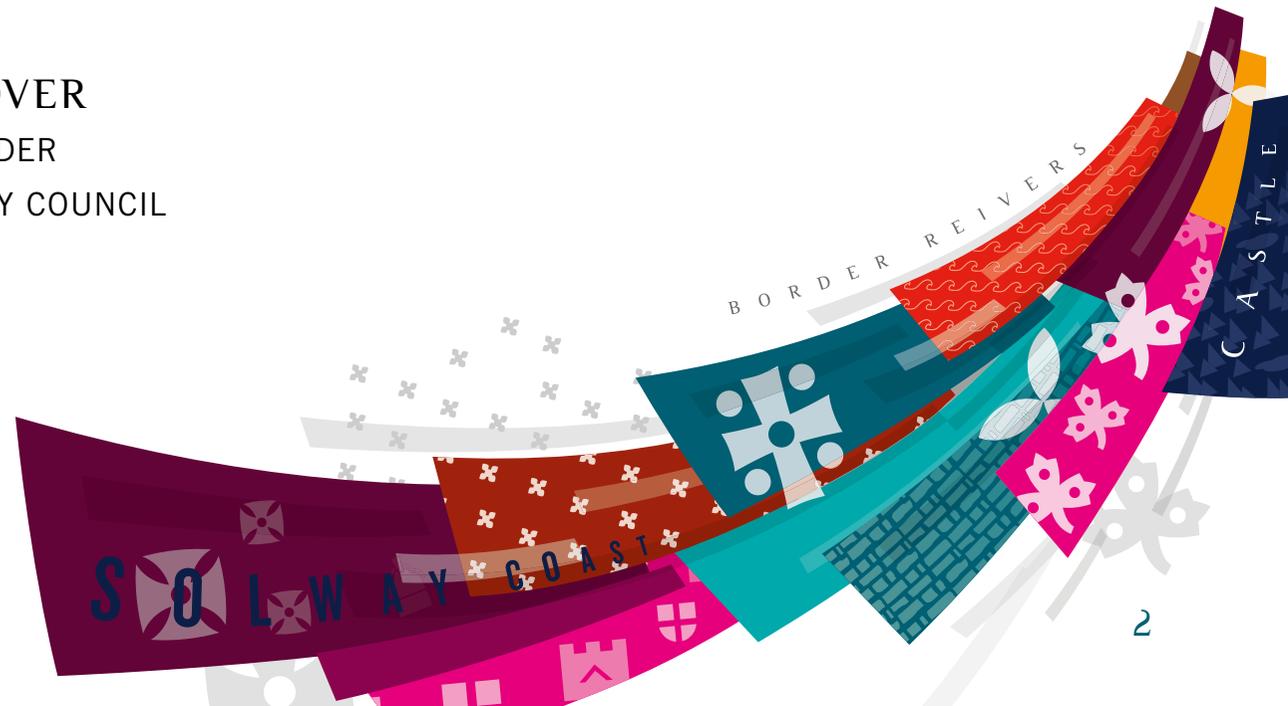
I am delighted to endorse these ambitious proposals which directly echo the priorities and vision of the Carlisle Plan 2015-2018 which aims to:

“ ... work in partnership to further establish our position as the regional centre and focus for investment, ensuring that residents can share in the benefits through increased opportunities and greater choice of jobs, range of housing and a quality environment”.

The opportunities afforded by the carefully chosen location provide multiple ideal starting points for a series of new, sustainable garden settlements that are well connected to local services and facilities, as well as the offer of the existing City of Carlisle. The location has unique potential to deliver transformational long term housing growth with associated investment in infrastructure in direct response to the housing and development needs of the Carlisle District and the wider sub region.

This expression of interest presents a vision for the area supported by how the concept will deliver against the key Garden City principles as set out by the TCPA. It also demonstrates how the City Council is well placed to drive and support delivery of up to 10,000 new homes in a unique and largely unconstrained location by building on existing community support and developer and landowner engagement.

COLIN GLOVER
COUNCIL LEADER
CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL



THE CARLISLE STORY

Located in the far north-west of England, Carlisle is a vital service and the economic capital for much of Cumbria, south-west Scotland and parts of Northumberland, with a catchment of over 500,000 people.

Whilst Carlisle has a rich and tempestuous history dating back to the Romans and beyond, it is now embarking on a new journey. It has the assets and opportunity to put itself on the map as the capital of Cumbria and the city of the Lake District, with genuine untapped potential.

Many of Carlisle's strengths are closely linked to its location, its physical infrastructure and the quality of its urban and rural environments. It enjoys excellent north – south road connectivity via the M6 and is similarly advantaged by west to east road and rail links. With a principal train station on the West Coast Main Line, London is under three and a half hours by direct services to the south with Glasgow within an hour to the north.

Carlisle Lake District Airport continues to develop and grow and can accommodate prearranged private and commercial flights. Ambitions to further develop it as a regional gateway provide exciting future opportunities that will benefit the city and wider region.

Carlisle has a prosperous economy which is already home to many international and successful brands. The locational advantages and skilled workforce have helped to power thriving engineering, manufacturing and logistics industries with the presence of Pirelli, McVities and the legendary Eddie Stobart brand being testament to this.

Beneath these headline firms sit a diverse and growing range of innovate SMEs. The recent award of Kingmoor Park Enterprise Zone and a healthy supply of forward employment land bodes well for continued growth.

Home to the University of Cumbria, with its focus on innovative learning and preparing students for employment, partners in Carlisle continue to work together to ensure the city is at the forefront of sustained economic growth through creating the next generation of entrepreneurs and enterprise. Growth in the student population affords its own opportunities for the city moving forward.

Owing to its predominately rural and stunningly beautiful setting, with the Solway Estuary to the west, the Pennines to the east, the northern Lake District to the south, the Eden Valley to the south east and Northumberland National Park in the north east, the local landscapes offer unrivalled leisure opportunities.

Coupled with the world heritage site of Hadrian's Wall and the city's distinctive shopping, leisure and cultural offerings, Carlisle is a destination for entertainment, fun and freedom.

Carlisle is a city where business, education and the public sector share an ambitious view of the future. The city and those active within it are signed up to the benefits of growth, providing the certainty needed for investment decisions and developers alike.

Spearheaded by the new Carlisle District Local Plan (2015-2030), which sets out a coherent, clear and shared vision, the city is embarking upon the most ambitious levels of growth ever. Housing growth on a scale not previously experienced is at the heart of this vision.

Carlisle offers enormous potential for those who want to be part of a growing city.



EDINBURGH - 96 miles
GLASGOW - 96 miles
NEWCASTLE - 57 miles
MANCHESTER - 119 miles
LONDON - 300 miles

M74

GLASGOW
EDINBURGH

A69

NEWCASTLE

Carlisle Airport

CARLISLE

M6

MANCHESTER
LONDON

Workington Port

ENERGY
COAST

LAKE DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK

West Coast
Main Line



CARLISLE SOUTH - THE OPPORTUNITY

Carlisle South presents an exciting and unique opportunity for transformational long term growth of a scale unprecedented in the sub-region. Comprising of a new mixed use development, including up to 10,000 new homes, the area is well placed to deliver additional strategic employment offerings alongside ancillary infrastructure and a new southern link road of larger than local significance.

Located to the immediate south of the existing built extent of the city, between junction 42 of the M6 in the east across to the southern end of the A689 in the west, this largely unconstrained location is already home to a small number of settlements and Carlisle Racecourse. Coupled with the area's strong green and blue infrastructure links and its wider strategic connectivity, the right assets and opportunities are considered present to aid the delivery of a single or series of integrated genuinely distinctive, self-sufficient, new settlements which can be seen to align with established Garden City principles.

Carlisle South has its grounding in the soon to be adopted Carlisle District Local Plan 2015 – 2030 (CDLP), at the heart of which is an ambition to grow and secure a step change in the level and make-up of the District's population. Aside from allocating land to immediately contribute to meeting housing needs across a range of locations, the Plan identifies, in pursuing the most ambitious levels of housing growth done so to date, Carlisle South as a broad location for future growth both within and beyond the current plan period. In this latter regard the site is of strategic importance in acting to ensure the continuity in the long term supply of housing land.

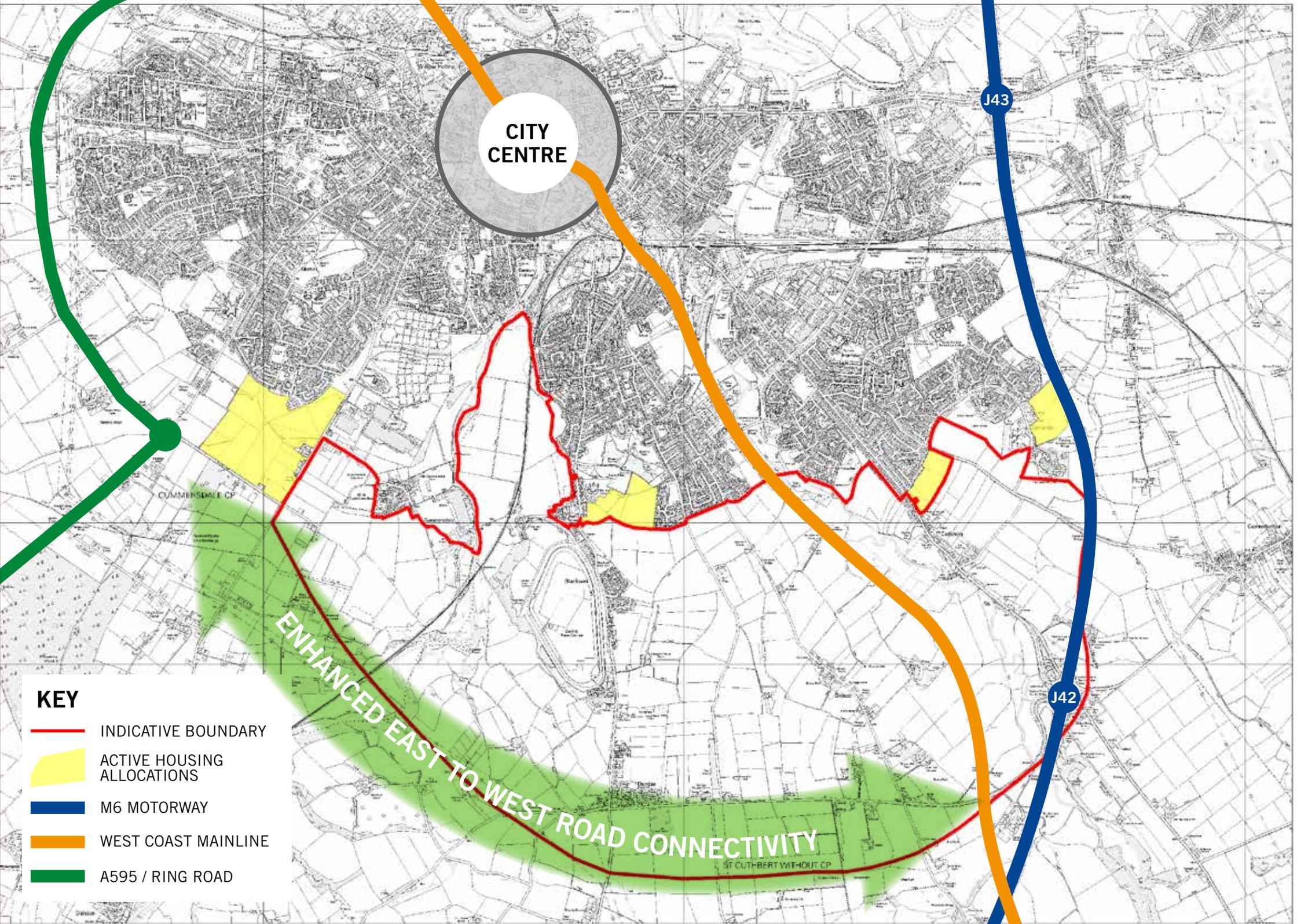
Policy SP 3 of the CDLP provides firm strategic direction for Carlisle South. The policy reaffirms the mixed use nature of the site and commits the City Council to the preparation of a masterplan to be approved as a Development Plan Document, the purpose of which will be to guide the release, form and phasing of development at Carlisle South. It will also have a critical role in identifying the infrastructure required to support growth and in establishing a clear strategy to ensure its timely delivery including making clear how it will be funded.

The carefully chosen location of Carlisle South has been unequivocally supported by the recent and comprehensive Local Plan process including Strategic Environmental Assessment. It is a concept which is strongly supported by the development industry, including many local land interests, and is one which has been met to date with little wider opposition.

Work on the Local Plan has seen engagement on the concept with a wide range of stakeholders and infrastructure providers. Whilst this did not bring to light any significant concerns or 'show-stoppers', it did highlight the importance of establishing a proper masterplan and delivery strategy for the necessary infrastructure. All of this has culminated in the Inspector appointed to examine the CDLP concluding that the broad location, including the notion for up to 10,000 new homes, is both a 'sound' and positive direction of travel.

The timing and circumstances of the opportunity is such that it affords a genuine prospect to truly embed the Garden Cities principals from the outset as well as to respond to emerging best practice and lessons learnt from elsewhere. This reflects that Carlisle South can be seen to offer a real opportunity to deliver strategic growth in a plan-led manner. Notably the CDLP examining Inspector considered the completion of a masterplan to be a legitimate pre-requisite to any development being brought forward to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated approach to the delivery of sustainable growth.





CITY CENTRE

ENHANCED EAST TO WEST ROAD CONNECTIVITY

KEY

- INDICATIVE BOUNDARY
- ACTIVE HOUSING ALLOCATIONS
- M6 MOTORWAY
- WEST COAST MAINLINE
- A595 / RING ROAD

J43

J42

CUMMERSDALE CP

ST CUTHBERT WITHOUT CP



KEY

— INDICATIVE BOUNDARY

■ ACTIVE HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

The work undertaken to date on the location has understandably been proportionate given the focus on securing an endorsement of the concept as 'sound'. Notwithstanding this the City Council has, working closely with Cumbria County Council and with the support of the Home and Communities Agency's ATLAS team, began to coordinate the key constraints and opportunities of the location in order to test some high level ideas. One of the key outcomes of this work, which is continually evolving, has been the identification of key components of a vision for the area as follows:

- contribute, through the delivery of up to 10,000 new homes, to meeting the immediate and longer term housing and development needs of the District and wider sub-region;
- address the existing employment land north / south imbalance in the city and provide access to a range of employment opportunities both locally and further afield, capitalising on the location within the M6 Corridor;
- raise the profile and prominence of Carlisle and Cumbria as a place to invest, live and work;
- be a self-sustaining community that does not rely on existing infrastructure and services but provides its own physical, social and community infrastructure;
- incorporate a new southern link road between the M6 junction 42 and the A689 to unlock growth and improve strategic east to west connectivity which will also support supply chain and labour pool linkages with the unprecedented investment in the international centre of energy excellence in West Cumbria;
- support a choice of transport modes which will seek to reduce further pressures on existing road connections into the City Centre;
- seek to play its part in alleviating the risk of flooding downstream which is of strategic importance; and
- provide multi-functional green spaces that will deliver attractive and enhanced connections from the site to the City Centre and to the wider open countryside, capitalising on one of the area's key and most distinctive strengths.

Based on this it can be seen that Carlisle South is not just about housing numbers but importantly has the potential, if harnessed correctly, to contribute to wider agendas including growing the regional economy and addressing local social deprivation and environmental issues.

The Carlisle Local Development Scheme is in the process of being reviewed given the impending adoption of the new CDLP and the need to now look and firm up the programme beyond this. Work on Carlisle South has already begun in the form of evidence gathering, with a clear strategy in place to plug identified gaps. Beyond this, key milestones in relation to the production of the DPD for the site are as follows:

PREPARATION STAGE 'KEY MILESTONE'	TARGET DATE(S)
Evidence gathering and initial stakeholder engagement	January 2015 ► Ongoing
Scope and Issues Consultation (Reg 18)	March 2017
Preferred Options Consultation including on route of Southern Link Road	February 2018
Formal six week consultation on 'Publication' (Proposed Submission Draft) Local Plan (Reg 19)	July 2018
Submission to Secretary of State	September 2018
Examination	December 2018
Receipt of Inspectors Report	May 2019
Adoption	September 2019

Providing it can be substantiated that the funding and delivery of infrastructure would not be prejudiced, opportunities for the early release of land may be identified through the process of plan preparation with weight attributable to emerging proposals in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The scale and ambition of Carlisle South is such that it is of greater than simply local significance. Accordingly the concept has evolved with the buy in and support of a broader sub-regional audience.

Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) sets out ambitions to deliver 15,000 additional jobs and an increase in GVA of £600m by 2024. The County, within which Carlisle is the only city, has an investment pipeline of £25bn over the next decade, a level largely unrivalled elsewhere in the UK. In the north-west alone, five of the eight largest proposed investment projects are being delivered in Cumbria.

The SEP explicitly recognises housing as a key economic driver *“both in terms of the jobs it supports (construction contributes £674m in GVA and 13,500 jobs to the Cumbrian economy) and to the economy as a whole”*. It further states that *“providing new housing is essential to support economic growth with an estimated 30,000 new homes required by 2025 across the county”* and that *“delivering an appropriate housing supply is fundamental to maintaining the workforce necessary to support the economy and requires investment”*. In this latter regard the recent Skills Plan reaffirms the extent of the significant skills shortage within the County and an urgent need therefore to increase the available workforce.

Owing to its scale, location and status Carlisle South entails unrivalled potential to secure continuity in the long term supply of housing land within Cumbria and, once established, to be the most prolific contributor of supply for decades to come. Recognition of this sees the site prioritised in the LEP's recent Strategic Investment Plan (July 2016), which states as the first of the required housing delivery actions:

“Masterplanning of Carlisle South – We will work with the HCA to develop proposals for the strategic growth of Carlisle. In line with the Cumbria Infrastructure Plan, the major urban extension will require significant new infrastructure. Integral to this process will be a new link road connection from junction 42 of the M6 to the A595”.

The location is similarly recognised as important in the LEP commissioned Cumbria Infrastructure Plan (May 2016) where it is explicitly listed as one of six strategic housing sites, being of a scale which is larger than that of the other five sites combined.

This Plan highlights the Carlisle Southern Link Road as a key element of the proposal but recognises that there would be *“further enabling support required”*.

It can clearly be seen that the delivery of Carlisle South is central to the wider economic wellbeing of the sub-region and essential to the LEP's growth ambitions.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF DELIVERING NEW HOMES IN CUMBRIA OVER THE NEXT 15 YEARS



33,020

new homes including up to

8,800

affordable properties



3,634

direct jobs, up to

6,700

indirect spin off jobs in construction and

2,500

indirect jobs due to resident expenditure



£3.27bn

investment and

£508m

economic output (GVA)



GARDEN CITY – THE PERFECT FIT

STRONG VISION, LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Carlisle is a city where business, education and the public sector share an ambitious view of the future. The city and those active within it are signed up to the benefits of growth, providing the certainty needed for investment decisions and developers alike. Spearheaded by the new Carlisle District Local Plan (2015-2030), which sets out a coherent, clear and shared vision, the city is embarking upon the most ambitious levels of growth ever (9,606 new homes between 2013 and 2030).

An increased supply of new high quality market and affordable homes is a central feature of the vision at the heart of the CDLP with one of the two specific housing objectives of the plan being ***“To boost significantly the supply of housing by making land available, to support economic growth, whilst ensuring new housing supports the creation of thriving communities”***.

Encouragingly, planning permissions for new housing are at an all-time high demonstrating that the city is prepared to follow through on its ambitions. More encouragingly is that the industry is converting these permissions into homes on the ground.

The City Council is committed to working with partners including Cumbria County Council, landowners, developers and the wider community, aiming to ensure that effective strategic cooperation will deliver housing, jobs, the required infrastructure and ultimately a better environment. In taking forward Carlisle South we will build on our existing commitment to community participation. Evidence of the success of this approach to date can be seen in the Local Plan process throughout which the City Council can be seen to have succeeded in ‘front-loading’ consultation as far as has been possible. The Council has successfully engaged and encouraged involvement with local communities, businesses and stakeholders throughout the entirety of the process and these interests have helped shape the Local Plan including Policy SP 3.

Future comprehensive community engagement is planned as a key element in developing proposals for Carlisle South. The approach followed will utilise tried and tested methods which have previously proved successful in engaging a broad and inclusive audience. Continued support will also be sought from ATLAS.

The focus of these efforts will be ensuring that existing local communities in the area together with landowners, developers and businesses, help to meaningfully refine the vision, objectives and proposals. Those who live, work or base their business within the area should ultimately benefit from investment through improved access to services, investment in infrastructure, access to both more local homes and job opportunities, and proximity of a local labour force.

MIXED TENURE HOMES AND HOUSING TYPES THAT ARE GENUINELY AFFORDABLE FOR EVERYONE

The City Council has a robust understanding of housing needs with the CDLP founded on evidence in the form of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment update (SHMA) undertaken in September 2014, the conclusions of which were broadly supported by the development industry. The outcomes from the study are considered, by way of reference to recently published updated population and household projections, to remain entirely appropriate.

The SHMA includes an estimate of the likely future supply of affordable housing and then subtracts this from the estimated future need to make an assessment of the net residual need for affordable housing going forward. The SHMA concludes that up to 2030 there will be a need for an average of 295 affordable houses per year. The analysis also recommends a tenure split of 30% intermediate housing and 70% social / affordable rent, with viability evidence having recommended a 50/50 tenure split to be more achievable.

Carlisle South presents an opportunity to provide up to 10,000 new homes over current and future plan periods. This provides a unique opportunity to deliver a wide mix of housing types and tenures to meet all income groups, ages and household sizes. It will also provide a platform for starter homes, self-build and custom build dwellings, broadening the range of people who will have the opportunity of home ownership. This scale and mix of housing proposed should also encourage more small and medium sized companies to benefit from these different approaches of home building, something which efforts will be focussed on to maximise.





A ROBUST LOCAL JOB OFFER, WITH A VARIETY OF JOBS WITHIN EASY ACCESS OF HOMES

A robust local job offer is already at the heart of planning for Carlisle South. Policy EC1 of the CDLP 'Employment Land Allocations' states that:

“Consideration will be afforded to the need for and nature and quantum of land release at Carlisle South, in order to support longer term economic objectives, through acting to masterplan the planned mixed use development in accordance with Policy SP3”.

This approach responds to the evidence which points to an existing imbalance in job opportunities between the north and south of the city, reflecting that the majority of job opportunities are concentrated in the north with the majority of the resident population in the south. Carlisle South is therefore well-placed, and will specifically be seeking, to address this imbalance to the benefit of existing residents of the south of the city and future inhabitants of the new development, ultimately to the benefit of the overall sustainability of Carlisle.

In terms of the attractiveness of the location to appeal to new employment investment it is material to note that the location is within the M6 corridor which is one of Cumbria LEP's established four priorities. The strategic dimension of the intended east to west improvements in connectivity will also ensure the location is well placed from a supply chain and labour pool perspective to support and benefit from the significant investments in West Cumbria at the heart of the UK energy economy

Aside from new provision, opportunities also exist to better connect with established employment destinations including Rosehill and Durranhill employment estates, the latter of which has just benefitted from £2m Local Growth Funding. The significance of the recently awarded Kingmoor Park Enterprise Zone, approximately 8km to the north of Carlisle South, and the significant employment opportunities this entails is equally material, with these two proposals mutually supporting each other across the long term. As the administrative capital of a wide sub-region, the city also boasts a variety of jobs in the health and education sectors, with the latter boosted by continued investment in and growth of the University of Cumbria and Carlisle College.

The scale of development is such that recognition also needs to be afforded to the significant new jobs in construction and its associated supply chain which, whilst temporary, would endure across a significant time period and consecutive local plan periods. On a related note, jobs will be created through the delivery of supporting services and infrastructure in the retail, school and health sectors for example.

DESIGN, BEST OF TOWN AND COUNTRY LIVING, HEALTHY HOMES AND VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

The “Big Green City” is a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Carlisle which sets out an approach to realising a vision which states:

“By capitalising on the great landscapes in the city region, the quality of its open green spaces and its other environmental assets, the city region will create communities with an exceptional quality of life, and robust health and wellbeing. It will be an excellent place for business, communities and wildlife.”

Owing to the potential to embed and link with an abundance of existing environmental and landscape assets, growth through Carlisle South presents a distinctive opportunity to genuinely create healthy, active, cohesive, sustainable and bio-diverse communities, with a high quality of life and wellbeing.

Beyond the strategy, the City Council is currently commissioning higher level strategic evidence around townscape and landscape to inform the masterplanning process. It is envisaged that the place shaping of the garden settlements would evolve in response to the principles of the Garden City movement, including quality design, cutting edge technology, accessible and attractive networks of greenspace and a high quality and distinctive public realm.

New schools, shops and community facilities will be an integrated part of the development, and will be located to be easily accessible but also be integral to creating a sense of place in each locality.

Early work on design will inform the concept of Carlisle South to define whether the ultimate approach an extension of the city or series of distinct places which are interlinked but have their own identity. This work will draw out how the development will respond to the local context of existing villages, farmsteads and agricultural buildings, and other scattered homes within the area. It will identify any opportunities presented by existing landscape and topographical features, including woodland, trees and hedgerows. It will also commence early work on defining the principles that will ensure that all components of a place such as buildings, open space, transport networks, landscaping and public realm are inclusive, safe and well related to one another, to ensure attractive neighbourhoods which are well integrated with their surroundings.

As a World Health Organisation Healthy City the creation of healthy homes and communities has been at the forefront of the Council and its partners' decision making. A strong foundation exists within the Local Plan through having embedded a 'Healthy and Thriving Communities' policy (SP9) as a strategic

policy at the Plan's outset. Beyond this, the networks interest and enthusiasm on the health agenda is firmly established with many relevant partners previously engaged in the concept of Carlisle South when an expression of interest was submitted for Healthy New Town status back in 2015.

The proximity of the area to the city of Carlisle allows for the development of multi-faceted communities, embracing place shaping principles, but with immediate access to key infrastructure and facilities of a city, such as hospital, university and cultural offers, which are already well established. A free standing settlement would take decades to develop this offer, whereas Carlisle already has such facilities with a thriving city centre.

DEVELOPMENT WHICH ENHANCES THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The masterplan will aim to ensure a net gain to biodiversity, by assessing the existing green and blue infrastructure across the broad location, and maximising opportunities to link eventual private and public green space to the wider green infrastructure network, including natural habitats whether or not they ultimately have public access.

Opportunities to be climate resilient will be embedded in the masterplan, building on the foundations of the adopted CDLP policies on climate change and flood risk. These policies attracted comment from the Inspector that:

“Policies in the CDLP support the transition to a low carbon future taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the re-use of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and the use of renewable resources in accordance with the NPPF. The Plan adopts proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change”.

In addition, the TCPA has been undertaking recent research into climate change policy in Local Plans, and has selected Carlisle as one of four case studies on the strength of the process of developing, modifying and implementing the Plan's policies.

The City Council is in dialogue with the Cumbria Local Nature Partnership (LNP), about how best to undertake collaborative working with the LNP, who are keen to make a positive contribution to the delivery of the masterplan for Carlisle South. Ultimately the LNP feel they are best placed to demonstrate through the MP process that improved environmental quality and improved economic performance are compatible and can be delivered together.

INTEGRATED AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

In building a healthier city, the scale of the proposal is such that there will be an opportunity to design an environment which, from an infrastructure perspective, is served by a variety of transport options which encourage public and active travel, reducing the need for cars.

Notwithstanding this initial modelling, work supports that the inclusion of a southern link road in the development would, aside from obvious strategic benefits, unlock growth and help to alleviate congestion on existing routes into and through the city centre.

These benefits will help reduce noise and improve air quality for a number of recognised communities along these routes known to suffer from deprivation would ensure Carlisle South delivers far reaching benefits beyond the site boundaries.

This new link road has the potential to also improve community and road safety, whilst providing opportunities to be physically active (through the incorporation of a parallel cycle link) and socially connected with improved access to employment and leisure opportunities including for those existing residents in the south of the city. The growth this route will unlock has resulted in the Southern Link Road receiving endorsement from Transport for the North via its Strategic Local Connectivity workstream and the City and Cumbria County Council will continue to promote this proposal with DfT and its agencies / delivery bodies.

Green Infrastructure corridors within the area afford unique opportunities to build on the city's reputation for travel to work by a high percentage of sustainable modes, with genuine opportunities and scope to include a new rail station within the development.





A STRATEGIC APPROACH

The Carlisle South proposal can be seen to be amongst the most ambitious and exciting planned developments within the north of England, aided by its heightened strategic importance given planned levels of investment in west Cumbria. Being free from any legacy constraints, and not subject to the development pressures being experienced elsewhere, it offers a unique opportunity for growth of this scale to be genuinely 'plan-led'.

Carlisle South is at an early stage of land assembly and there are therefore opportunities to potentially purchase land and / or hold discussions at an early stage regarding land value. This constitutes a major strategic benefit of the proposal which could see captured land value invested into the quality of the development. The City Council would be keen to explore and understand any support available to purchase land / capture value for the good of the development.

A strong, strategic and clear policy framework is now in place to guide more detailed masterplanning and to ensure that the site is available when needed to respond to the District's and wider sub-region's development needs. In these regards Carlisle South affords a real opportunity to implement best practice and showcase new innovation, with the ultimate aim of advancing Carlisle and Cumbria's credentials as a destination to live and work, as well as the key tenets of the Garden City approach.



DELIVERY

A key pre-requisite to the delivery of Carlisle South is the timely preparation of a masterplan which is to be approved as a Development Plan Document (DPD), the purpose of which will be to guide the release, form and phasing of development.

It will also have a critical role in identifying the infrastructure required to support growth and in establishing a clear strategy to ensure its timely delivery including making clear how it will be funded. A strong policy framework is in place to ensure this approach is allowed to prevail which acts to reaffirm the genuine opportunity which exists for a Garden City in Carlisle to be plan-led.

The Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) indicates an adoption date of September 2019 with the Plan however anticipated to be at an advanced and 'submission' stage in September 2018. Whilst it is unlikely that plan preparation can be accelerated, based on the current timescales for obtaining the required evidence, weight can be attached to the Plan as it emerges. This may afford opportunities to identify and accelerate initial phases of development, providing that to do so would not prejudice the delivery of required infrastructure.

Owing to the support provided by ATLAS to date and the funding previously secured through the Large Sites Infrastructure Programme, good progress has been made on ensuring the required evidence base upon which to found the subsequent masterplanning and delivery strategy is in place. Relatively comprehensive land ownership plans have been compiled and the completion of a Stage 1 study identifying preferred route corridors for the vitally important link road has been completed.

Identified gaps in the evidence base, which are presently being plugged, relate to a landscape / townscape assessment and market intelligence with respect to the target sectors for the location's employment land offer. Work is also ongoing with the County Council to progress further development and feasibility work relating to the southern link road, acting to ensure that the identification of a final preferred route corridor can best support the wider masterplanning.

The City Council is now working, post agreement with ATLAS, to develop a high level concept framework which will provide more clarity on the scale of the opportunity and inform the brief for the more detailed masterplanning which will follow.

This framework will constitute the focus of the first formal consultation in the planning process (Regulation 18) which is envisaged to commence in March 2017. It will take forward and advance in much greater detail an initial high level concept which was prepared following an ATLAS facilitated Council officer session in July 2015.

With regards to wider infrastructure planning the existing evidence supports that Carlisle South needs to be self-sufficient with little if any capacity in existing provision to absorb additional pressure. Whilst this presents challenges in terms of accelerating early phases of the development, more positively it presents an opportunity to take a truly comprehensive, place-led and Garden City based plan-led approach.

To ensure the most effective phasing of development, and critically for essential developer contributions to be secured when needed, co-ordination between land owners and / or developers will be essential. Support in addressing this challenge will be central to success.

Viability will understandably be a key challenge which is likely to be exacerbated by the need to be self-sufficient in infrastructure terms. Work undertaken on the Local Plan sought to comprehensively understand viability and how this varies across site types and locations within the District.

The conclusions of this work support that development in most locations, and particularly greenfield sites, is viable and able to make meaningful contributions to infrastructure whilst meeting other plan requirements. Notwithstanding this the Council has already identified, working with ATLAS, the need to develop further and high level viability testing specific to Carlisle South. Once completed, this work will helpfully inform the emerging concept framework.

In terms of market commentary, the broad location of Carlisle South was well supported by the development industry through the Local Plan process being an evident attractive future proposition.





To realise the site's full potential, it is clear that there is a need to grow the number of developers active within Carlisle, with the City Council working hard to do so via positive promotion aided through successfully engaging the Home Builders Federation.

Whilst further efforts are planned, and having recently appointed Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners to assist in these, initial success is already evident with a very positive and growing momentum of house building activity within the District. Testament to this are the 502 net new home completions during 2015/16, which is the highest level observed based on recent records. Completions in 2014/15 and 2015/16 exceeded anticipated rates with in excess of 600 projected for 2016/17, which observations support is on track. These increasing build rates have been aided by the presence of new players within the market as well as, encouragingly, increased outputs from those outfits already well established locally.

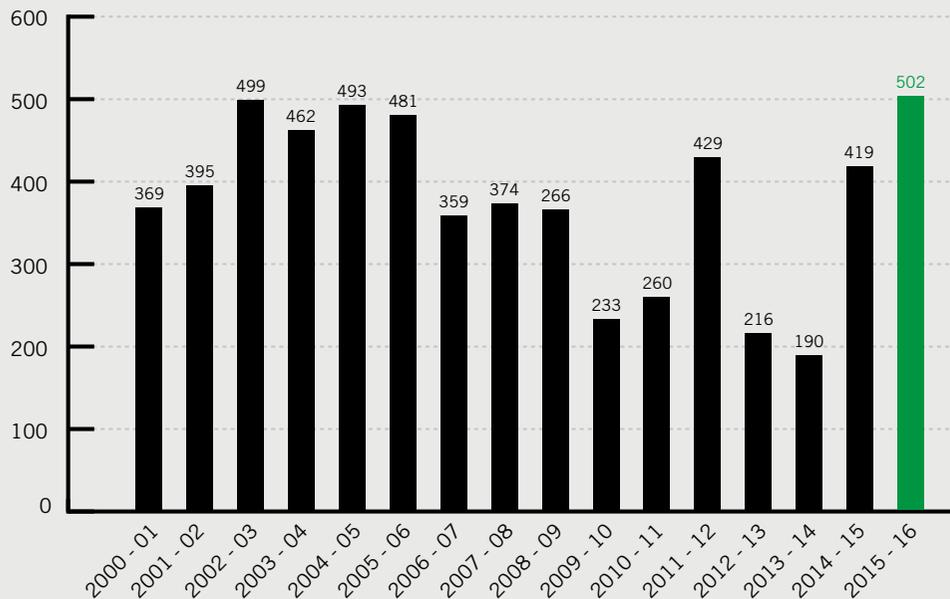
Of direct relevance to Carlisle South is that a number of sites on its fringes are already being actively built out demonstrating that multiple start points are, given the scale involved, possible and beyond this generating the momentum which could spill over into the broad location. Discussions with the developers of these sites have revealed that sales are surpassing their demand expectations, boding well for the future.

Beyond leading planning efforts the City Council has a strong appetite to explore what role they can play with regards to delivery from an implementation and enabling perspective including with regards to land assembly and infrastructure provision. In this regard the City Council is keen to think differently and to step up and proactively lead on and embrace innovation, including where this would see the Council take on greater risk and operating outside of its traditional duties. One example of this, which the Council would be keen to explore, is the use of development corporation powers.

Importantly the Council would not however see such powers as at the expense of an approach to delivery which is grounded in true partnership working with local landowners and development interests.

The timing of the opportunity Carlisle South presents, and that presented by the Garden City programme, is fortuitous in that there is a genuine window in which a range of delivery options can be properly explored and those with the best fit taken forward including potentially piloting emerging concepts. Support in identifying and exploring these options would be a key ask if included in the programme.

HISTORIC NET HOUSING COMPLETIONS



GOVERNANCE

The City Council has a proven track record of delivery with regards to plan preparation as demonstrated by the recent CDLP which, despite being a comprehensive Local Plan including site allocations, was delivered considerably quicker than the England average with fewer resources.

This was achieved without compromising the quality or the soundness of the Plan, testament to which is a positive Inspector's report and that many aspects of the Plan continue to be highlighted by external organisations as best practice.

Key to this success has been the frontloading of consultation and internal governance arrangements through a cross party Members' working group. A similar approach is proposed to be adopted with respect to Carlisle South, with the implementation of tried and tested methods tailored to reflect the specific opportunities and complexities of the proposal.

Corporately, Carlisle South has been identified as a 'significant project' which requires direct support from, and the close monitoring of, the Corporate Project Board. This approach will ensure continued awareness of the importance of the project at the highest level within the City Council, and also enable the allocation of appropriate resources and co-ordination of the project with other relevant Council activities and plans. Risk management, from both an opportunity and challenge perspective, is an integral part of this project management approach.

Beyond plan preparation, the City Council is taking a lead role with respect to implementation and delivery. Additional support in this regard would clearly be beneficial given the opportunity is of a scale not previously tackled by the Council or indeed other key local interests.

The City Council has an excellent working relationship with Cumbria County Council with both committed to working together to ensure the timely delivery of infrastructure required to enable growth. Evidence of this commitment is a signed statement of intent between the two Councils and the continually ongoing work undertaken on the preparation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. This includes ongoing work on the identification of a preferred route corridor for a new Southern Link Road. The city similarly has a strong relationship with the Local Enterprise Partnership, with Carlisle playing a key role in the achievement of the LEP's ambitions.

Therefore a wide range of partners, including infrastructure providers, are already well aware of and have been working together, not least through the process of the Local Plan to develop the Carlisle South opportunity.

The City Council also has a positive relationship with the private sector and an increasing reputation for being a forward looking and proactive authority which is respected. The City Council has already engaged in constructive dialogue with many of the multiple land ownership and interests in Carlisle South including those seeking early development in the area.

The aim of this engagement has been to explain the intended approach of strategic Policy SP 3 and to encourage medium to long term thinking on the part of the landowners and developers.

A firm commitment within Policy SP 3 to commence early on the masterplanning of the site, as well as modifications through the examination process to remove a fixed future start date to aid flexibility, has been well received and lends credibility to the notion of genuine partnership working moving forward.

The importance of community engagement and that of the wider public is also recognised, and is again an aspect where the City Council has a proven track record of success.

The shape of the appropriate overarching governance arrangements are dependent on the precise delivery mechanisms which are selected and taken forward. Preceding sections have already detailed how the timing of the opportunity that Carlisle South presents is perfect with regards to exploring and ultimately identifying the most appropriate and effective mechanisms to take forward. The identification of appropriate governance arrangements would be an integral part of this work.



KEY CHALLENGES

The over-riding challenge in delivering Carlisle South will be the complexity and timing / phasing of the proposal given its scale.

In the absence of direct experience of progressing a plan for, and delivering a site of this scale, the ability to draw on expertise and lessons learnt from elsewhere will be critical moving forward. It is in this regard where inclusion in the Garden Cities programme could be of the greatest immediate benefit.

Many of the challenges faced in realising the full potential of Carlisle South will be common to most proposals of a similar scale and include:

- land assembly – despite a local willingness to make land available, it is in multiple and currently entirely private ownership;
- viability – including managing land value expectations, although not all of the location is currently covered by options presenting some real opportunities for more innovative approaches to land value capture;
- infrastructure – funding and co-ordination, including developer collaboration, to ensure the timely delivery of critical infrastructure in advance of when needed; and
- securing the required capacity and funding to maintain the momentum of plan preparation and, beyond this implementation, the need for which will be critical to a plan-led approach.

From a local perspective, the broad location of Carlisle South is largely free from any significant physical and other constraints. There are no landscape designations and the only biodiversity designation which applies is the River Eden SAC which extends to the River Caldew.

There are a number of small pockets of ancient woodland and there are also a number of areas within flood zones 2 and 3 associated with the rivers which traverse the area. However, the scope and scale of land within the broad location is such that, as opposed to being regarded as constraints, these areas can instead be viewed as presenting opportunities for strategic green infrastructure which has the potential to be a strong and distinctive component of Carlisle South.

Additional unique challenges facing the area include:

- securing funding to progress proposals for a new southern link road through the development phases (with a modest gap at present with regards to phase 2 work), and beyond this with regards to delivery, ensuring that a delay in this critical component of the evidence base does not hold up wider masterplanning;
- securing the appropriate, viable and timely agreements with Network Rail to potentially bridge the West Coast Main Line (electrified) and the Cumbria Coast Line (non-electrified). The requirement for this will be confirmed through the ongoing work on a southern link road, again amplifying the need to secure all of the required funding for and to maintain the timely progression of this key piece of work; and
- availability and capacity of consultants to support key aspects and commissions in relation to progressing masterplanning and delivery.

The City Council considers that along with partners it is well placed to respond to existing and future challenges with the aforementioned strategic framework and alignment already well established and providing a solid footing from which to go forward.

It is the Council's belief however that this response, and ultimately the achievement of evidently mutual objectives, would be considerably enhanced if addressed via a partnership approach with Government by way of the inclusion of Carlisle South within the Garden Cities Programme.

MAKING IT HAPPEN

The City Council is already committed to, and actively progressing, the broad location of Carlisle South.

The extent to which best practice and innovation can be truly embraced however, particularly with regards to delivery mechanisms, is limited in the absence of any external support. The same holds true in relation to the extent to which opportunities to accelerate delivery can be explored and where possible taken. This reflects that, notwithstanding a strong appetite for innovation locally, there is simply not the experience of having previously delivered a development proposal of this scale.

ATLAS has played a key role in supporting the advancement of the concept to date, providing structure to early efforts focussed on evidence gathering and concept evolution, as well as helping to sustain momentum. Funding previously secured through the Large Sites Infrastructure Fund has also been key in enabling the evidence base, including initial aspects of the southern link road route exploration, to be frontloaded.

In order to fully respond to the highlighted opportunities and address the identified challenges, the City Council is seeking, through inclusion in the Garden Cities programme, the following support from Government:

- continued and tailored guidance and support from ATLAS including in relation to further developing the vision and concept framework. The outcomes of this work will inform the brief for the further and more detailed masterplanning;
- access to funding and expertise to immediately commence feasibility work relating to the identification and exploration of delivery mechanisms and models and to put these into effect in the future;
- support for the co-ordination of landowners and developers to support the phasing of delivery and the provision of critical developer contributions;
- priority access to relevant funding where proven to add value to the programme of works and / or place; or where needed to bridge funding gaps with respect to critical infrastructure;
- scheme development funding to support Cumbria County Council and Carlisle City Council bridge the anticipated future gap in developing the southern link road, the completion of which will form a key input into the wider masterplanning process;
- brokerage across Government departments particularly with regard to the Department for Transport and its delivery bodies including Network Rail and Highways England in order to secure early recognition and support for the strategically important new southern link road, thus reducing delays with their internal processes down the line; and
- access to a network and information portal to share best practice across the programme to better understand and aid innovation.

It is the City Council's belief that the above support will make a significant difference in adding value and reducing delays in moving more definitive proposals for Carlisle South forward. Beyond this, the support will have the obvious benefit in bringing to fruition a proposal which will not only accelerate housing delivery but can be seen to genuinely showcase the Garden City principles.





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Images courtesy of and with thanks to Capita, Eden Housing Association, Graeme Peacock, Impact Housing Association, Riverside Group and Story Homes.

