

## Contact Report

**Organisation / project:** Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), Chalgrove Airfield

**Meeting Date:** 3 July 2017

**Meeting with:** Benson Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan team

**Location:** Parish Hall, Sunnyside, Wallingford, OX10 6LZ

**Attendees:** Cllr Philip Murray, Dianne Brooks (parish clerk), Dave Rushton (Neighbourhood plan team), Gareth Adam, Kate McBride (HCA), Kieron Gregson (Carter Jonas), Chris Carter (AECOM), Ben Lowndes (Newgate Communications).

### 1. Summary

- An introductory meeting was held between representatives of Benson Parish Council, the Neighbourhood planning team representatives and the HCA's recently-formed strategic land team, which has taken responsibility for the Chalgrove Airfield project.
- Gareth Adam explained that the strategic land team will take the site forward with a view to submitting a planning application for the site towards the end of this year.
- Benson PC set out key issues relating to traffic, its Neighbourhood Plan and the timescales for progressing this.

### 2. Topics discussed

#### HCA position:

- Gareth A outlined the role of the strategic land team, the engagement taking place with stakeholders and the work involved in preparing a planning application for Chalgrove Airfield.
- The masterplan created at the Enquiry by Design event in January 2017 has provided a good starting point and will form the basis of a proposal for around 3,000 homes. The HCA is testing this as the proposal evolves.
- Stakeholders have been written to in May and a new website is being set up at [www.chalgroveairfield.com](http://www.chalgroveairfield.com).
- The HCA's Chalgrove team includes Gareth Adam, Kate McBride, Louise Wyman and Ken Glendinning.
- It was confirmed that the strategic land team has responsibility for the site.
- Positive discussions are being held with South Oxfordshire District Council and the HCA submitted a Regulation 18 response to its local plan in May 2017.
- An update was also provided on discussions with Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Oxfordshire County Council on health and education matters.
- Gareth confirmed that the HCA is looking to submit a planning application for the site later this year. Target date for start of work on site is March 2020.

**Benson issues and challenges:**

- Philip Murray said the council's consultation on its neighbourhood plan had started quickly and was picking up pace again after stalling recently.
- He said it's hoped that Benson would be easy to work with and that there was a 'natural line' between the parish's needs and the HCA's aims for Chalgrove.
- The parish's pre-submission plan in March was supported by more than 90% of respondents. It has identified two options:
- **Option 1:** Support significant increase from current position of 1,350 homes, of around 750-800 new dwellings. This includes:
  - 184 homes at BEN1, phase 1 (Littlewood Road)
  - An outline application which is approved for 241 homes at a site opposite Littlewood Road.
  - Up to 80 homes at Land off Hale Road (BEN2)
  - Around 240 homes on sites identified as BEN3 and BEN4.
- This level of growth exceeds South Oxfordshire's stated requirements.
- Key considerations include the capacity of local schools and the traffic on local roads.
- The Neighbourhood Plan is seeking support for an edge road to provide capacity for new developments relieve the amount of traffic on the street network and B4009 running through the village.
- Results of the village survey suggest that support for development would not be as strong without commitment to an edge road, with up to 60% of respondents saying that would be against the Neighbourhood Plan without this.
- Four developers with an interest in sites are said to be committed to part funding the edge road, or are about to commit to doing so.
- Junctions at either end of the proposed edge road are unfunded, which equates to around 25% of its total cost.
- The Neighbourhood Plan is looking at routes that avoid potential flood zones.
- Total cost of the road is estimated to be £12m-£15m, making the outstanding contribution around £3m-£4m.
- Positive discussions have been held with South Oxfordshire District Council and a professional study is being considered to determine the need for the new road.
- PM said a decision on funding or an indication that support could be provided is needed by September. The Neighbourhood Plan is expected to be submitted in September.
- Dave R said the parish has said its data on traffic use has similar findings to the HCA.
- **Alternative to option 1** would be to support development at BEN1 phase 2 site.
- Dave R highlighted the issue of the local library, which he said has a large number of users from the Chalgrove area.

### **3. Actions**

- HCA to maintain dialogue and set up future meetings with the parishes in the autumn.
- HCA provide data to Benson on traffic use and future forecasts.
- HCA to provide feedback from future meetings with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council.
- HCA to provide an update on funding position.
- Benson Parish Council to provide a copy of the Neighbourhood Plan (provided and available here <http://www.bensonplan.org/pre-submission-plan/>)