

Contact Report

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

Meeting Date: 2 October 2017.

Meeting with: Chalgrove Parish Council and Chalgrove SHIELD.

Location: Chalgrove Village Hall, Chalgrove.

Attendees: Cllr Ann Pritchard, Cllr Jacky Nabb (part), Cllr David Turner, Jo Murphy (Chalgrove Parish Council); Jo Arnold, Paul Boone, Simon Reynolds, Heather Topping, Neil Topping (Chalgrove SHIELD); Gareth Adam, Terry Fuller (HCA), Nick Taylor (Carter Jonas), Andy Ward, Tom Smith (NEW Masterplanning), Chris Carter (AECOM), Ben Lowndes (Newgate Communications).

1. Summary

- A meeting was held between representatives of Chalgrove Parish Council, Chalgrove SHIELD and members of the HCA's Chalgrove team.
- The meeting followed an earlier session on 21 July and was intended to update members on progress, answer questions on areas of concern and discuss future contact.
- This note summarises the key points of the discussions, with follow up actions listed under item 4.

2. Update from last meeting

This section is intended to summarise the key points of the discussion and the HCA's response to them; agreed actions are summarised at section 4.

HCA update:

- Gareth Adam thanked everyone for taking the time to meet and booking the meeting room.
- He explained that the team is aware of their concerns and the parish's and SHIELD's position relating to proposed development of the airfield.
- This is the first of the next round of meetings held with other parishes, with other meetings to follow in October.
- The Gareth A confirmed that the HCA is looking to submit a planning application for the site later this year.

The following items / actions from the last meeting were responded to by the Chalgrove team and are summarised below.

EDUCATION

Question: David Turner asked when and how the school would be built and said he did not believe the existing Chalgrove primary school could be extended

Response: Based on the HCA submitting an application for 3,000 homes, and discussions with the local authority, our proposals include a secondary school and two primary schools on the

Chalgrove development. This is being consulted on as part of South Oxfordshire's Local Plan. These details were presented to members on 5 September. Our intention will be to deliver the first primary school as part of the first phase of development, by 2023. We are in very close discussions with the county and the local school about this and will ensure that this does not impact on the future of existing provision in Chalgrove.

Further questions

Q: DT suggested there may not be enough children to sustain a school during the first phase of development, adding 100 homes would provide around 25 children.

A: This is something we are working very closely with the local education on. The HCA will continue to liaise with the education authority and share these details with stakeholders.

TRAVELLER PITCH PROVISION

Question: Jo Arnold asked about the provision for travellers which are allocated by South Oxfordshire, and whether these would include five or more pitches.

Response: Our understanding is that this requirement is likely to be reduced following a review by South Oxfordshire District Council and possibly also in light of an ongoing appeal. It will be consulted on by the local authority. We will support any provision that is agreed as part of this.

Further questions

Q: JA asked whether the provision in the local plan is for plots or pitches, as these definitions relate to different things.

Action: HCA to discuss with South Oxfordshire District Council at next meeting and confirm.

CAPACITY OF TREATMENT OF SEWAGE

Question: Jo Arnold asked about capacity for the treatment of sewage, how it would be treated and the odour footprint.

Response: Thames Water owns, operates and maintains the existing Chalgrove Sewage Treatment Works which lies to the north east of the site and serves Chalgrove itself. The Environment Agency is being consulted with regards discharge to local watercourses. We have our next meeting with both parties in early October (TBC) regarding the treatment of sewage. There are two options, both of which are achievable, and our discussions are focused on which one to progress. The solution will account for the capacity of the existing network, as well as other planned developments. Option 1 is to upgrade the existing Sewage Treatment Works located to the north east of the site. Option 2 is to provide a new STW on the site itself.

Further questions

Q: Cllr David Turner stated that Thames Water must be satisfied that they will be able to meet the capacity of any new development at Chalgrove.

A: This was accepted by the HCA team.

RAF BENSON

Question: Has RAF formally rescinded operational uses of site / impact on Benson?

Response: The HCA has always been clear about its commitment to retaining an operational runway as part of any plans to develop Chalgrove Airfield. We are in discussions with Martin Baker and have appointed legal and property advisors to work with them to form an offer which enables them to remain on the airfield whilst development takes place, and in future. RAF Benson was consulted on the disposal of the airfield site and its transfer from the Ministry of Defence to the HCA. The MoD has confirmed that it has not held flying or landing rights since Martin Baker's occupation of the site. Any existing arrangements has been agreed between RAF Benson and Martin Baker. It has also stated that its disposal would not have proceeded if operations at Benson were impacted. The HCA cannot comment on arrangements regarding use of the site between Martin Baker and RAF Benson, apart from to restate its commitment to enabling this to continue. Chalgrove Airfield was identified as a surplus site by the Ministry of Defence before its ownership passed to the HCA earlier this year.

Further questions

Q: Cllr David Turner said he had an outstanding FOI request on this and that existing manuals confirmed that RAF Benson still used the site.

A: Any existing arrangements has been agreed between RAF Benson and Martin Baker. The disposal would not have proceeded if operations at Benson were impacted.

Q: PB questioned whether the HCA had accurate survey data for the noise made by Meteor planes.

A: This is confirmed. Surveys would be completed as part of the preparation of an Environmental Statement.

Q: PB/DT asked for details of who from MoD provided the statement to councillors at recent meetings.

A: This was provided to the HCA by a divisional director of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation.

CRICHEL DOWNS

Question: Paul Boone asked how what has been done to trace previous owners, and whether this complies with Crichel Down rules.

Response: The site was deemed surplus to requirements by the MoD in 2016. The HCA has been tasked by government to deliver homes on publicly owned sites. The MoD sought ministerial approval to transfer the site under current legislation. This was approved by the Minister Mark Lancaster in April 2016. The MoD then wrote to potential claimants and advertised the site in national industry publications. Following this, the transfer former owners on 27 July. At every stage, we have sought legal advice on the transfer of the site and have complete assurance that it is entirely in accordance with Crichel Down rules.

Further questions

Q: PB queried whether this would still be correct, given that the site would be disposed of to a development partner if the HCA's proposals go ahead.

Q: DT advised that he has provided the MoD with a list of people to write to on this subject and he did not believe all of them had been contacted.

A: The HCA continues to be advised on this issue and will act entirely within the rules set out.

3. HCA update

This section summarises the key points of the discussion and the HCA's response to questions; agreed actions are summarised at section 4. Where the same item has been raised during the conversation, they are covered under the same topic area below.

- The HCA set out in headline terms its commitment to providing the right infrastructure at the right time, in a letter to South Oxfordshire District Council on 31 August. This commitment will be added to as the scheme evolves and more details on what is needed emerge.
- South Oxfordshire District Council's Cabinet resolved on 21 September and the Full Council endorsed this decision at the meeting on 28 September to proceed with the current housing target.
- GA explained that the HCA's project team had presented on 5 September to SODC councillors. We can confirm that 12 members attended this briefing; the HCA also wrote to every councillor on 7 September to send them a summary of the details discussed at the meeting. South Oxfordshire District Council confirmed that it would present to councillors at subsequent meetings on its local plan. The HCA's representatives attended each meeting, and responded afterwards to matters raised relating to Chalgrove.
- The HCA has also started formal pre-application discussions with District/County. An Environmental Statement Scoping Report is currently being finalised and is due to be formally submitted to South Oxfordshire District Council this week.
- **Healthcare:** HCA is in discussions with Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group over possible financial contributions based on occupancy rates and anticipate that this could require the construction of a new surgery. The strategy must also take account of the existing facility, The Brook Surgery).
- **Education:** We have been advised by Oxfordshire County Council that the need remains for two primary schools and a secondary school. The exact dates by which these will be needed is being confirmed. The HCA has already committed to these being provided on the dates requested by the local education authority.

Further questions

Q: There were questions from the group about ongoing discussions with Martin Baker, and the way this has been presented in previous meetings.

A: TF/GA explained that the commercial sensitivity of discussions with MBL meant that the HCA could not disclose anything further, other than the information provided in the update in section 2 of this note. GA confirmed that the latest from the HCA to MBL was made on 27 September and that this has is being considered by Martin Baker.

Q: HCA was asked if it would confirm the status of discussions with Martin Baker with people in the village.

A: HCA has confirmed that this will be done at the appropriate point. An update is provided on the project **website at [link]**

Q: PB questioned the deliverability of the site and it was suggested that the draft allocation is not consistent with the 'deliverability' definition in South Oxfordshire's draft plan.

A: NT explained there is a difference between the test relating to five-year housing land supply and the 15-year period of a development plan allocation. This is to be confirmed.

Q: Would HCA still progress an application if Chalgrove were not in the Local Plan?

A: This is intended to be a plan-led approach. The HCA is responsible for Chalgrove Airfield and is promoting the site through the South Oxfordshire Local Plan process.

Masterplan discussion and questions

Q: It was suggested that whilst others would gain a bypass, Chalgrove would lose its existing bypass which is the only route serving the village.

A: AW explained the rationale and the benefits this would bring including ***stronger green edges, a viable local centre and enhanced flood alleviation.***

Questions were raised about areas which included:

- The establishment of an Air Quality Management Areas within the new development
- Traffic being close to the new road
- HGV and larger vehicle movements
- Impact on unclassified roads
- Relationship to approved Hills' development
- The need for a bridge/tunnel over a retained B480.

It was suggested that a dedicated transport workshop be arranged.

Action: HCA to liaise with stakeholders on potential workshop to explore issues around traffic and flooding.

Phasing

AW explained the three phases of development – these details can be found on slide 14# of the presentation provided to councillors on 5 September
<https://www.slideshare.net/secret/vkUyMEW0EcyMOV>

Q: It was suggested by PB/HT that if the HCA was just proposing the first phase, this might be acceptable. The later phases are not.

Q: A question on the number of construction-related vehicle movements was asked.

Action: HCA to respond.

Q: HCA was asked why they are still progressing with this the government's consultation on housing numbers.

A: NT advised that councillors had debated the reduced target at Cabinet and decided to proceed.

Q: The total number of new jobs to be created by the proposal was queried.

Action: HCA to respond.

4. Actions - summary

HCA to:

- Explore workshop with stakeholders and confirm details with parish and SHIELD representatives.
- Feed back questions relating to education requirements and report back.
- Share synopsis of next newsletter and plans for further correspondence and engagement.
- Confirm details re construction-related traffic.
- Confirm traveller pitch provision.
- Confirm employment projections.