



## Contact Report

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

**Meeting Date:** 10 October 2017.

**Meeting with:** Watlington NDP Group and Parish Council, local councillors and officers from South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council.

**Location:** Watlington Town Hall, Watlington.

**Attendees:** Gareth Adam (HCA), Kieron Gregson (Carter Jonas), Chris Carter (AECOM), Ben Lowndes (Newgate) Gill Bindoff, Terry Jackson, Keith Jackson, Pauline Harvey, Ian Hill, David Cotterell, Tony Williamson, Norman Perry, Peter Richardson, Rachel Gill (WPC / WNDP), Cllr Steve Harrod (Oxfordshire County Council, Chalgrove and Watlington division), Cllr Anna Badcock (South Oxfordshire District Council, Watlington ward), Jason Sherwood (Locality, Infrastructure & Road Agreements Manager, Oxfordshire County Council), Peter Canavan (Principal Planning Officer), Claire Spendley, (Environmental Health Officer, South Oxfordshire District Council).

### 1. Summary

- A meeting was held between the HCA's Chalgrove team and representatives of Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan Group, Watlington Parish Council Parish Council, local district and county councillors local authority officers.
- The meeting followed a session on 3 July and was intended to update members on progress, discuss the HCA's commitment to supporting an Edge Road around Watlington, answer questions and agree next steps.
- This note summarises the key points of the discussions, with follow up actions listed under item 5.

### 2. HCA update

***This section summarises the key points of the discussion and the HCA's response to them; agreed actions are summarised at section 5.***

Gareth Adam thanked everyone for taking the time to meet and set out the following points as part of the HCA update.

- He explained that the HCA continues to work towards a planning application for development of around 3,000 homes at Chalgrove Airfield.
- As part of this, the HCA set out in a letter to South Oxfordshire District Council on 31 August its position on the infrastructure improvements required to support development at Chalgrove Airfield.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> HCA letter to South Oxfordshire District Council on 31 August [https://estatecreate-storage.s3.amazonaws.com/site\\_14500/control\\_995365/sfgakx3scv?response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%2217%2008%2031%20Ltr%20Peter%20Canavan%20Chalgrove%20](https://estatecreate-storage.s3.amazonaws.com/site_14500/control_995365/sfgakx3scv?response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%2217%2008%2031%20Ltr%20Peter%20Canavan%20Chalgrove%20)



- The letter identifies the Watlington Edge Road as a priority for HCA funding support and Gareth explained that the HCA is committed to providing the remaining funding required to deliver it.
- This commitment is predicated on development at Chalgrove Airfield coming forward.
- He added that is important now for the HCA to work with the group and respective landowners to agree the basis on which this can move forward.
- The Watlington Edge Road was discussed as part of a key internal meeting we have on offsite infrastructure provision around Chalgrove on 20 October.

### Update on engagement activity that is not covered above

Gareth provided the following update on engagement activity since the last meeting in July.

- This meeting is one of a number with parish representatives, district councillors, Oxfordshire's Clinical Commissioning Group and the education / highways authority.
- The HCA has also started formal pre-application discussions with District/County. An Environmental Statement Scoping Report has been submitted to South Oxfordshire District Council<sup>2</sup>.
- **Education:** Gareth explained that the HCA's proposals for 3,000 homes are being discussed with the local authority. Based on this discussion, the HCA's proposals include a secondary school and two primary schools on the Chalgrove development. Gareth explained that any decision on future education provision is a matter for the local authority. HCA's role is to facilitate any future provision as part of the Chalgrove development

### 3. Watlington update

Gill Bindoff explained that the core plan is complete and is due to be discussed at the full council meeting on 10 October.

**After note:** The Plan was agreed at full council.

There are two documents still outstanding before the plan can be submitted:

- Traffic Management Plan – nearly complete.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://estatecreate-storage.s3.amazonaws.com/site\\_14500/control\\_995365/v5v1v065kv?response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22Chalgrove%20Scoping%20Report\\_VFinal%20%281%29.pdf%22&response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIBTGJZEGNHOU3BEA&Expires=1507911389&Signature=gz7X%2FDay4AykZ%2ByMr4gmQGN0zsz%3D](https://estatecreate-storage.s3.amazonaws.com/site_14500/control_995365/v5v1v065kv?response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22Chalgrove%20Scoping%20Report_VFinal%20%281%29.pdf%22&response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIBTGJZEGNHOU3BEA&Expires=1507911389&Signature=gz7X%2FDay4AykZ%2ByMr4gmQGN0zsz%3D)



- Habitats Regulations Assessment – this is being discussed with Natural England. It was confirmed that this will consider the likely impact of Chalgrove and other development areas. Due November 2017

**The plan is anticipated to be submitted in November 2017, subject to local approvals.**

### **Edge Road delivery**

Chris Carter (Associate Director at AECOM) set out key areas to agree:

- The overall specification of the edge road: it is suggested that it would have a minimum width of 6.5m and have a speed of 30 mph. Gill Bindoff said this met the expectations of the NDP group. It is important that the specification meets the needs of development, accommodate large vehicles and meet the requirements set out by the county council's highways team. Jason Sherwood confirmed that this is not intended to be a dual carriageway or a bypass. CC/JS to co-ordinate and the specification of the road will be issued by the County Council.
- Land ownership: the meeting was told that there are three developers progressing applications in the area who need to be engaged in discussions: Providence Land, Victoria Land and Archstone. It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged between the HCA and the three parties.
- Funding positions: There are no legal agreements in place currently although there have been discussions taking place for some time and the developers are said to be supportive. The HCA has indicated a commitment to provide up to a third of the funding needed for an edge road.
- Timescales for delivery. The HCA will want to be confident that its delivery timescales align with those set out within the NDP.

### **4. Questions**

*Some questions and points were made during the meeting. This section summarises those key points and records any actions agreed. Where a point has been made more than once, such as with the timescales for delivery, it has been combined into a single response.*

#### **Edge Road discussion**

**Q:** Cllr Anna Badcock said that it would have to be more attractive to use the edge road than drive through the town centre, and asked if a 30mph limit would support this.

**A:** It was explained that a package of measures which looks at the edge road and town centre traffic management will be considered. The aim will be to have a free-flowing edge road and measures which discourage traffic through the town centre as part of this. Town centre measures are part of Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan's Traffic Management scope.

**Q:** Norman Perry asked for the HCA to note that funding support will be needed early to support the edge road. It was also stated that there was strong support for the edge road specified in the plan, provided it happens at an early stage.



**A:** This will be considered as part of the overall package.

**Q:** Gill Bindoff and Anna Badcock asked if provision for a cycleway can be included in the specification.

**A:** This is noted. A county council-approved specification for the Edge Road will be produced. This will be coordinated between CC and JS.

**Q:** Peter Canavan stated that it was important to bring landowners together to discuss the specification for the edge road after the HCA workshop on 20 October. He added that it is preferable to have agreements in place before the NDP is established.

**ACTION:**

- HCA to coordinate workshop with landowners, Peter C, Jason S and a representative of the NDP group and parish council to work towards agreeing a statement of common ground between all parties. Invitees will be considered and confirmed with those leading the work on the edge road delivery.
- Gill Bindoff to supply contact details for landowners for HCA reference.

**Infrastructure / traffic**

**Q:** Cllr Anna Badcock asked about an amendment that proposed to South Oxfordshire District Council's Local Plan (which is currently out for consultation as of 11 October).<sup>3</sup>

**A:** Jason Sherwood explained that the following amendment has been made in response to this request:

*"Improvements to highway infrastructure through direct mitigation or significant contributions to new or improved roads, such as a bypass or edge road, including sustainable transport improvements, and where appropriate in association with relevant Neighbourhood Plans and any wider County Council highway infrastructure strategy, around, but not limited to Benson, Stadhampton and Watlington, including highway intervention measures to mitigate additional impacts, both transport and environmental, in Cuxham, Chiselhampton, Little Milton, Shirburn and other settlements where justified."*

**Q:** Cllr Badcock asked what the anticipated 'trigger' would be for the delivery of infrastructure for Watlington and said that it would be important to deliver this early. Tony Williamson added that it is important that local people are informed of the timing of this.

**A:** It was confirmed that the timing of the infrastructure would depend on the number of houses coming forward, rather than a date, at Chalgrove and the likely traffic that this would generate. Any infrastructure would be planned to accommodate this. Discussion over whether this trigger would also consider air quality as well as traffic congestion. South Oxfordshire District Council to advise whether it requires this.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/emerging-local-plan>



**Afternote:** With regards to communication, the HCA will take steps to ensure that accurate information is available and clearly sets out what will happen, by when.

**Q:** Cllr Badcock asked how the impact of construction traffic would be addressed.

**A:** It was explained that a construction management plan would be put in place early to help address and manage the impact of construction traffic. This will include looking at appropriate routes and how these can be enforced.

### **Education**

**Q:** Gill Bindoff raised concerns about future education provision. She explained that there is provision within Watlington's plan for around 4.4 ha of land to be safeguarded for secondary education provision. She added that the NDP Group takes the view that a larger school will be provided as part of the Chalgrove development and added that clarity is needed for their plan. Any potential effects on the Icknield School will need to be considered, although the current uncertainty is the key challenge to the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

**ACTION:** Councillor Steve Harrod (ward) is to discuss the issue with Hilary Hibbert Biles (Conservative member for public health and education at Oxfordshire County Council) and feed back to the NDP group.

**Q:** The HCA was asked to confirm if the timescales for the secondary school to be delivered by 2026 were an accurate indication. The HCA confirmed this.

### **Air quality**

**A:** The meeting was asked what measures will be taken to take account of air quality and would it be possible for this to get worse during a development.

**Q:** It was explained that assessments would be carried out which would set out the likely impact now and in 2033 and suggest measures to address this. There will be a trigger point at which highways mitigation will need to be provided. The district council will advise on whether a similar trigger would be needed for air quality. If so, the technical work will assess whether the timing of the need for mitigation differs from the timing required for highways mitigation.

## **5. Actions - summary**

### **HCA to:**

- Coordinate workshop with landowners, Peter Canavan, Jason Sherwood, Gill Bindoff, Peter Richardson and Chalgrove team.
- Gill Bindoff to supply contact details for landowners for HCA reference.
- Councillor Steve Harrod (ward) to discuss the education issue with Cllr Hilary Hibbert Biles (Conservative member for public health and education) and feed back to the NDP group.



## **6. Update following HCA Infrastructure Workshop**

The HCA undertook to update the Parish Council following an internal meeting on infrastructure on 20 October. It was agreed to liaise with Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan Group to set up the workshop. Specification for the road will be issued by the County to the Group in advance of the meeting.