



Contact Report

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

Meeting Date: 21 July 2017.

Meeting with: Chalgrove Parish Council and Chalgrove SHIELD.

Location: Chalgrove Village Hall, Chalgrove.

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

Apologies: Louise Wyman (HCA)

1. Summary

- A meeting was held between representatives of Chalgrove Parish Council, Chalgrove Shield and the HCA's recently-formed strategic land team, which has taken responsibility for the Chalgrove Airfield project.
- Representatives of both organisations stated that they do not support the principle of development of the airfield and raised concerns about the potential impact of development on the village.
- The meeting covered key issues relating to traffic, flooding, infrastructure, education and health provision.
- Follow up actions have been agreed and are listed under item 3.

2. Topics discussed

This note is intended to summarise the key points of the discussion and the HCA's response to them; agreed actions are summarised at section 3. Where the same item has been raised during the course of the conversation, they are covered under the same topic area below.

HCA update:

- Gareth A provided an update on the HCA's work at Chalgrove and outlined the role of the strategic land team in preparing a planning application for Chalgrove Airfield.
- Terry F (general manager, strategic sites) confirmed the HCA's ambition is to obtain consent for the scheme, provide infrastructure and meet the community's needs with regards to health services, education, transport and retail provision.
- This is part of the HCA's role as a government body, which plays a key role in meeting national and local ambitions for delivering new homes, jobs and investment on public sites.
- Gareth A explained the make up of the Chalgrove team, which is led by Louise Wyman and comprises Gareth Adam, Kate McBride, Jayshree Patel and Ken Glendinning.
- The Strategic Land team has reviewed the work undertaken to date and commissioned a new project team which includes Carter Jonas (planning), AECOM (transport and technical), NEW



Masterplanning, Montagu Evans (property and commercial advisors), BLP solicitors and Newgate Communications.

- Stakeholders have been written to in May and a new website is set up at www.chalgroveairfield.com. This will be regularly updated.
- Gareth A confirmed that the HCA is looking to submit a planning application for the site later this year.

Q&A – summary of key points

Infrastructure

Q: Neil Topping asked for clarity about the HCA's plans for infrastructure provision and the timing of this. He said it was important for this to be provided early.

A: Terry Fuller confirmed that his approach is to invest in infrastructure first. He cited Northstowe as an example of a development of 10,000 new homes, where £30m is being invested in the early provision of infrastructure. This is the intention for Chalgrove.

Q: Cllr David Turner asked when and how a school would be built.

A: Nick T said Oxfordshire County Council believes that the existing primary school could be extended. Cllr Turner said this was not consistent with their message to the parish council at an earlier meeting.

ACTION: NT to clarify the education position and feedback.

Terry Fuller also confirmed that the trigger mechanisms will be on the number of homes, and not dates. He said he would not support children being bused out of the village, adding that the strategy for education and all infrastructure has to be right from the outset. This commitment was acknowledged.

Q: Neil T asked about off-site improvements and Jo Arnold asked for detail on specific highways improvements being proposed.

A: Chris Carter explained that there is an appropriate package of measures under consideration and these are being discussed with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council.

Q: Jo Arnold asked about the option to relocate the B480 through the site and downgrade it to a green lane.

A: Chris Carter confirmed this is being tested alongside another option, which would not include this.

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

A: Nick T said this matter would be confirmed with South Oxfordshire District Council.

ACTION: Nick T to investigate and confirm.

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

A: Chris Carter said discussions were ongoing with the Environment Agency and Thames Water.

Q: Jo Arnold and Simon Reynolds asked about the budget needed to deliver Chalgrove and the associated infrastructure. They asked for the HCA's view on whether the scheme will be viable.

A: Terry Fuller said he expects Chalgrove to be viable and that the exact cost of infrastructure was being looked at by the team.

Consultation / communication to date

There was some discussion about the Enquiry by Design process and ongoing communication with local residents and stakeholders. The following key points were made:

- The Enquiry by Design process is better suited to regeneration projects than for schemes of this nature.
- Jo Arnold said the outputs or principles were not supported by local residents.
- Cllr Anne Pritchard said that the scheme concept has not changed before going into the EBD event.
- Concerns were raised about the time that has passed since the Enquiry by Design process, without communication taking place.
- Jo Arnold questioned the timing of the engagement activity.

Response from the HCA team:

- Gareth Adam explained that the Enquiry by Design event in January 2017 was a starting point for setting a vision for the site and that this is now being tested by the strategic land team.
- Local input had been taken on board. An example of this is reflected in the reduction in the number of homes proposed for the site, from 3,500 to 3,000. There were also a number of changes around technical issues.
- Terry Fuller acknowledged the concerns about the.
- The HCA is committed to further engagement, is speaking with stakeholders and will be in contact about further activities before the autumn.
- Gareth A explained that it is more possible that the HCA will organise workshops around specific themes and an exhibition in the autumn.

Future contact / correspondence

Q: The HCA was asked why it had met other parish councils before Chalgrove, given the development's importance to the village.

A: It was explained that initial meetings were diarised for early July and that the HCA was keen to arrange a session with its senior team to ensure that the most was made from the meeting.

ACTION: HCA / Newgate to liaise with Chalgrove Parish Council and Chalgrove Shield to agree follow up dates before arranging meetings with other parishes.

Q: Paul Boone asked when the website will be updated and if his previous comments on the Enquiry by Design notes had been addressed.

Post meeting note: The website updates have been made and will continue as more information becomes available <http://chalgroveairfield.com>. The notes from the sessions have been updated and are available on the project website.

Martin Baker

Q: Questions were asked about discussions with Martin Baker, which was recognised as an important part of any future proposal. The HCA was asked why it has started public engagement on the proposals without an agreement with Martin Baker in place.

A: Gareth A confirmed that discussions with Martin Baker are continuing and that more information will be shared with once these discussions conclude.

Terry Fuller explained that it is normal for large projects such as this to run a number of technical topics or matters in parallel and that Chalgrove is not unusual in this respect.

RAF Benson

Q: The HCA was asked if the RAF has formally rescinded operational use of the site and referenced an agreement between RAF Benson and Martin Baker.

A: Terry F said that this would be reviewed and reconfirmed.

ACTION: HCA to investigate and report back.

Transfer of the site to the HCA

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

A: Gareth Adam explained that this has been looked at by lawyers and that the HCA does not believe that Crichel Down rules apply in this case.

ACTION: HCA to confirm.

Local Plan / call for sites – to note

CLlr Turner explained that members of South Oxfordshire District Council had no input into the Local Plan process until six days before details of the first consultation document was put into the public domain.

Paul B raised concerns over the way the site was introduced into the Call for Sites in 2015. Little regard has been paid to whether local infrastructure can support it, or the character of the area. Residents believe the selection process is flawed.

General comments - to note

Paul Boone read from a statement which set out Chalgrove Shield's position in relation to the development proposal. He has agreed to share this statement with Gareth Adam and the HCA team.

'Sustainable development' was defined as being appropriate and proportionate and supporting the setting and history of the village, which are set out in South Oxfordshire District Council's objectives and definitions.

Simon Reynolds expressed concerns that the level of development would create a suburban town setting. He said that any development should be kept separate from the existing village to allow it to retain its identity.

Neil Topping raised concerns about the scale of development and said residents did not want a Greater Chalgrove to happen. He added that it is impractical to remove the B480.

Heather Topping said that changing the B480 to a green lane is a flooding benefit, but added the rest of the development isn't needed.

Paul Boone said other strategic locations in South Oxfordshire have access to A roads and motorways links. He expressed concerns about making changes to the B roads around Chalgrove.

Simon Reynolds questioned the HCA's survey assumptions about vehicle movements and raised concerns about the traffic impact on the village.

Paul Boone said HGVs routinely breach the current 7.5 tonne restrictions.

3. Actions - summary

- Education: Nick Taylor to clarify the education position with Oxfordshire County Council and feedback.
- Traveller provision: Nick Taylor to confirm level of provision.
- HCA to reconfirm position re RAF use of the site
- HCA to confirm position relating to transfer of the site from the MoD.
- HCA to confirm details of next meeting, in late September / early October.