



## Contact Report

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

**Meeting Date:** 3 July 2017.

**Meeting with:** Watlington Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan team.

**Location:** Watlington Town Hall, Market Place, High Street, Watlington OX49 5PY.

**Attendees:** Peter Richardson, Gill Bindoff, Norman Perry, Tony Powell (Watlington NDP), Ian Hill, Tom Bindoff, Tony Williamson (Watlington PC), 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 Watlington Parish Council, the Neighbourhood planning team 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.
- Watlington representatives set out key issues relating to traffic, education provision and infrastructure requirements for the town.

### 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 were written to in May and a new website is being set up at [www.chalgroveairfield.com](http://www.chalgroveairfield.com).
- 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.
- He said AECOM continue to be involved in the project and that the new team is reviewing all the information built up by the HCA's local area team in the time leading up to the Enquiry by Design event in January 2017. A full handover has taken place and the team is updated on existing information in relation to the site.
- It was confirmed that the HCA is in regular, positive discussions with South Oxfordshire District Council. The team is working with parish councils to fully understand the infrastructure package required for the site.
- An update was also provided on discussions with Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Oxfordshire County Council on health and education matters.



### **Watlington update:**

- Gill Bindoff (neighbourhood plan coordinator) said they want to move forward with a Neighbourhood Plan, with some minor amendments.
- She said there is support for the plan locally (from around 80% of respondents), but that Oxfordshire County Council has raised comments about the realignment of the B4009, which is fundamental to the WNDP.
- The parish council wants certainty that the road will be delivered and would like this to happen ahead of any development.
- She added that there is interest in Oxfordshire County Council's position on local highways issues. The Atkins model designed on behalf of the county does not justify the realignment of the B4009.
- Target date for submission of the plan is by 17 July.
- Gill B agreed to send through Oxfordshire County Council's response to its plan.
- Funding for the road is being sought from a number of sources, including CIL. Constructive meetings have been held with developers of allocated sites. Development contributions will not be enough to fund the entire cost of the road.
- A detailed application is expected on Site A, to the west of town, very soon. Gill B said that the road is needed before significant development takes place.
- Norman P and Tony W said that a referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan could be lost without an indication of funding support for the realignment of the road.
- Tom B asked about the likely cost of the road and stated that estimates he was aware of ranged from £7-9m to £20m from Oxfordshire County Council, who had pro-rated the cost of a cycle-way. Chris C stated that more design development would be needed to calculate costs.
- Norman P asked where responsibility for road design would lie. Chris C said this is to be confirmed and would need to be discussed with the highways authority.
- Norman P said it was important for Oxfordshire County Council to understand that the HCA would see the realignment of the road as a strategic priority. This would help the progress of the NHP.
- Gill B said there is a difference of opinion on the route of the proposed road with Pyrton.
- One aim of the proposal to re-align the B4009 is to remove some through traffic from Watlington town centre. This is likely to result in a significant improvement in air quality. Traffic management proposals for the town centre are being investigated. Their report is expected by the end of July. It will be sent to HCA for information as soon as it is available.
- The future of secondary education provision in Watlington (Icknield Community College) was raised as a concern. Gill B and Norman P said that the loss of the secondary school would be unpopular if provision was made at Chalgrove.
- There is also concern about the impact that any loss of services would have on the high street.

### **3. Actions**

- HCA to maintain dialogue and set up future meetings with the parishes in the autumn.
- Gill B to send Oxfordshire County Council's response to Neighbourhood Plan.

- HCA to raise issues relating to traffic in meetings with Oxfordshire County Council.
- HCA to provide a response regarding funding position to Watlington PC - **done**.

