

MINUTES

Daws Hill Reference Group

20 February 2012

Gill Gowing (Chairman)
Jerry Unsworth WDC
Chris Steuart WDC
Richard White WDC
Ian Manktelow WDC
Jonathan Crowhurst WDC
Marcus Rogers BCC Place
Jeff Bishop BDoR

Cllr David Johncock
Cllr Paula Lee
Cllr Trevor Snaith
Chris Watson HWS
Barbara Wallis LMPC

Carolyn Leonard FHRA
Ken Tyson SCRAL
Arthur Winning DHRA
John Moore FSFRA
Stuart Armstrong DHRA
Simon Peacock DHRA

Wimpey Team (TW)

Geoff Armstrong DPP
Sarah Matthews PBA

David Peycke TW

Bill Luck TW

Apologies: Councillors Lesley Clarke, John Savage, Jean Teesdale and Brian Pollock. Tony Fooks HWS and Ian McGowan TfB.

1 Workshop process

Jonathan Crowhurst referred to the draft outline of the workshop process that had been sent out with the minutes of the last meeting. The Reference Group members commented that they had seen the document and were happy with it.

Jeff Bishop gave a broad overview of the workshop process and his personal experience in this field. Reference was made to the Localism Act where provisions will soon be enacted that makes community consultation a duty for developers. However, he noted that the government had set no standards for community engagement. He referred to the challenging timetable that has been set out for the process but said this was necessarily the case. He also considered there were benefits to running the pre – application process in parallel with the development brief process. He considered that Daws Hill has the potential to be a good collaborative planning exercise.

The process that has been drawn up requires the District Council to take the lead on the early workshops (Workshop 1 – semi strategic infrastructure and Workshop 2 - site specifics). TW will then take over the process with a drop in event. As we go through the process we will widen the invitations to ensure other stakeholders and the public views are sought. The first workshop will be for the Reference Group members, the second workshop will be broadened out to include other stakeholders.

Barbara Wallis asked if the Chiltern Society could be invited to the first workshop. JC advised that they are on the reserve list at the present time.

Councillor Snaith asked how developments in the wider area would be picked up in transport work. JC advised we would set this out in item 2d on this agenda.

Ken Tyson was concerned that other infrastructure needs to be considered. JC said that this would be outlined at item 2c on this agenda.

2a Transport background

Marcus Rogers gave a presentation that set out the detailed history of transportation research for this area dating back to 2005. He identified reports dating from 2005 onwards. He noted a number of key conclusions that appeared in these reports. [Note the more recent reports can be viewed on the Daws Hill page of the District Councils web site – address in footer to these minutes].

Web site page: <http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/planning-and-buildings/planning-news/daws-hill-area.aspx>

Councillor Johncock considered that amending junction 3 to allow traffic from Oxford direction to leave the motorway would be a big help to relieving congestion in Wycombe and to revitalising the area around junction 3. MR replied that he supported this idea and was promoting the idea when he had the opportunity. He stated that M40 Junctions 2, 3 and 4 all needed to be considered in terms of improvements.

2b Taylor Wimpey recent analysis

Sarah Matthews set out the progress TW had made so far. This included recent survey work of the school trips and pedestrian movements.

Arthur Winning wondered why the analysis had focussed only on the morning peak and not the evening peak for the schools and there followed a brief discussion about the different characteristics of the morning and evening peak. The travel behaviours were discussed including the perceived danger of school children who have to walk in the road (Daws Hill lane) due to the absence of footpaths or their inadequate width.

2c Other infrastructure

Ian Manktelow presented a series of slides that summarised recent research into the other infrastructure requirements associated with development in the Daws Hill area. He referred to a Buchanan's report that sets out the detail of their survey work. [Note the report can be viewed from a link from the Daws Hill page of the District Councils web site – address in footer to these minutes].

Ken Tyson sought more information regarding education contributions. In particular he was interested to know how the residents will be able to see that a particular education contribution secured from the development has been spent on a particular improvement to a local school. He thought it would be useful to have an Education Officer at the first workshop. He also thought that health matters needed more consideration and that a health representative should be at the workshop.

IM/JC considered that it would be unlikely that we would be able to get these people to the workshop. GG thought we should invite them to address a future Reference Group meeting. MR said that the grammar schools were unlikely to benefit from contributions as they are not funded by the County Council.

ACTION

- Invite a County Education Department representative to a future Reference Group meeting
- Invite a Health Service representative to a future Reference Group meeting

2d First Workshop

Jeff Bishop outlined the arrangements for the first workshop.

There was then a 15 minute break.

3 Matters arising from the minutes of 9 January

Chris Watson referred to Tony Fooks comments that appear under item 2 of the agenda. In particular the phrase "integrate planning for the two sites" referring to Daws hill and Abbey Barn South. CW felt that the minutes gave the wrong impression of the HWS position and wanted to set out this position. He read from a prepared statement.

GG said that at the last meeting Tony Fook's point was that it was prudent to plan for both sites. In the statement read out by Chris Watson there was reference to the ABS site not being required until after 2026. IM said that this was not the Council's position as the site may need to be released sooner than that. CW believed a Council leaflet had stated that the site would not be needed until after 2026 and the public may feel misled. [IM checked this point outside the

meeting and the leaflet and position statement correctly reflect the Councils position and the public should not feel misled – see statement attached to these minutes].

4 Neighbourhood Forum

Arthur Winning said they have draft terms of reference for this and will be discussing the idea as a group in the next week. They will come back to the next meeting with more to report.

Barbara Wallis said that Little Marlow Parish Council were considering a neighbourhood plan for their parish.

5 Pre-committee presentation on 29 February

Richard White described the arrangements for the pre Planning Committee presentation.

Arthur Winning said that the residents need to decide who will attend.

Barbara Wallis asked who would be invited. RW responded that the two nearby parish councils and the Chiltern Society would be invited.

6 Quality Counts Tour

Chris Steuart outlined this years Quality Counts tour which will take place on 29 March. It would be a useful tour for members of the Reference Group to attend as we will visit some major housing sites including some constructed by Taylor Wimpey. Places can be booked on a first come first served basis by contacting carol_courcha@wycombe.gov.uk.

7 Points raised by the Daws Hill residents.

Ken Tyson introduced this item. He said he was impressed by Marcus Rogers and Sarah Matthews presentations this evening. He referred also to Tony Fooks comment at the last meeting that he had done some analysis assessing committed and other developments that would place thousands of additional cars on the local road network and wondered if the Councils had seen the details of Tony's analysis. The Councils confirmed they had not seen the details.

In relation to the TPO trees Ken Tyson's point was to know which trees on the site were at risk. RW updated the meeting stating that TW had carried out a tree condition survey that was currently being discussed with WDC tree officers.

In relation to infrastructure Ken Tyson noted the discussion that had already taken place at this meeting. Jeff Bishop said that even if the infrastructure services are not present at the workshops we can still consider the implications of the development for infrastructure.

In relation to the point about a retirement village Ken Tyson thought that the officer's comment in the appendix was too dismissive of the idea. He reported that at a recent meeting with TW a TW representative had said that they would be prepared to provide elderly person accommodation instead of providing affordable housing. CS commented that failing to provide the correct level of affordable housing would be contrary to planning policy. Councillor Snaith said that in his view the top of the hill was not a good location for elderly housing which he considered would be better provided within the valley.

In relation to a point about WDC needing to update the Position Statement Jerry Unsworth commented that the Position Statement will effectively be taken forward by the development brief.

8 Key dates

Reference Group meeting 6 - Monday 26 March 6.00pm WDC offices

Reference Group meeting 7 – Wednesday 9 May 6.00pm WDC offices

Web site page: <http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/planning-and-buildings/planning-news/daws-hill-area.aspx>

Workshop 1 Tuesday 28 February The Hub, Easton Street
Workshop 2 Tuesday 17 April

Pre Planning Committee presentation – Wednesday 29 February 6.00pm WDC offices

9 Agenda items

Neighbourhood Forum update (Daws Hill residents)

Presentations by County Education and a health authority representative?



INFORMATION SHEET

Planning and Sustainability

Issue No: 3/2012

Date Issued: 16th March 2012

Position Statement re Greenfield Reserve Sites and Abbey Barn South

Officer contact: Ian Manktelow, HW 421579, ian_manktelow@wycombe.gov.uk

Introduction

At the Daws Hill Reference Group on 20th February an issue was raised about the Council's specific position in relation to the release of greenfield reserve sites and the Abbey Barn South site in particular, in the light of statements made in Council publications in 2011. This note seeks to clarify this issue.

Summary of Position

- The reserve sites (including Abbey Barn South) are reserved in the Wycombe Core Strategy (adopted 2008) to meet future development need.
- No timescales are given in the Core Strategy for their release, although the strategy anticipates some or all of them being needed by 2026.
- The Council's Position Statement on Housing and Land for Business (July 2011) indicated that there is not a case for release of these reserve sites, in terms of meeting housing requirements, at present but that their future should be reviewed in the forthcoming review of the Core Strategy 2013-16 when overall housing targets will also be reviewed.
- Since the adoption of the Core Strategy Abbey Barn South has been considered as a potential special case for early release in advance of when the housing requirements suggest, given the prospect of development on the adjoining RAF Daws Hill site, but only if significant additional benefits from its early release can be demonstrated.
- The Position Statement concluded that, based on the available evidence at that time, the case had not been made for its early release and unless very significant benefits can be demonstrated the Council's preferred approach is to see the development of just the RAF Daws Hill at this point in time.

Detail

Background including adopted Statutory Policy Position

The following sites are included in Policy CS8 of the Wycombe Core Strategy (adopted May 2008) as reserve sites:

- Abbey Barn North
- Abbey Barn South
- Gomm Valley
- Slate Meadow (Bourne End)

Web site page: <http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/planning-and-buildings/planning-news/daws-hill-area.aspx>

- Terriers Farm¹

These are sites reserved for future development when needed. No timescales are set out in the policy for when the sites should be developed and no priority order for their release is set out. The policy indicates that the Site Allocations document will determine the extent of any development needs that may be required to be met at these locations. However the supporting text to the policy indicates that development needs up to 2026 are likely to generate a requirement to draw on some or all of these areas by that date.

The Delivery and Site Allocations (DSA) document was to be the document that determined the need (or otherwise) for the release of these reserve sites and indicate the broad timing of any release. Earlier consultations on the DSA in 2009 and 2010 considered this issue and also explored whether there was a case for an earlier release of Abbey Barn South as part of a more comprehensive development with RAF Daws Hill. However the Council is not now addressing the issue of the release of reserve sites in the DSA document, the scope of which has been reduced. Instead the issue will be considered in a review of the Core Strategy, work on which is due to commence at the end of this year and finalised in 2016. This Core Strategy review will also set a new overall housing target for the District.

As a result a Position Statement was issued in July 2011 and this was followed up in September 2011 with information in a newsletter/broadsheet issued as part of a consultation on the “reduced” DSA document.

Newsletter (Sept 2011)

Page 3 of this newsletter/broadsheet included 3 articles about the following housing issues:

1. Setting our own housing target in the future
2. Protecting Green Belt/AONB including comment on the greenfield reserve sites.
3. RAF Daws Hill and Abbey Barn South.

There was then a signpost to the Position Statement on Housing and Land for Business (July 2011) for more details.

The second article indicated we don't need to build on any greenfield land in the foreseeable future and stated that we are not bringing forward development on any of the 5 reserve sites listed above. However it stated that *“we can't say there never will be development on these sites because they are still reserved to meet our future development needs.”*

The article on Daws Hill/Abbey Barn South explained that after looking carefully at whether there is a special case for allowing development on Abbey Barn South we have decided that the case has not been made and that the development of RAF Daws Hill should proceed on its own.

Position Statement on Housing and Land for Business (July 2011)

This sets out the detailed position.

Reserve Sites

Paragraphs 2.14 – 2.15 of the Position Statement set out the position at July 2011 in relation to the reserve greenfield sites. It explains that there is broadly a sufficient supply of previously developed (“brownfield”) sites to meet housing requirements up to 2021 without the need to release any greenfield reserve sites. It states that given the Council's intention to review its housing targets and housing provision through the Core Strategy Review, the Council's position is that there is no case for the early release of the reserve greenfield

¹ Terriers Farm is also allocated in the Local Plan as a housing site but an appeal decision in 2008 indicated that it did not need to be released at that time due to the availability of previously developed sites which should receive priority over greenfield sites.

sites and that the position in relation to the release of these sites should be reviewed through the Core Strategy Review. However it then refers on to the next section of the statement in relation to the Abbey Barn South site.

The Council keeps its overall housing land supply position under review on a regular basis so the Position Statement is setting out the position at a point in time.

Abbey Barn South

The statement makes it clear that the Council has been assessing and consulting on the merits of an early release of the Abbey Barn South site to form a comprehensive development with RAF Daws Hill. This would be in advance of when it is needed to meet housing requirements, and would need to be justified on the basis of there being very significant added value/benefits from releasing the site early.

The Position Statement concluded that from the work undertaken to date there is not the overriding case to release the Abbey Barn South site now. It noted that whilst there were some benefits associated with the comprehensive development of both sites there remain significant concerns about the transportation impacts of the larger development and its ability to demonstrate the wider additional benefits. It stated that *“Unless such very significant benefits can be clearly demonstrated, the Council’s preferred approach is to see the development of just the RAF Daws Hill site at this point in time”* whilst ensuring that RAF Daws Hill is designed and delivered in such a way as to ensure development of Abbey Barn South can be fully integrated with it in the future.

Policy PS8 of the Position Statement sets out a series of principles for the development of the RAF Daws Hill site.

