

RAF Daws Hill, High Wycombe

Development Brief

Stakeholder Event 16 July 2012

Wycombe High School for Girls, Marlow Hill

Full Report

Wycombe District Council

Introduction

This event was held as resident/stakeholder members of the Daws Hill Reference Group had expressed concerns about the transport elements of the strategy and brief and wanted to have a forum to discuss this issue further. In response to this the council arranged this stakeholder consultation event on Monday July 16th at Wycombe High School for Girls (Main Hall) on Marlow Hill in High Wycombe

The event was for residents and stakeholders and focused on the Daws Hill Development Brief and the related Daws Hill sections of the Southern Quadrant Transport Strategy. The developer Taylor Wimpey was not present.

In order to be as inclusive as possible whilst keeping numbers manageable, in addition to the existing resident/stakeholder members of the Reference Group the invite was extended to:

- Other elected members in the affected wards (District and County)*
- Representatives from the 3 schools in the area (St Augustine & St Bernard's, John Hampden Grammar and Wycombe High School)*
- Up to 4 further attendees from each of the Residents Associations in the area (DHRA/SCRAL/FFSRA)*

Options for the format of the event itself were presented at the 5th July meeting of the Daws Hill Area Reference Group (see appendix 1). Following feedback at this meeting the format of the event was as follows:

- 6:30 Refreshments and registration (the exhibition material for the development brief was put up in the venue so stakeholders could look at it during this time)*
- 6:50 Welcome and opening statement by Jerry Unsworth with a brief Q&A afterwards.*
- 7:10 Presentation on the Southern Quadrant Strategy by Marcus Rogers with Q&A afterwards*
- 8:00 Break*
- 8:10 Workshop task 1 on the Transport strategy*
- 8:50 Feedback from workshop task 1*
- 9.00 Workshop task 2 on the redevelopment objectives of the Development Brief*
- 9.20 Feedback from task 2*

We would like to thank everyone who came and contributed to the event

All the text in italics, as here, is introduction, explanation and commentary. Everything in plain text is as recorded on the evening.

Question & Answer Sessions

Below are notes taken of the two question and answer sessions included at the start of the event.

Jerry Unsworth Q & A session:

Q. Will the consultation period be extended now that Taylor Wimpey are intending on submitting their application in November?

A. This will not be possible as the timetable to get the document adopted in September cannot accommodate any more time. It is important that the developer has enough time to prepare their application in accordance with the brief. It is key that the Southern Quadrant Transport Strategy is in place as soon as possible to inform other developments currently being considered in the Southern Quadrant area.

Q. The council should take account of the Neighbourhood Forum in its plans.

A: Yes but we believe the best way to guide the development is through the Southern Quadrant Transport Strategy and RAF Daws Hill Development Brief and would encourage everyone to participate fully in the preparation of these documents.

Q. What will get the council to change its mind on some of the issues as it is felt that the strategy and brief do not fully reflect what was said at the previous workshops.

A: The strategy and the brief have taken account of the opinions given at the two events, however it was felt some issues which were not favoured at the workshops like for example the inclusion of business uses should be aired in the wider consultation process.

Q. The councils have not looked at the site strategically enough from Booker Air Park to Loudwater. There is a need to get everyone around the table to do this.

A: Agree that the area needs to be planned in a strategic way which is why the transport strategy has been developed for the southern quadrant area of High Wycombe.

Marcus Rogers Q & A session:

Q: Questioned statement in the strategy that said that only schemes with general support were included. The proposal for a bus route along Daws Lea does not have the support of residents. Daws Lea is on the Defra list of high priority for noise abatement and a recent planning application in the vicinity was refused due to the noise and air pollution it would give rise to from parking cars.

A: It is recognised that this was not an accurate statement and an apology was made about this at the last reference group when it was raised. When the document is reissued post consultation this statement will be corrected.

It is recognised that local residents are opposed to the bus route, but the views of people outside the Daws hill area should also be taken into account. There are examples elsewhere in the county where a proposed bus route was opposed initially by residents who then changed their opinion after the bus route had been implemented.

Q. Was a route considered to the rear of Daws Lea back gardens?

A: It was discounted due to available space, topography, and the need for increased screening.

Q: Were legal costs included in the assessment of the feasibility of the Daws Lea bus Route?

A: As the document is draft and indicative at this stage this was not costed. Alternative options for the route put forward will be considered and costed post consultation.

Q: CS20 states that new development should not make the traffic situation worse for existing residents; surely this takes precedence over the NPPF test of severe impact at least until April 2013.

A: A decision on this scheme is likely to be taken in March/ April next year which could be after the year long transitional period for the NPPF. After this point local polices can only be a consideration where they are in conformity with the NPPF.

Q: Where would the bus route go after it has gone to the sports centre?

A: It would go to the town centre; then onto the station and then ending at the Bus station although the exact route has not been agreed

Q: How will bus gate be enforced?

A: Through the use of transponders on the buses that would open the barriers

Q: Concerns about the impact upon Fair Ridge residents of the bus route – could the bus junction be aligned further away from Fair Ridge and there is need for a dedicated exit /entrance point for Fair Ridge.

A: This will be looked at in the context of current Sports Centre/ Hub application

Q: What will be the routing of the new Park and Ride Service?

A: It will be routed down Marlow Hill, not serving Cressex Business Park as at present. A new service for Cressex will be considered.

Workshop Task 1 on the Transport Strategy

The attendees were split into 3 groups and asked to consider the following two questions:

1 – Does public transport have important role to play in contributing to the solutions of the SQTs?

2 – If opposed to the proposed public transport solutions, what other solutions should the County Council consider to ensure regular, frequent and reliable public transport services?

Group 1

Overview

The table included 8 participants from the Daws Hill area and Daws Lea. The table were supportive of Public Transport but highlighted serious concerns regarding the use of Daws Lea as a bus route.

- The group were supportive of public transport having a role in the strategy.
- The immediate concern related to the proposed route with clear objection to the use of Daws Lea for the routing of the Number 36 bus due to the potential adverse impacts on amenity of the residents.
- There was also concern that once the bus had turned down Daws Lea, residents to the west and north of the Daws Hill area would not have access to the service
- The focus of the discussion was seeking an alternative solution to the Daws Lea route. The primary option considered was to continue using Daws Hill Lane but turn up Marlow Hill, to the coachway. The group were unanimous that the “psychology” of turning away from the point of destination (town centre) would not put people off using the service as there would only be a small addition to the time.
- It was suggested that the lay-by adjacent to the left turn could be used as a bus lane to give but priority up Marlow Hill, or the left turn could be widened to

accommodate a bus lane. BCC Officers suggested the traffic management system could prioritise the buses to assist with punctuality.

- The current 36 service is not often enough and therefore less people use it, which questions the viability of the service.
- It was suggested that the frequency of the service could reflect the level of patronage during off-peak and peak times i.e. during off-peak times the service could run every 20 minutes rather than say 15 during the peak.
- It was suggested that there could be two services to ensure the users of the existing P&R service do not lose out to a joint P&R and 36 service. There could be two services. The 36 to the coachway and the P&R from Coachway to the town centre via the Cressex Business Park.
- There was concern that whichever service is chosen, consideration should be given to routing via the hospital or a stop to serve the hospital.
- There was concern that the County Council had not tested the viability of the proposed route via Daws Lea and alternative proposals considered during the preparation of the draft SQTS. Viability work should be prepared and made publicly available.
- There was concern that the coachway to serve the new P&R will not have enough spaces. The County Council should consider using an alternative drop-off area on the existing highways depots.

Group 2

Overview

The table consisted of a number of residents from the Daws Hill Lane area and Fair Ridge. There was a general consensus that public transport had a role to play in contributing to the solutions in the SQTS but there were serious concerns about the use of Daws Lea as a bus route.

- Agree that Public Transport should form part of the transport package.
- Agree that the transport hub must be included on the public transport route but there was a question mark as how best to get there.
- Suggestion to use Daws Hill Lane and the left turn up Marlow Hill as the route to the hub using public transport.
- The group suggested that the bus timetables should be adjusted to account for any periods of delay.
- Serious concern was highlighted as to the impacts of the residents of Fair Ridge from traffic to the transport hub and business units.
- Suggested that the public transport and associated traffic with the sports centre be segregated from the residential traffic of Fair Ridge.
- Serious concern over noise and air pollution on the residents of Fair Ridge from all associated traffic relating to the sports centre and hub development.

Group 3

Overview

The table included four participants, one member of the Wycombe Society who didn't live in the immediate area, two residents of School Close, just off the gyratory at the top of the hill, and a member for the Flackwell Heath/Bourne End area. The overall views round the table were positive and supportive of the Transport Strategy.

- The group viewed the need to maximise the provision and use of public transport as the right approach for this area, indeed the group considered this to be the only reasonable way to deal with the complex mix of potential journeys for current and future residents of this area, and traffic growth.
- On the bus route via Daws Lea, there was some concern about the impacts of the proposal, but the group considered that if the number of bus journeys were minimised, i.e. by running the buses in one direction only, this would be more palatable. The group considered this to be the best option available.
- The group would like further detail to understand the issues associated with running the bus lane behind Daws Lea - but considered that there would be design and environmental constraints.
- There was a concern raised about the width of Daws Lea, hence the discussion about operating the buses in a one way direction only.
- The Wycombe Society representation was keen that the quantity of development on the RAF Daws Hill site was minimised, given that this is an obvious way to minimise traffic volumes. The group discussed whether it was better to minimise

density or to minimise number of houses, or both. The group acknowledged the compromise between size of development and likely funding for transport schemes.

- Pooling of development monies was raised, particularly in the context of M40 J3a.

The question was asked whether many developments could contribute to this longer term objective.

- Access to further viability work for the new Park and Ride and Coachway services was requested. The Wycombe Society representative was keen to understand the risks involved in securing service provision particularly for Coachway.

- The option to widen Daws Hill lane was discussed. Overall, the group came to the conclusion that widening had more disbenefits than benefits, including land acquisition and loss of trees.

- The group agreed that the alternative drop off for schools behind the school site is an essential part of the Strategy. The group were less in favour of the drop off on the RAF Daws Hill site, but could see the benefits of providing for a new primary school on the RAF Daws Hill site.

- The group were unanimously in favour of widening the left turn from Daws Hill Lane to Marlow Hill

- The group were also in favour of opening the right turn to Marlow Hill, particularly for general traffic rather than just bus only.

- An option of running the bus along the old Marlow Hill to bypass the Marlow Hill / Daws Hill Lane junction was introduced, but the group could not see the benefits of this, particularly given gradient issues.

- The option of a roundabout at Daws Hill Lane / Marlow Hill was discussed - the group discussed the design issues associated with the topography of the area.
- All agreed that increasing the frequency of bus services was a supportable objective.
- The Flackwell Heath member highlighted the need to ensure that a wider view is taken and the impacts on the Flackwell Heath area are given more focus.

Development Brief Group Work

This workshop task was curtailed somewhat by the time overrun of the transport part of the event.

The three groups were asked to quickly go through each of the redevelopment objectives contained in the brief and state whether this objective should be kept or not and any changes they would like to make.

Different opinions within the groups were recorded.

If there was time, groups could also suggest new objectives.

Redevelopment objective 1:

To create a heart for the Daws Hill area

Daws Hill does not have a public place which serves as a focal point for the community. This development should grasp the opportunity to provide a local centre for the wider community of Daws Hill.

This objective came from the analysis of the context (page 12) and analysis of the land use (page 16)

It has resulted in the inclusion of a local centre located close to Daws Hill Lane as shown on the concept plan and framework plan (pages 19/ 20/21)

Details of what could be included in the local centre are in section 6.5 (page 31) and sections 7.4 & 7.5 (page 35)

Should this objective be kept?

① Yes

② No

③ Yes

Did everyone in the group agree with this? If not please summarise differences below:

② We feel no need for a heart. We have High Wycombe

③ Should be central to RAF Daws Hill rather than the frontage

③ Atrium as the frontage

③ Should be community centre as public place

Key: ① Group 1 comments ② Group 2 comments ③ Group 3 comments

Redevelopment objective 2:

To reconnect the site with its surroundings and historic past and be a gateway to the Chilterns AONB

The character of Daws Hill is founded on the ancient woodland and the parkland trees that were laid out as the grounds for Daws Hill House. The site is situated at the point where town turns into countryside. This development should open up the former private base to allow connections to be made between the parkland, the woodland; and the countryside.

This objective came from the analysis of the site (page 10); context (page 12) and connections (page 14)

It has resulted in the retention of the existing footpath and siting the open space next to the ride; new/ enhanced footpath links and retention of the existing important trees in the framework plan (page 19 & 20)

Details are included in sections 6.4 (page 29) and section 7.7.4 (page 38)

Should this objective be kept? Yes / No

① Yes

② Yes

③ Yes

Did everyone in the group agree with this? If not please summarise differences below:

③ Concern over the deliverability and potential impacts, objective undermined by Abbey Barn South

Any rewording of the objective?

① Simplify the statement. Reword, easier language

Key: ① Group 1 comments ② Group 2 comments ③ Group 3 comments

Redevelopment objective 3:

To reinforce and protect existing Arcadian character of Daws Hill Lane

The unique character of Daws Hill Lane comes from the informal wooded avenue that runs either side of it. This forms a wooded “front garden” to the houses running along the Lane which are visible underneath the canopy of the woodland. The trees that front Daws Hill Lane that are part of this site should be retained and reinforced to continue and build on this unique character, built development should be located behind this wooded frontage.

This objective came from the analysis of the site (page 10); context (page 12).

It has resulted in the retention of the trees along Daws Hill Lane and the position of development behind these trees in the framework plan (page 19 & 20)

Details are included in sections 6.4 (page 29) and section 6.6 (page 31)

Should this objective be kept? Yes / No

- ① Yes
- ② Yes
- ③ Yes subject to rewording below

Did everyone in the group agree with this? If not please summarise differences below:

- ② + sylvian, arboreal tree lined character of Daws Hill Lane to be preserved
- ③ Absolutely fundamental – number 1; important to remove reference to “lane”

Any rewording of the objective? No comments recorded

Key: ① Group 1 comments ② Group 2 comments ③ Group 3 comments

Redevelopment objective 4:

To provide the catalyst to address congestion and the school drop off issue along Daws Hill Lane

Daws Hill is congested and this development should enable this to be addressed. Providing a better solution to the bus and parents drop off for the two Catholic schools is an essential part of this.

This objective came from the analysis of the connections (page 14); and land use (page 16). It has also been informed by the Southern Quadrant Transport Strategy (pages 3; 4 & 8)

It has resulted in the inclusion of a school drop off area within the site (see framework plan (page 20) and requirement to contribute a school drop off facility off the sports centre access road see section 7.7.1 (page 37)

Details are included in section 7.7 (page 37-38)

Should this objective be kept? Yes / No

① Yes

② Yes

③ Yes

Did everyone in the group agree with this? If not please summarise differences below:

No comments recorded

Any rewording of the objective?

No comments recorded

Key: ① Group 1 comments ② Group 2 comments ③ Group 3 comments

Redevelopment objective 5:

To create a high quality scheme that is sustainable and a great place to live

This site should realise the fantastic opportunity to produce a new place to live of real quality. The opportunity of this unique location with such a rich landscape resource should be fully realised. The design should make the best use of this urban site and be of the highest quality setting a new standard both in terms of quality of living space and sustainable living.

This objective came from the aims of local and national policy (pages 4-9) and the analysis of the site and context (pages 10 & 12);

It has resulted in the inclusion of set of urban design principles detailed in section 6.2 (pages 22-24); principles for parking (pages 24-28) and sustainability measures in section 6.7 (page 32)

Further details regarding the residential element are given in section 7.1 (page 33) and regarding open space in section 7.6 (page 36)

Should this objective be kept? Yes / No

- ❶ -
- ❷ Yes
- ❸ Yes

Did everyone in the group agree with this? If not please summarise differences below:

- ❷ The existing houses should be preserved; we query why they cannot be preserved
- ❸ Should be amended to reflect sustainable dwellings rather than to reflect “economic” definition of sustainable

Any rewording of the objective?

- ❶ say scheme should reflect the existing character of the area – in context. More clarity in the wording.

Key: ❶ Group 1 comments ❷ Group 2 comments ❸ Group 3 comments

Redevelopment objective 6:

To plan and fully integrate with future development

The design and layout of this site should take account of the potential for future development to the east at Abbey Barn South. The boundary between the two sites should be designed to allow a seamless integration to form part of the wider Daws Hill Community.

This objective came from the analysis of the land use (page 16);

It is reflected in the concept layout and framework plan (pages 19&20) and the suggested locations of the school; sports field and main vehicular route.

Further details are included in section 7.3 Education (page 35); section 7.6 Open space (page 36); and section 7.7.5 On site transport measures (page 38)

Should this objective be kept? Yes / No

① Yes but rewording is important

② Yes

③ No as currently worded

Did everyone in the group agree with this? If not please summarise differences below:

① Need to consider wider area in terms of integration, perhaps remove the specific mention of Abbey Barn South

③ Don't agree that Abbey Barn South should be considered

Any rewording of the objective?

① Too prescriptive? – (not preclude)

Key: ① Group 1 comments ② Group 2 comments ③ Group 3 comments

Additional objective from group 2:

Housing density/ build should be restricted by the capacity of the transport infrastructure

No business units on site

Participants:

John Anderson	John Hampden School
Bryan Catchchese	FFSRA
Lesley Clarke	WDC Member
Tony Fooks	High Wycombe Society
David Francis	FFSRA
David Johncock	WDC Member
Liz Johncock	DHRA
Angus Laidlaw	DHRA
Carolyn Leonard	FHRA
Philip Manktelow	John Hampden School
Frank Mirtle	FFSRA
Bob Mitra	SCRAL
John Moore	FFSRA
Simon Peacock	DHRA
John Prout	SCRAL
Philippa Staples	FFSRA
Andrew Taylor	High Wycombe Society
Ken Tyson	SCRAL
Alan van der Pant	DHRA
Arthur Winning	DHRA
Dave McMahon	DHRA
Mike Appleyard	WDC Member

DHRA – Daws Hill Residents Association

FFSRA – Fair Ridge, Foxleigh and Spinney Residents Association

FHRA – Flackwell Heath Residents Association

SCRAL – School Close Road Association Ltd

WDC – Wycombe District Council

Council Representatives:

Christopher Colbourn	Buckinghamshire County Council
Jonathan Crowhurst	Wycombe District Council
Ian Manktelow	Wycombe District Council
Marcus Rogers	Buckinghamshire County Council
Richard Smith	Jacobs/ Transport for Buckinghamshire (BCC)
Jerry Unsworth	Wycombe District Council
Richard White	Wycombe District Council

Event chaired by:

Gill Gowing

Appendix I Options for the format of the stakeholder event as presented at the Daws Hill Area Reference Group 5th July 2012

Attendance: interested people from Daws Hill Reference Group primarily. Developers and landowners would not be invited.

Likely total number: 20 (plus representatives from WDC and BCC)

Date, time and venue: 16th July 7-9:30pm at St Bernards School Dining Hall (to be confirmed)

Purpose of the event: to facilitate responses to the consultation documents, providing a forum for people who are already familiar with the issues to get a deeper understanding of what is proposed and make more detailed comments.

Potential formats for the event: the event could be organised in a number of different ways, and focus on all or part of what the transport strategy and development brief cover. The exact form of the event will be confirmed after feedback has been received from the reference group. Below are a series of potential options to prompt feedback:

I. Managed workshop

Depending upon numbers attending, people would be organised into a number of groups (max 8 per group). These could be either self managing or be facilitated by representatives from WDC and BCC. Each group would go through a number of exercises based around parts of the strategy and brief through the night to generate comment; discussion and ideas. There would be opportunity for the groups to feedback their comments to the whole meeting. Experts from WDC and BCC would be on hand to answer any questions.

Example programme:

6:30 – 7pm (light buffet)

7pm Start & introductions

Task 1 Transport strategy: look at transport challenges and transport solutions outlined in the strategy which affect Daws Hill. Groups to discuss what they agree with and if anything has been missed and what they would like to see changed or added. Any alternatives should provide similar benefits to those being proposed by the strategy.

7:30 Feedback to main group

7:45 Break – Use time to individually comment on Analysis section of the brief using flip chart paper

8:00 **Task 2 Development brief objectives:** Groups to discuss the six redevelopment objectives contained in the brief. Identify which they agree with; or would like to change or any further objectives they would like to add.

8:15 **Task 3 Framework plan:** Groups to discuss framework plan constrained in the brief and amend in light of the refined objectives set out in task 2

8:45 **Task 4 Landuse requirements:** Groups to amend any of the landuse requirements (section 7 of the brief) in light of the refined objectives and amended framework plan set out in task 2 and 3 (groups will be given a short summary sheet of what section 7 of the brief contains to aid the discussion)

9:00 Feedback of tasks 3/4/5 to main group and general questions

9:30 End

2. Question and answer session

This could be arranged like an “Any Questions/ Question Time” event with a panel of experts and a chairperson that would go through a series of questions submitted beforehand or something similar.

Questions and responses and discussion would be recorded to feed into the consultation.

3. Round robin tables: *a series of tables based on specific subjects and key topics that groups would rotate round through the night. At each table the groups could ask questions of experts or go through a task. At the end of the night the people manning each table would feedback main comments and there would be a Q&A session.*

Example programme:

6:30 – 7pm (light buffet)

7pm Start & introductions

First rotation of tables – 4 tables with the subjects for example 1: Transport - School drop off & congestion; 2: Housing density and design; 3: Business uses; 4: Open space and community

7:25 Second rotation of tables

7:45 Third rotation of tables

8:05 Fourth rotation of tables

8:20-8:30 Break

8:30 Feedback from each subject table (5 mins each)

8:50 Q&A session

9:30 End

4. Consultation questions discussion

The meeting would simply go through the consultation questions on the representation form, effectively going through the two documents line by line. Any discussion would be recorded and be added to the consultation responses.

Depending upon numbers this could either be as one group or several groups. To shorten the process some groups could focus on the transport strategy while others could focus on the development brief.