

## Terms of Reference for Reserve Sites Liaison Groups

### 1. Purpose

To work towards a high quality sustainable development through enabling people directly affected by the development, local stakeholders and councillors, officers and landowners/developers to discuss the progress of development on the reserve sites and the opportunities and challenges that emerge, and to hold the Council and the landowners/developers to account.<sup>1</sup>

### 2. Aims and objectives

To actively assist in the preparation of site development briefs<sup>2</sup>, and comment on planning applications on the sites;

- a. **Information:** To provide a forum to share information related to the brief and application(s), to test that information for its effectiveness in the planning process, and, if necessary, to request further explanation and information.
- b. **Scrutiny:** to critically consider the issues and matters before it, in a spirit of ensuring that the project improves, and the overall outcome of the development is better for the scrutiny.
- c. **Local knowledge:** to ensure local knowledge is shared and taken into account, identifying what the issues are, articulating why they need resolution, and putting forward ideas on how they might be resolved.
- d. **Communication:** to use networks that already existing within the community to share the work of the group, and feedback comments, to ensure the group is as inclusive as possible.
- e. **Collaboration:** to work in a collaborative and open manner, focussing discussion on finding appropriate solutions, rather than debating matters for their own sake (see table at end)
- f. **Balance:** in considering the different issues, the group may or may not have 'one view' – if different people on the group have different views, these need to be articulated and recorded, with the group agreeing to disagree. Equally,

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<sup>1</sup> Please note, formal decisions on the briefs will be made by WDC Cabinet, and formal decisions on any planning applications will be made by WDC Planning Committee.

<sup>2</sup> The planning brief will consider all planning issues, including infrastructure. For the sites in High Wycombe, a separate 'Round Table' is being established to allow the infrastructure impacts of the four sites to be assessed collectively. The brief for each site will therefore include the outputs from that infrastructure work. For Slate Meadow, infrastructure will be dealt with directly by the Liaison Group.

where the group is in agreement, this also needs to be recorded. All these views need to be taken into account alongside technical information within the planning framework. Where the group feels it is appropriate, it may wish to make recommendations to the Council or Landowner/developer.

- g. **Learning:** to consider matters from others points of view, and learn from their experience.

### 3. Membership

Each Liaison Group will identify exact membership, and will keep it under review.

Membership will be drawn from:

- ward councillors<sup>3</sup>,
- parish councillors,
- representatives from local community groups,
- local individuals who have an interest,
- other parties with a particular interest in the site (such as the wildlife trust if there are particular wildlife issues, or the local school)

Membership needs to balance

- ensuring it is inclusive and having a functional size of group.
- representation from unparished and parished areas
- other interested parties, ward and parish councils not outweighing the voice of local residents.
- the opportunity for individuals to engage who do not wish, or have no opportunity, to join residents associations, against the advantages residents associations provide in terms of making use of existing community networks.

Continuity from one meeting to the next is important for the effectiveness of the group. The group will therefore identify named individuals, but that individual can send a substitute should they not be able to attend a meeting.

Council officers will not be on the group, but will attend each meeting to advise the group. The Council's specialists, and the County's transport planner, will attend meetings when there are relevant items on the agenda, and the Council will request

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<sup>3</sup> Because Slate Meadow will be dealing with matters of infrastructure, a County Council member also needs to be included on this Group.

attendance from outside agencies (such as the Environment Agency), although their attendance is not guaranteed.

Land owners, developers, their agents and advisors will be invited to attend the meetings by the Liaison Group.

The Chairman of the Infrastructure Round Table will invite each Liaison Group to nominate who they would like to join the Round Table.<sup>4</sup>

#### **4. Chairman**

- The Council will chair the meetings, to ensure that the purpose of the Liaison Group is achieved.
- The Chairman will act in an impartial way, and ensure all different views are heard, as well as maintaining the overall programme for the sites.

#### **5. Meetings.**

- The Chairman will set the agenda of Liaison Group meetings.
- Council officers will suggest to the Chairman appropriate topics for each meeting.
- In setting the agenda the Chairman will seek the views of the group.
- The agenda, and any associated documents and information, will be put on a dedicated page of the Council's website.
- Notes will be prepared by the Council. The Chairman will approve the draft notes, which will be posted on the website as soon as possible following a meeting. The notes of a meeting will be approved at the next meeting.
- Liaison Group meetings are open to the public, should observers wish to be present
- The meetings for the Liaison Groups for sites in High Wycombe will be held at the Council offices unless the Liaison Group makes arrangements for a more local room booking, kit etc.

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<sup>4</sup> Although Slate Meadow will be dealing with infrastructure, the Group is nonetheless invited to have representatives on the Round Table because the Round Table will be considering the outputs of a strategic transport model that includes Bourne End.

## 6. Programme

- Meetings will be arranged in relation to the programme, rather than at regular intervals. The meeting points will be subject to change, but at the present time are:
  - Inaugural meeting (Jan/Feb 2015)
  - Issues Feedback (Feb/March 2015)
  - Draft Brief/pre-application (June/July 2015)
  - Application (assuming outline) first meeting (Sept/Oct)
  - Application second meeting (Nov/Dec)
  - Reserved matters – timetable not yet identified
  - S.106 – timetable not yet identified

<b>Constructive Dialogue</b>	<b>Decide Announce Defend</b>
We, us	Them, you
Conversations	Presentations
Discussion	Position, campaign
Look for common ground	Look for differences
Share data	Share convenient data
Share problems	Avoid problems (unless there is a solution that works for you)
Work on solutions together	Work on solutions independently
Understand	Know, fight, win, announce
Recognise many views	“he knew he was right”
Work for the ‘greater good’	Score points
Owning up to mistakes	Covering up mistakes

**ends**