

Contact Report

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

Meeting Date: 12 October 2017.

Meeting with: Benson Parish Council.

Location: The Parish Hall, Sunnyside, Benson, OX10 6LZ.

Attendees: Gareth Adam (HCA), Chris Carter (AECOM), Ben Lowndes (Newgate), Cllr Phillip Murray (Benson Parish Council) and Dianne Brooks (parish clerk).

Apologies: Dave Rushton (Benson NDP group).

1. Summary

- A meeting was held between the HCA's Chalgrove team and representatives of Benson Parish Council on 12 October.
- The meeting followed a session on 3 July and was intended to update members on progress, discuss the HCA's commitment to supporting an Edge Road around Benson, answer questions and agree next steps.
- This note summarises the key points of the discussions, with follow up actions listed under item 5.

2. HCA update

This section summarises the key points of the discussion and the HCA's response to them.

Gareth Adam set out the following points as part of the HCA update:

- The HCA has been meeting parish and district councillors, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and the education / highways authority as part of its engagement on the Chalgrove Airfield project.
- South Oxfordshire District Council's Cabinet resolved on 21 September to progress with its local plan and the Full Council endorsed this decision on 28 September. The six-week consultation on this started on 11 October.
- The HCA has also started formal pre-application discussions with District/County. An Environmental Statement Scoping Report has been submitted to South Oxfordshire District Council.
- We are in discussions with Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group over possible financial contributions based on occupancy rates and anticipate that this could require the construction of a new surgery. The strategy must also take account of the existing facility, The Brook Surgery. The CCG is considering this as part of its strategy for meeting the increasing demand for healthcare provision from a developed Chalgrove Airfield site.
- **Education:** Based on the HCA submitting an application for 3,000 homes, and discussions with the local authority, our proposals include a secondary school and two primary schools on the

Chalgrove development. This is being consulted on as part of South Oxfordshire's Local Plan. We are in very close discussions with the county and the local school about this point. Any decision on future education provision is a matter for the local authority. HCA's role is to facilitate any future provision as part of the Chalgrove development

Infrastructure update

- The HCA continues to work towards a planning application for development of around 3,000 homes at Chalgrove Airfield.
- As part of this, the HCA set out in a letter to South Oxfordshire District Council on 31 August its position on the infrastructure improvements required to support development at Chalgrove Airfield.¹
- The HCA is committed to support the delivery of the Edge Road at Benson.
- It is understood that the Benson Neighbourhood Plan group has secured agreements for 100% of land and 85% of funding for an edge road around the village. This situation is evolving.
- Any HCA funding for the edge road is predicated on development at Chalgrove Airfield coming forward.
- As the HCA move towards developing an agreed infrastructure package with Oxfordshire County Council and the District, it will need confirmation of the funding and land ownership positions to inform this approach.
- An important internal meeting on offsite infrastructure provision around Chalgrove is scheduled to be held on 20 October.

Traffic update (from Chris Carter)

- Chris explained that discussions with the county are ongoing. The HCA believes the Chalgrove site is sustainable in terms of traffic that is projected to stay on the site.
- Oxfordshire County Council has proposed that the HCA uses traffic rates used in the Wates development east of Chalgrove.
- It is expected that this will provide updated information on estimated traffic flows in the coming weeks.
- The HCA will need to be confident about the deliverability of the edge road at Benson. Chris explained that the Edge Road is in the district's Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Engagement activity next steps

¹ HCA letter to South Oxfordshire District Council on 31 August https://estatecreate-storage.s3.amazonaws.com/site_14500/control_995365/sfgakx3scv?response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%2217%2008%2031%20Ltr%20Peter%20Canavan%20Chalgrove%20Infrastructure%20letter%20Final.pdf%22&response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIBTGJZEGNHOU3BEA&Expires=1507720907&Signature=XVzdDZlGPEpA%2FF6L%2BnX2GDJZymo%3D

The HCA explained that it is looking to carry out the following activity in the coming months:

- Public exhibition in January.
- Further contact with stakeholders.
- A planning application will follow this activity.

3. Benson update

PM explained that the parish is within days of finalising the production of its Neighbourhood Plan. South Oxfordshire District Council's Habitats Regulations Assessment will need to be complete before the plan is submitted.

It is understood that this is expected to be completed in November.

Developer contact

PM explained that the parish has been engaging three developers on development sites that are needed to unlock the delivery of the edge road scheme.

- Owners of sites BEN 1-4 are supportive of the edge road plans.
- BEN 1 developer is CALA, who are producing a masterplan that includes safeguarding for the whole route. The majority of the route would be built by the developer. One section at the western end is currently unfunded. The land for this western section will be safeguarded and sold to Oxfordshire County Council for a nominal sum. Consideration is being given to a S106 agreement for the road.
- Discussions are ongoing regarding the funding of the western section. There remains a possibility that the developer would build the road, with the fall back being that the HCA would provide the shortfall. HCA funding would be predicated on planning permission being granted for Chalgrove Airfield.
- Thomas Homes (BEN 2) has a letter of intent, which sets out a commitment to fund and build a section of the edge road across its site.
- BEN 3-4 are expected to put in full planning applications delivering their sections.
- There is an agreement in place between BENs2-4 on the funding of necessary junctions.
- Although there are no legal agreements currently in place which secure the delivery of an edge road, each application to develop sites at BEN 1-4 will include a S106 agreement.
- Road spec assumptions is said to range from 6m – to 6.5m.

ACTION: Dave Rushton to confirm anticipated spec for the road with Oxfordshire County Council.

4. Questions

Some questions and points were made during the meeting. This section summarises those key points and records any actions agreed.

Q: PM asked at what point would the infrastructure be delivered at Benson.

A: Chris Carter confirmed that the timing of the infrastructure would depend on the number of houses coming forward at Chalgrove and the likely traffic that this would generate. Any infrastructure would be planned to accommodate this. It was not possible to provide a confirmed answer on the number of homes at this time.

Q: PM said that 2020 would be the preferred date and asked if the edge road would be delivered by 2027.

A: This is noted and timescales will be confirmed as the plans for the scheme evolve.

Q: Question on the Environmental Impact Assessment, pages 29-30.² PM asked why Benson is not referenced in this section of the document.

ACTION: Chris to review and confirm. CC confirmed that traffic from Benson is include in the cumulative assessment scenario for the Transport Assessment, which is a more robust document in terms of traffic impact. The Benson sites will be included in traffic, noise and AQ assessments.

5. Actions - summary

- Dave Rushton to confirm anticipated spec for the road with Oxfordshire County Council.
- Chris Carter to respond to question relating to the Environmental Impact Assessment.

² https://estatecreate-storage.s3.amazonaws.com/site_14500/control_995365/v5v1v065kv?response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22Chalgrove%20Scoping%20Report_VFinal%20%281%29.pdf%22&response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIBTGJZEGNHOU3BEA&Expires=1508239717&Signature=qoSH40YBb3qW2j1%2BJMU7BcqwbC8%3D