

Watlington and Surrounds Follow-up Workshop

Notes from Workshop – 13 December 2016

Summary

The Watlington Workshop took place on 13 December 2016 and included members of the Parish Council, Neighbourhood Plan team, immediate surrounding parishes and HCA Technical team to discuss infrastructure options for Watlington to alleviate the current issues and the potential impacts of development on Chalgrove Airfield.

Attendees were:

- Gill Bindoff – Watlington Neighbourhood Plan Forum
- Tony Powell - Watlington Neighbourhood Plan Forum
- Peter Richardson – Watlington Neighbourhood Plan Forum
- Terry Jackson - Watlington Parish NP Steering Committee
- Ian Hill - Chair Watlington Parish Council and NP Steering Committee
- Lucy Brittain – Pyrton Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan team
- Genevieve Young – Pyrton Parish Council
- John Curtis – Chair, Pyrton Parish Council
- Roger Beattie – Shirburn Parish Meeting
- Ann Voss – Cuxham Parish Meeting
- Graham Wells – Britwell Salome Parish Meeting
- Chris Bidgood – Britwell Salome Parish Meeting
- Paul Murrain – Paul Murrain Ltd
- David Taylor – The Urban Engineering Studio
- Clémence Morlet - The Urban Engineering Studio
- Charlotte Taylor – GVA
- Chris Carter – AECOM

Morning Session

1. Paul Murrain led the session with introductions around the group.
2. Gill Bindoff provided an update on the Watlington Neighbourhood Plan:
3. **Neighbourhood Plan Transport Modelling:** the specification for the transport work has been sent out to four consultants. It is anticipated that this would be instructed in early 2017. The work will be funded by a grant from Locality. The work would cover traffic impact analysis and look at traffic management strategies in the town e.g. chicanes, pedestrian crossings etc.
4. **Neighbourhood Plan Timetable:** The team is awaiting a date for a joint meeting with Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council. Pre-submission consultation is targeted for February 2017.
5. **Site selection:** 23 available sites have been assessed against 16 criteria. Tony Powell explained that the Plan would include a minimum housing requirement of 200 homes. The site selection would be based on the following potential development distribution strategies:

- A selection of small sites throughout the town
 - A few larger sites
 - Sites required to deliver the edge street
6. In summary:
- WAT1 – an application is coming forward in January/February for 30-40 homes.
 - WAT9 – 90-100 homes proposed. Same promoter as WAT8. Pyrton Parish would seek for a buffer on WAT9 between any development and Pyrton Manor to the north.
 - WAT10 – Minimum of around 40 homes. Covenant on the land that runs until 2026.
 - WAT11/WAT12 – development proposals coming forward from Archstone and Bloor for 183 homes. The current masterplan includes a safeguarded route for a potential edge road.
7. Sites within Pyrton Parish:
- WAT7 – brownfield land for some housing development. Capacity of around 50 but would want to see only the quantum of the square footage of the existing buildings.
 - WAT8 – capacity of around 280 homes but current application with SODC proposes 100 houses.
8. The provision of an edge street was discussed. If this route comes forward, there is an aspiration for Watlington (and the edge street) to have a 20mph speed limit and for the alternative route to have a 7.5T weight limit.
9. Pyrton Parish provided an update on the emerging Pyrton Neighbourhood Plan. There is a consultant on board to prepare the plan and a pre-submission draft is anticipated to be published pre-Christmas. Pyrton Parish is not required to accommodate new development by the SODC Local Plan. In terms of sites, however, the draft plan currently includes 3 sites for 6 houses as infill. With regard to the Watlington sites:
- Site WAT8 is to be shown as a green buffer between Watlington and Pyrton;
 - Site WAT7 is to be shown as available for brownfield redevelopment but only up to the quantum of the existing square footage.
10. CT confirmed that the HCA team has been in contact with Archstone/Bloor (WAT11/WAT12) and Knight Frank (WAT10). A meeting with Providence Land (WAT8/WAT9) will take place on 19 December.
11. There was discussion around the principle of an edge street and how this relates to WAT8, which falls within Pyrton Parish. Two separate issues emerged:
- The provision of an edge street that goes through Pyrton Parish
 - The provision of housing within Pyrton Parish
12. It was accepted by Pyrton Parish that an edge street with no housing on WAT8 might be more acceptable than with housing.

13. There was consideration about the interaction between the Watlington and the Pyrton Neighbourhood Plans and their timescales for examination. It is likely that SODC would want to send both plans to examination in parallel to ensure that they contain consistent policies.
14. The alignment of an edge street and whether this could run wholly within Watlington parish land was discussed. This would not be a viable option because it would take land from the playing fields, the allotments and the grounds of Icknield Community College and would still need some land within Pyrton parish. Ian Hill noted that the playing field is not owned by Watlington Parish Council but is held on a long lease from Beechwood Estates. The Company has indicated that it is not interested in discussing developments on their land within the context of the Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan.
15. David Taylor draw the discussion together to focus on the programme:
 - January – Enquiry by Design event (19-23 January)
 - February – Key month including: strategic review with OCC and SODC; testing options within the SATURN (strategic traffic) model; emerging Watlington pre-submission plan.
 - March – second strategic corridors workshop(s)
16. David Taylor talked through the emerging strategy for the wider infrastructure work that has been developing through discussions with a number of parishes in and around Chalgrove. This includes:
 - Regional traffic management
 - Improved public transport
 - Bypasses
 - Edge streets
 - Safety and civility for roads through villages
 - ‘Quiet lanes’
17. Ann Voss raised concerns about what interventions might be proposed at Cuxham due to the potential transport impacts of a development at Chalgrove Airfield. The HCA team is visiting Cuxham separately to discuss on the 5th January.

Afternoon Session

18. The afternoon session focused on discussing the edge road around Watlington in terms of its alignment and interaction between the Parishes of Watlington and Pyrton.
19. The previous edge road concept designs by the HCA team were discussed. The first design with fewer houses was preferred, however, there was consensus from Pyrton Parish that as little housing development as possible should be allowed within WAT8 due to the impacts on landscape, heritage (Pyrton Manor) and encroachment between the parishes. The principle of an edge road was, however, broadly accepted.
20. The rest of the session focused around two scenarios for an edge road development: the Neighbourhood Plan view and the Developer view.

21. There was consideration of a road alignment that could accommodate greater development within WAT9 to balance less development within WAT8 as this is the same landowner and there may be a way to balance the financial benefits/costs. There was broad consensus that the route should be more 'urban' in character through WAT11/WAT12, WAT10 and WAT9, turning to a rural route through WAT8 and WAT7.
22. This concluded that as a Neighbourhood Plan team, Watlington Parish has three potential routes for delivery of housing:
 - Around 400 homes with some additional funding from other sources
 - Developer-led delivery of the edge road, requiring around 700 homes
 - 200 homes with no edge road

Next Steps

- The HCA team agreed to take the principles for the alignment and character of an edge road and prepare a drawing that the Neighbourhood Plan team could review and amend in line with policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.