

## **Thurmaston Liaison Group**

**3 October 2013 - 6pm**

### **Second meeting**

#### **Attendees**

- Cllr Kate Knaggs – Leicestershire County Council
- Mrs Lynne Stewart – Barkby Parish Council (LS)
- Mr Steve McDonald – Roundhill Academy
- Cllr Paul Henry - Syston Parish Council
- Cllr Sue Buckenham – Queninborough Parish Council
- Mr Owen Bentley – BABTAG
- Mr Darren Gartside
- Jon Kenny – CEG
- Rob Gill – CEG
- Kevin Tilford – Flood risk and drainage consultant, Weetwood Services Ltd
- Richard Wain – Hawksmoor
- Nick Baker- Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners
- Victoria Walker – Beattie Group

#### **Other invitees (including apologies received)**

- Rt Hon Keith Vaz, MP
- Rt Hon Stephen Dorrell, MP
- Cllr Seaton
- Cllr Lowe
- Cllr Harley
- Cllr Grimley
- Cllr Barkley
- Cllr Vardy
- Cllr Pacey
- Cllr Hampton
- Cllr Singh Sandhu
- Cllr Potter
- Cllr Patel
- Cllr Willmott
- Cllr Singh Clair
- Cllr Singh Batti
- Sir Peter Soulsby, City Mayor
- Cllr Dave Houseman MBE CC
- Cllr Ralph Raven

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Jon Kenny (JK) welcomed everyone to the liaison group and introduced the project team and attendees.
- 1.2 JK explained that he was aware attendees were disappointed that were not covering transport issues. Unfortunately the highways consultant is involved in a public inquiry and unable to attend. We are aware it is a significant issue and will endeavour to ensure he is at the next meeting.
- 1.3 Mr Owen Bentley (OB) responded to say that he appreciates that people are interested in drainage, but they need more notice. VW apologised and explained that we would seek to ensure that all information about the forthcoming meeting is issued a week in advance. She explained that in the week following the last meeting, she did issue a request for any items for the agenda as well as circulating the minutes. It was agreed that any information about the forthcoming meeting would be issued at least one week in advance in future.

## **2. Matters arising**

- 2.1 VW to undertake amends to the minutes as raised in the meeting.
- 2.2 VW to ensure that those making statements or raising questions are identified in the minutes.
- 2.3 Cllr Knaggs (KK) queried if the 28<sup>th</sup> October is the decision date for Council regarding the Local Plan, when will transport information be submitted? JK responded to explain that Charnwood is considering its own Core Strategy, not a planning application on this scheme. The Draft Local Plan covers the whole of the Local Authority area and the decision is not specific to this development. It is about strategic needs across the Borough up to 2028. Ultimately, it is a long term plan for the Borough and the decision the Council will be taking is whether to submit the Plan to an Independent Inspector for consideration. The Inspector will then scrutinise the draft plan. He will look at all of the evidence, including for Charnwood's housing requirements, and consider if they are planning for enough housing or not. He will consider if the plan is sound.
- 2.4 In terms of whether there is an absence of information on roads JK explained that he feels that Charnwood has sufficient information on the Borough, including their own traffic surveys and the County Council's LITIM model which has been considered very carefully. This will form the basis of the judgement Charnwood will make on the strategy for the Borough being submitted to the Inspector or not.
- 2.5 KK asked if it is a paper and calculator exercise as it seems difficult to make these judgements. JK responded to say that the County's LITIM transport model is a very sophisticated programme which assesses human behaviour and movements. They have spent several million pounds on producing this system. Charnwood and County are happy with this model and it is for them to make a decision if they are happy to submit the Plan to the Inspector.
- 2.6 Sue Buckenham (SB) – Asked whether the Inspector will also look at accumulative impacts by looking at development which has already taken place. SB stated that in Queniborough the village is getting 135 new houses which will add 20per cent to the village envelope. This is a significant amount and will the accumulative effect of this be considered?
- 2.7 NB: The inspector has to look at the legal issues and the key question is 'is it sound.' Therefore looking at whether it has been positively prepared, effective, justified and in-line with national planning policy.

- 2.8 Darren Gartside (DG) stated that it is an extremely difficult commute which is exemplified by the Sainsbury's development taking place. You have talked about the Borough, but we are really on the edge of the Borough and almost in Leicester. Our experience is that it is difficult to get the City, County and Borough working effectively together. How is this being overcome?
- 2.9 JK: The housing requirement being considered for this area is to meet the growth on the edge of Leicester. Leicester is therefore already involved as it is contributing to Charnwood's housing pressures. In terms of the cooperation, one of the key soundness tests the Inspector will look at will be the demonstration of the 'duty to cooperate.' This is a legal requirement.
- 2.10 DG highlighted that City Councillors are not here today. JK explained that they are invited, as are Charnwood local members. The City Councillors did attend the public consultation exhibition. Also today there has been a steering group meeting at officer level and City were involved in this.
- 2.11 RW: At the transport meetings we've held over the last 5 years; City, County and Charnwood have all attended.
- 2.12 JK: If we didn't feel there were any parties not taking this seriously we would be in a vulnerable position due to the costs we're incurring so it is equally as important to CEG to ensure the partnership working is effective.
- 2.13 DG: Transport is a key concern. I think other than this concern the proposal is a good idea.
- 2.14 KK: A secondary school site is incorporated in the masterplan (ref: first meeting minutes 3.9) Is this sustainable considering there is an existing school?
- 2.15 JK: The facilities we need to deliver need to complement rather than compete with the existing facilities. There is no intention on our part to replace what is in existence. In terms of education, it is the County Education authority which makes the decision regarding what is required. They will consider if they need to expand an existing school, what are the needs of that school or if a new school is required.
- 2.16 KK would there then be some commitment to the school if this goes ahead?
- 2.17 Rob Gill (RG): there are financial contributions towards' education from day one.
- 2.18 JK: we are interested in extending the existing schools in the area if there is capacity in the area. We want to build up their facilities before get to the point before a new facility is required. There have also been discussions with the Academy regarding how that integration may occur as well as conversations with the primary schools.
- 2.19 OB: Regarding Q27 in last month's minutes, has there been any further development regarding how you will manage the green land?
- 2.20 JK: There has been some progress but we are some way away from a firm proposal.
- 2.21 OB: Will you come up with a solution for your outline planning permission?
- 2.22 JK: We are keen to understand people's ideas on how they would like to see this evolve. A Trust idea appeals but we need to consider the feedback received from Hamilton regarding its effectiveness. The challenge is that Local Authorities do not want to take on green space management and effectively it is being outsourced. Some of the most poorly managed parks can sometimes be ones run by Councils as well. This is a great opportunity to ensure it is looked after to a very high standard and we will continue to look at the assets and liabilities of the community buildings and other facilities which can generate an income as well as the cost of management of the green and open spaces.

- 2.23 SB: Suggested a future meeting could explore this in more detail. If you were looking at an environmental angle the Wildlife Trust might want to take this on, but that would just be one small aspect.
- 2.24 JK: All environmental and social aspects are being given a lot of consideration. There would be a lot of people living here and the social element is of huge importance. We will consider the environment, biodiversity, energy usage and other elements to ensure they can work together and be economically sustainable.
- 2.25 KK: If this development happens, would it become an 'extension' of Thurmaston? This is a big issue and there has been no clear answer to date.
- 2.26 JK: There is some 'yes' and some 'no' in the answer; one of the issues which arose at an early stage is that there is a desire to see a development which is broken up into individual neighbourhoods so there are multiple villages within the space. What they don't do is correlate neatly with parish boundaries, they run across a number of parish boundaries. Relooking at Parish Boundaries is not something CEG can make a call on. What I would say is that to ensure that some of Hamilton's experiences are not repeated, the community infrastructure and assets should not become fragmented. There were two levels of asset management in Hamilton, each paying different amounts and each receiving a different level of service. We need to ensure this doesn't happen here.
- 2.27 JK: This development is in Charnwood. We have a massive vested interest in making sure the utilities, green space management, street cleaning and police service are all run effectively. We want to ensure a high standard is maintained throughout. If we don't then we will not be able to encourage people to come and live here. I want to deliver continual improvement with every house built.
- 2.28 RW: Boundaries were discussed at steering group today. Charnwood is arranging meetings with the three parish councils to understand what the Parishes' views are.
- 2.29 DG: It's the unitary boundaries that we are concerned with. If they move certain areas into the City it will fundamentally affect where services come from. Queninborough for example could be absorbed into the City.
- 2.30 KK: I don't know if that is on the books, there is talk of a 'donut' shape but I don't think we'd be absorbed into the City.

### **3. Flood Risk and Drainage**

- 3.1 Kevin Tilford (KT) explained the drainage presentation. The planning application will be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment report and an Environment Statement (ES) which presents the findings of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).
- 3.2 The FRA will demonstrate that the site is safe from risk of flooding (for the lifetime of the development) and that it will not increase flood risk elsewhere. The assessment takes into account the effect of climate change using government (DEFRA) guidance.
- 3.3 The Environmental Statement includes a chapter on Flood Risk and Hydrology. As well as flood risk, it presents an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on water quality.

- 3.4 The FRA and WFD assessments are based on best available information from many sources including, desk top research, surveys and consultations with stakeholders including the EA, County, City and Borough Councils.
- 3.5 The FRA report includes a surface water drainage scheme and thereby demonstrates that surface water runoff from the site can be sustainably managed (i.e. based on sustainable drainage principles – Suds) in accordance with local and national policy. Outline calculations are included in the FRA - detailed design is undertaken at a later date (standard practice) and the LPA approval would be required prior to implementation.
- 3.6 Weetwood has undertaken detailed hydraulic modelling of Melton Brook and Barkby Brook indicating that the EA flood map overstates flood risk in the vicinity of the site. The EA has approved the modelling and is in the process of updating the flood map using the model outputs.
- 3.7 LS: You have reviewed the current data, but surely if a development goes here this will change the Zone again?
- 3.8 KT: Surface run off would increase with development as a result of the increase in impermeable area. However, this runoff must be attenuated/stored and not released except at the same rate as existing (Greenfield) flows. Once climate change has been factored in, betterment would be expected via an overall reduction in peak surface runoff rates.
- 3.9 KT: The attenuation measures try to work with the terrain and manage drainage through the site in a distributed way using source, site and regional controls. Retention ponds are one of the solutions which are included (regional control). A number of the storage elements would be expected to be underground (not evident on illustrative masterplan).
- 3.11 DG: Who maintains the channels?
- 3.12 KT: Watercourses are managed by the EA (main river), local authority (ordinary watercourses) and riparian landowners (both). The management of surface water drainage assets is more complex as new legislation (Flood and Water Management Act) is in the process of being commenced. At the present time, drainage schemes can be adopted by the Water Company or local authority or by a management company. At this stage, we don't know the answer, but an agreement would be put in place to tie this up.
- 3.13 DG: How do residents enforce it if there is a problem?
- 3.14 KK: There are actually three different organisations involved at Watermead and it is very challenging when there is a problem.
- 3.15 NB: We are looking for best practice and will learn from this for a number of aspects of the development, including SUDS management.
- 3.16 DG: So you can design a system which requires a minimum amount of maintenance, but what if there is a problem?

- 3.17 JK: Exactly as today, residents would contact their local councillors, the EA or those who are responsible and they have a legal obligation to ensure that it is effectively maintained.
- 3.18 KT: The Flood Water Management Act is trying to clarify ownership/maintenance responsibilities. Suds can look great, can deliver environmental benefits and are effective but require effective management.
- 3.19 The geology is complex, it varies across the site, some areas are very poorly drained and there is a bowl in the middle which goes into Thurmaston Dyke. There are areas of the site which are susceptible to flooding from surface water and ground water.
- 3.20 LS: The high susceptible areas are in the middle of the site.
- 3.21 KT: This doesn't mean that they are not developable but it will influence the construction approach and mitigation measures. Basements and underground car parks for example have to be tanked if in a susceptible area.
- 3.22 KT: I'm conscious there are significant issues downstream of the site as well as the duck pond area. LS handed out photos of the duck pond area flooding last year and explained flooding occurred when the ground (clay) was saturated. The original duck pond was filled in by the Council. The Council also altered the road camber and caused flooding to a property and they have had to spend more to redo this as a result.
- 3.23 KT: The David Wilson proposal seeks to reduce this. LS: But CEG is not proposing any solutions to tackle this?
- 3.33 KT: Explained this is still work in progress. When the initial surface water scheme for this area was developed, two options were considered – infiltration and surface attenuation storage. The latter solution is the same as the David Wilson's proposal.
- 3.34 LS: Re the low lying land to the west of the site: If the land is not seeded early in the season then by autumn this area is completely unworkable as water does not drain from here. KT: It drains into the bowl and sits there at the moment, but Thurmaston Dyke does receive some of this water as confirmed by CCTV monitoring and dye tracking. The proposal for this area would be to store runoff in retention ponds and released to Thurmaston Dyke at restricted rates via gravity outfalls (land reprofiling may be required) or pumping.
- 3.35 At this stage, this is an outline drainage system and we have to show that it is technically possible. The detail of the design, which would outline whether gravity is the best solution or whether pumps are also required, would have to be agreed with the authorities.
- 3.36 LS: The people in the duck pond area are very concerned. These homes are hundreds of years old and have been subjected to flooding most years, often several times each year.
- 3.37 KT: There is an opportunity here to provide betterment and reduce the occurrence of this happening. JK: We appreciate that there is a current issue and flooding is occurring before any development. The authorities are not offering to deliver a solution. Ultimately someone needs to come and remedy this problem and as part of our proposals we will be

incorporating solutions which we believe will result in betterment for those living in the Duck Pond area.

- 3.38 KK: Where has the DWH proposal come from and why?
- 3.39 JK: We've been working with Charnwood for 6 – 7 years on a masterplan with the Council which identifies areas for education, housing, employment etc..
- 3.40 JK: We felt this site was the most appropriate place for job creation. This piece of land is in separate ownership and we assume that the landowner is not happy with this area being proposed for employment. We therefore assume he has brought forward a residential planning application in order to maximise the value of the land.
- 3.41 KK: Does this take your plan back to the drawing board?
- 3.42 JK: No we would still bring forward our proposal but it may mean we need to reconsider where the employment will go. It does make a mockery of what Charnwood has been undertaken in terms of the work into the Draft Plan to identify the most suitable and sustainable locations.
- 3.43 JK: Charnwood is inundated with applications for speculative housing proposals, in many of the Borough's villages, for 100 – 200 homes and these don't bring forward any infrastructure investment. Charnwood needs to progress its plan so it can effectively object to these less sustainable proposals.
- 3.44 JK: Our approach has been to work with the planning authority so that the stakeholders have some involvement into the design and strategy of this scheme rather than receiving a speculative planning application.
- 3.45 DG: Does this affect the proposed road and when would this be delivered?
- 3.46 JK: Our view is that the delivery of the road needs to be phased in line with housing development. The existing bridge would be used for a certain period of time and then when it needs to be upgraded and the new road opens this will be undertaken. The phasing of the development is from south to north.

#### **4. Date of Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in the conference room at Roundhill Academy. The date of the next meeting will be Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2013 at 6pm