

West Eynsham SDA Meeting – 18 January 2019; 9:30am, Woodgreen, New Yatt Road, Witney

Meeting Note

1. Introductions

Present:

Chris Hargraves (WODC)
Judi Blyth (Berkeley Strategic)
Graeme Phillips (JTP)
Julie Spence (JTP)
Patrick Gurner (PSP)
Charlotte OMahony (Barton Willmore)
Aaron Wadhams (Berkeley Strategic)
Jonathan Lambert (Berkeley Strategic)
Odele Parsons (OCC)
Sharon Brentnall (Bluestone Planning)
Gordon Beach (EPC)
Peter Emery (EPC)

On dial-in:

Charles Maxlow-Tomlinson (OCC)

Apologies:

Andrew Yeardeley and Martin Leyland (Vanderbilt)

2. Purpose and scope of the meeting

CH explained that the primary purpose of the meeting was for the District Council and the main developer interests to come together and discuss as appropriate the progress of the West Eynsham SDA including the draft SPD being led by the District Council.

CH welcomed the two representatives from Eynsham Parish Council and explained that JTP had also been invited to explain in more detail the masterplanning work they propose to undertake on behalf of Berkeley Strategic.

3. Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan update

CH explained that the submission draft Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan had recently been received by the District Council and had just started a 6-week period of statutory consultation prior to submission for examination later in the year.

The web link to the submission plan is as follows:

<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/residents/communities/community-planning/neighbourhood-planning/eynsham-neighbourhood-plan/>

The consultation closes on 28 February 2019.

GB explained that the Parish Council are keen for the neighbourhood plan to be taken forward to examination as soon as possible with a view to potential adoption in summer 2019.

4. West Eynsham Development Framework SPD

Issues paper consultation summary report

CH explained that the initial 'issues' paper consultation for the West Eynsham SPD took place from July – September 2018 and had generated around 120 responses from a variety of different individuals and organisations.

Note: the full responses to the consultation are available online at:

<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1906161/west-eynsham-sda-issues-paper-consultation-schedule-of-responses.pdf>

CH explained that a consultation summary report had also now been completed and would be made available alongside the full responses. Note: the web link to the summary report is as follows:

<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1960725/West-Eynsham-SDA-Issues-Paper-Consultation-Summary-Report-January-2019.pdf>

Evidence base update

CH talked through the schedule of evidence base reports circulated previously and explained the current stage and timing of each with the majority due to report in the next couple of months.

PE expressed some concerns regarding the appointment of LUC in respect of several studies in light of what he considered to be some poor quality work undertaken in support of the Local Plan.

CH explained that the previous LUC work referred to was commissioned jointly by the Oxfordshire authorities in support of the Growth Board apportionment of Oxford's unmet need and that their appointment to undertake further work in support of the West Eynsham SPD and Garden Village AAP was based on WODC's own established procurement process.

CH also explained that the intention was to make the various evidence base studies referred to available on a 'rolling basis' as and when they are completed.

OP provided a brief update on the transport evidence that is being undertaken by WOOD on behalf of OCC/WODC in support of the planned growth at Eynsham explaining the current position and anticipated next steps.

In this regard, OP explained that it would be helpful to receive any emerging thoughts/ideas on certain key variables including school location and access points to be able to feed into the transport evidence being prepared.

JB highlighted that those issues are to a large extent dependent on the availability of modelling data and hence it is too early at this stage to provide any definitive options.

PE expressed some confusion about the inter-relationship between the various transport evidence that has been/is being prepared. OP explained that it is essentially a 'layered approach'

proportionate to the level of detail required, thus the work being undertaken by WOOD is intended to inform the strategic planning process but further, more detailed transport evidence would still be required in support of any planning application/s through a Transport Assessment (TA).

Masterplan update

GP introduced himself and the JTP team and explained that they have been appointed by Berkeley Strategic to progress masterplanning on behalf of the whole of the West Eynsham SDA. JTP are a large organisation with around 100 staff and have a strong focus on effective place-making. Their work is primarily housing focused and they are used to dealing with a range of different scales of development including strategic-scale growth.

GP explained that JTP has a large focus on community planning and urged those present to look at their website for examples of work undertaken elsewhere. Note: see <https://www.jtp.co.uk/>

JB explained that as it is Berkeley's intention to build homes at the SDA they want to 'get it right' and have therefore opted for JTP as a firm with a strong reputation for quality.

PG confirmed that Jansons are 'on board' with the appointment of JTP.

JL explained that JTP/Berkeley will be bringing together various pieces of information into an overall constraints type plan for further discussion at a later date. CH emphasised that this would need to be informed by evidence being prepared on behalf of the District Council including ecology, flood risk, landscape and heritage and green infrastructure.

Timetable

CH talked through the SPD/masterplan process diagram which had been circulated previously, explaining that WODC's work over the next few months would take place in parallel with the work of JTP with a view to informing future discussions (including a community workshop) on the development of a draft concept/framework plan for the West Eynsham SDA.

There was some discussion about the community workshop and the possibility/merits of JTP leading this in conjunction with WODC.

PE highlighted the need to consider the phasing of development in the Eynsham area and more widely to ensure that any disruption to local people is kept to a minimum. CH explained that this issue had been mentioned in a number of previous consultation responses.

5. Transport update:

A40 park and ride and bus lane update and HIF

OP provided an update on the proposed A40 improvements including Phase 1 (park and ride and eastbound bus lane) which is to be funded largely through the Local Growth Fund with further design work currently ongoing and a planning application due to be submitted in March 2019 together with the outline business case to the Department for Transport.

GB explained that EPC are waiting to see the outline business case and will be requesting a meeting with the Transport Secretary in due course.

PE queried why work on the park and ride application appeared to be progressing independently and in advance of the detailed consideration of the access strategy for the garden village and SDA.

OP noted that this was to ensure the programme and secure funding and confirmed that the park and ride design would not prejudice the consideration of an arm into the SDA.

PG asked for clarification as to when OCC would 'freeze' its design.

Action: OP agreed to try and obtain further information on this point from Raymond Cheung.

OP also provided an update on the HIF project with the business case for the longer-term A40 improvements due to be submitted on 1 March 2019.

6. AOB and date of next meeting

Under any other business, JL asked if EPC had any particular requests in relation to community engagement in response to which PE and GB emphasised the importance of independent external facilitators.

The date of the next SDA meeting was not fixed but is likely to be held in March 2019 depending on progress with evidence base studies etc. CH to circulate potential dates closer to the time.