

WEST OF WATERLOOVILLE FORUM**3 August 2009**Attendance:Councillors:Winchester City Council

Hollingbery (Chairman) (P)

Chamberlain (P)
Coates
Collin (P)Cooper (P)
StallardDeputy Members

Councillor Clear (Standing Deputy for Councillor Coates)

Havant Borough CouncilFarrow
Hunt (P)Guest (P)
Smallcorn (P)Hampshire County Council

Allgood (P)

McIntosh (P)

Officers in Attendance

Mr S Tilbury: Corporate Director (Operations), Winchester City Council
 Mr N Green: Major Development Area Project Leader, Winchester City Council
 Mr H Bone: Head of Legal Services, Winchester City Council
 Mrs J Batchelor: Head of Development and Technical Services, Havant Borough Council

1. **CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME**

The meeting was held at The Deverell Hall, Purbrook and the Chairman welcomed approximately 45 members of the public, local residents, representatives of amenity groups and County, District and Parish Councillors.

2. **MINUTES**[\(Report WWF44 Refers\)](#)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 30 September 2008, be approved and adopted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

During the public participation element of the meeting, the following issues were raised.

Mr Bird commented on the developer's hoardings placed by Hambledon Road (opposite the parade of shops) and that he considered these to be an eyesore. Following an initial response from Ms Smith (Planning Officer with Havant Borough Council), the Chairman requested that officers provide Mr Bird with a detailed response to his concerns, with a view towards achieving a compromise.

Mr Blackett (PAWARA: Purbrook and Widley Area Residents' Association) raised concerns regarding the relocation of the new cemetery within the masterplan. He advised that it should not be located near the Rowans Hospice or anywhere where it may impact upon the water table.

Mr Jezeph spoke as a representative of the Rowans Hospice. He explained that the Hospice raised no objection to the new location for the cemetery, so long as there was a sufficient buffer between it and the Hospice. However, the Hospice would object if the new cemetery shared the same access, as it was unacceptable that hearses would pass by the Hospice on route to the cemetery.

In response, Mrs Batchelor updated the Forum on the latest position of the proposed cemetery. She explained that in the current masterplan, it had been agreed that the cemetery would be located on the highest point of the site, off London Road, and away from the Rowans Hospice. However, survey work and archaeological investigations conducted in this area had established there to be a surprisingly high water table, which made the location unsuitable for a cemetery without significant engineering costs. Mrs Batchelor stated that, given the importance of the cemetery to the area, its re-location would be one of the factors to be considered in the new masterplan.

On behalf of Grainger, Mr Beresford explained that he was due to meet with representatives of Rowans Hospice in the near future to discuss this issue further.

Mrs Blackett commented on the need to preserve the area's woodlands and this issue was discussed in further detail under the relevant agenda item below.

Mrs Moss commented on the additional 1,000 dwellings and raised concerns regarding the consequences of affordable housing. In response to these, the Forum noted that affordable housing on the site would be allocated through a joint housing waiting list held between Havant Borough and Winchester City Councils, but that this list did not include the inhabitants of Portsmouth City Council.

4. **PROGRESS REPORT ON THE WEST OF WATERLOOVILLE MAJOR DEVELOPMENT AREA (MDA)**
[\(Report WWF45 refers\)](#)

Mr Tilbury gave the Forum a presentation which set out the latest position regarding the development of the MDA.

In summary, he stated that work had commenced at Taylor Wimpey's element of the MDA (under the marketing name of Bryant Homes) and they had reported positive interest from potential home buyers. As a consequence, they anticipated their building works would continue at the current pace.

However, it had not been possible to replicate this level of progress on the larger part of the MDA, which was to be developed by Grainger.

Although Grainger had been granted outline permission for 1500 dwellings and had completed access works to their part of the MDA, a detailed application had not yet been received by the Local Planning Authority.

This was because the current economic downturn made the development of their current outline permission unviable. In addition, since granting the outline permission, Winchester City Council had proposed (as part of the Core Strategy process) to release the reserve MDA of a further 1,000 dwellings, to meet the requirements of the South East Plan. These additional 1,000 dwellings fell within Grainger part of the MDA.

In response to a Member's question, Mr Tilbury explained that Taylor Wimpey had been able to continue with their development because they had purchased their land decades before Grainger and at a lower price. Therefore, even within the current economic downturn, the Taylor Wimpey scheme remained financially viable.

As a consequence, the wider economic circumstances, together with the certainty of the additional 1,000 dwellings, had led officers of both Councils and the developer to agree that the Grainger masterplan should be re-considered.

Before reaching this conclusion, officers had considered re-phasing the existing masterplan. However, this had been rejected because the delay in the development of the new school and other infrastructure items would have created an unacceptable situation for several years, until the whole development had been completed.

Another option considered was to make the MDA more economically viable by reducing the requirements of the Section 106 Legal Agreement (which set out infrastructure items required by the planning authorities to mitigate the effect of the development). Whilst this had been possible at other MDAs across the country, this was not a viable option for the Grainger site, as there was nothing within the existing Section 106 Agreement that could be removed

without adversely effecting the development to the detriment of both future residents and existing nearby residents.

The final option considered by officers, before recommending the re-consideration of the masterplan, was to seek central Government funding for the MDA. However, following investigation, such funding was only made available to schemes where work had progressed much further than on the Grainger site and on much smaller schemes than the Grainger development.

Mr Tilbury explained that the new masterplan would be based on the principles of the existing masterplan and on the previous work of the Forum. The new masterplan would not produce a MDA of lower quality or lose any of the items in the existing Section 106 Agreement; but it would change to take account of the additional 1,000 dwellings and new survey information that had come to light since the existing masterplan was agreed. Just as the existing masterplan had taken into consideration financial viability, the new masterplan would also; but this would have to take into account the current, less favourable, economic situation.

Mr Tilbury proposed that the process to agree the new masterplan would be the same as that used for the existing masterplan and that Forum would remain central to this process.

Mr Tilbury explained that the Forum would be asked to set out their vision for the MDA. Then the officer Project Board (consisting of officers from Hampshire County, Havant Borough and Winchester City Councils, together with representatives of the developer) would turn the Forum's vision into a draft masterplan, having fed in the responses of consultees, such as the Environment Agency and Natural England. This draft would then be worked on in greater detail by the developer's design team (Savills) to produce a further draft that would be subject to public consultation through the Forum. Subject to any possible amendments arising from this process, Mr Tilbury anticipated that the new masterplan could be considered by both Winchester's and Havant's Planning Committees by winter 2009/10.

During debate, a Member raised concerns regarding the extent of public participation in the new masterplanning process. In agreeing the importance of this, the Forum also agreed that its role should be to ensure that the new masterplan reflected the needs of the public and future residents.

The Forum therefore requested that the principles previously agreed for the existing masterplan be considered at its next meeting, to assist the above process.

During debate, the Forum considered the effect these changes could have on education provision in the area. In response, Mr Lawson (Education Department, Hampshire County Council) explained that this had been assessed by the Local Education Authority who were satisfied that there would be no shortfall in school places, as a consequence of the MDA, in the

short to medium term. He added that children from the MDA would fall within the secondary school catchment area of Crookhorn School.

However, at the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Cheshire (Havant Borough Council) and Mrs Moss explained that this was unrealistic, as local schools were already full to capacity.

The Forum also received a presentation from Ms McGinty of Capita Symonds (part of Grainger's consultancy team), which updated Members on landscape issues as outlined in Appendix B to the Report

In summary, Grainger's survey had discovered:

- Several grasslands of high ecological value
- Five ancient woodlands
- A poor variety of species at the SINCs (caused by overshadowing)
- A number of protected hedgerows
- Nine badger setts in the area, but few that were close to the development site
- Bats at Plant Farm Road, but few close to the development site
- Some, but few, Door-Mice, Slow Worms and Grass Snakes on site
- Evidence of Greater Spotted Newts to the south of the site
- 63 varieties of birds, but no Brent Geese

It was noted that Grainger proposed to continue ecological survey work. During debate, several members of the public that spoke (at the Chairman's invitation) commented that the area had significant numbers of Deer and Slow Worms.

The Forum also noted a Member's comment that Newlands Meadow had only recently been ploughed for the first time in 35 years and that his own study of the area had produced different results to Grainger's.

Grainger had planted 2.4 hectares of new woodland to mitigate the effect of the development and the new masterplan would integrate hedgerows and seek to enhance the east-west biodiversity links. They were also considering minimising footpath diversions to protect the ancient woodlands, but that this required a balance with public access to enjoy the area.

In response to comments that these areas required proactive management as soon as possible, Mr Tilbury explained that this was a continuing subject of discussion between officers and the developer. Although both agreed on the merits of proper management, the developer's preferred option was that it should be done through a management company, whilst the local authorities preferred that the management be transferred to them, who were then likely to transfer this responsibility on to local wildlife trusts.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chairman thanked the public for their contributions to debate and anticipated that the next meeting would be held on a date yet to be set in September 2009.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Report be noted.
2. That the next meeting of the Forum receive a report setting out the principles it had previously agreed to help guide the development of the new Grainger Masterplan.

The meeting commenced at 2.00pm and concluded at 3.10pm.

Chairman