

Statement of Community Engagement

Land east of Warwick Road, Banbury

July 2022

Turley

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Engagement (SCE) has been prepared by Turley on behalf of Vistry Group (the Applicant).
- 1.2 This SCE forms part an outline planning application to deliver up to 170 dwellings (Use Class C3) with associated open space and vehicular access off Warwick Road, Banbury. All matters are reserved except for access into the site.
- 1.3 Further details are provided in the accompanying technical reports and Planning Statement submitted as part of the planning application which this SCE should be read alongside.

Consultation overview

- 1.4 The engagement undertaken has enabled the project team to build an understanding of the local context, along with raising awareness and gathering feedback on the outline proposals.
- 1.5 To ensure all groups had the opportunity to view and comment on the plans a number of engagement methods were used. Engagement activities included pre-application awareness raising with key stakeholders and community representatives; distribution of an information leaflet and hosting a project website.
- 1.6 The pre-application public consultation period took place between 14 and 30 June 2022.
- 1.7 Since launching on 14 June 2022, the consultation website has received a total of 825 page views by 325 unique users.
- 1.8 A total of 90 forms of feedback have been received via email and digital feedback forms via the website, along with feedback received during a meeting with representatives from Hanwell Parish Council.
- 1.9 All of the feedback received as part of the consultation has been considered during the evolution of the plans and is included in this report, along with the Applicant's response to the key feedback themes provided.
- 1.10 In summary, the Applicant considers that the pre-application engagement undertaken with the local community and stakeholders has been timely, meaningful and effective.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1 The Applicant recognises that National Planning Policy places an emphasis on community involvement as an important part of the planning application process. To ensure the approach taken in the pre-application stages of this application is consistent with national and local guidelines; relevant policy was reviewed in full.
- 2.2 The Government's policy on community involvement is set out in a number of statutory and non-statutory documents, including the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004). Cherwell District Council provides guidance on pre-application consultation in their Statement of Community Involvement (2021).

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 2.3 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) ("the Framework") sets out that the planning system should be a collective enterprise with the purpose of helping deliver sustainable development.
- 2.4 Paragraph 39 specifically promotes early pre-application engagement and the front-loading of consultation and explains that applications that can demonstrate effective pre-application engagement should be favoured over those that cannot. The purpose is to better coordinate public and private resources and help identify issues that can be resolved at the pre-application stage. In addition, paragraph 41 states that as a result, the outcomes for the community are improved and the planning system is able to function more effectively and efficiently.
- 2.5 As set out in this Statement, comprehensive community engagement has taken place prior to the submission of the planning application, in full accordance with guidance set out within the Framework.

Cherwell District Council Statement of Community Involvement (2021)

- 2.6 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires Local Planning Authorities to produce policy documents, called Statements of Community Involvement. Cherwell District Council sets out its expectations for pre-application engagement in their Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) 2021 document¹.
- 2.7 The SCI encourages "*developers and promoters for large scale development to undertake their own consultation and engagement process with local people.*"
- 2.8 It is also noted that "*the Applicant should set out: what consultation was undertaken; and how any and all comments received have been addressed in the evolution of their design.*"

¹www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/33/planning-policy/383/statement-of-community-involvement

2.9 The project team have fully reviewed both national and local guidelines on pre-application engagement before creating a bespoke engagement strategy as detailed in Chapter 3.

3. Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement

- 3.1 A number of stakeholders were identified early on in the process as being key in the development of the proposals including:
- Oxfordshire County Councillor for the Banbury Hardwick Division;
 - Cherwell District Council ward members for Cropredy, Sibfords and Wroxton;
 - Cherwell District Council ward members for Banbury Hardwick;
 - Hanwell Parish Council;
 - Banbury Town Council; and
 - Drayton Parish Council.
- 3.2 The proposals were introduced to these stakeholders via email, which was sent on 7 June 2022, along with an invitation to a briefing with the team to discuss the proposals. Project updates were shared with stakeholders throughout the pre-application consultation process.
- 3.3 Hanwell Parish Council accepted the offer of a briefing, which was held with representatives from the parish council on 24 June 2022. A summary of the discussion is outlined by theme below. The feedback received is also included and responded to in Chapter 5.

Site location

- 3.4 It was noted that the site is outside the existing settlement boundary for Banbury and Hanwell.
- 3.5 There was an understanding that there was a need for new homes, but a concern that the proposed site was not the best location for development.
- 3.6 There was a preference for brownfield sites to be developed first, including any in Banbury town centre.

Coalescence

- 3.7 There were concerns that the proposals could lead to coalescence between Banbury and Hanwell.
- 3.8 The previous application to the east of the site was discussed, along with earlier applications to the north of Banbury, with councillors sharing concerns that this would continue and remove the separation between the two settlements.
- 3.9 It was noted that this could set a precedent for future development if it was approved.

Site details

- 3.10 There was an interest in knowing why land to the east of the proposed red line boundary was not included in the scheme, as this had previously been included when Vistry Group promoted the site through the Local Plan process.
- 3.11 It was questioned whether land to the east of the current site could be developed in the future.
- 3.12 It was noted that the site was currently agricultural land. The importance of agricultural land was noted in the context of the government's strategy to achieve food security.

Land ownership

- 3.13 There was an interest in who currently owned the land and what agreement Vistry Group had with the landowners.
- 3.14 Questions about the land agreement were asked regarding how this worked and how long the agreement might last for.

Drainage

- 3.15 There was a concern regarding drainage and whether this would be taken into account to prevent flooding on or off site.

Ecology and biodiversity

- 3.16 It was questioned whether there would be a biodiversity net gain on the site.
- 3.17 The proposed open spaces and landscaping were discussed, including the incorporation of green corridors and hedgehog highways.

Open space

- 3.18 The types of open spaces proposed were discussed.
- 3.19 There was a concern that the existing children's play areas were not used and that there may not be a demand for new play spaces.
- 3.20 The future management of the open spaces was discussed, with questions regarding how this would be paid for and whose responsibility it may be.

Housing need

- 3.21 It was questioned whether there was a local housing need and how this had been calculated.
- 3.22 It was felt that the proposals could be seen to be taking advantage of an unmet five-year housing land supply position.
- 3.23 There was recognition of a need for housing but concerns regarding the development of this site (as noted under 'site location').

Local sentiment

- 3.24 Hanwell Parish Council representatives highlighted that there was no support for the principle of the development from the residents they had heard from.

- 3.25 It was noted that Hanwell Parish Council had held a meeting regarding the proposals which was well attended by residents.
- 3.26 It was highlighted that many existing residents currently use the open spaces and Public Rights of Way on the site.
- 3.27 Outlook was discussed, and it was questioned whether the new development could be visible from Hanwell.

Character

- 3.28 There were concerns that the development could impact on the character of Hanwell and the conservation area.

Planning process

- 3.29 The planning process and timescales for the application were discussed.
- 3.30 It was questioned how the submission of the planning application would fit in with the Local Plan process and whether this had been considered.
- 3.31 It was questioned whether Vistry Group would look to appeal the decision should the application be refused planning permission.

Homes

- 3.32 The types of housing proposed were discussed, including affordable housing provision. It was questioned whether these homes would be truly affordable.
- 3.33 The design of the new homes was questioned, including building heights and Vistry Group house types.

Layout

- 3.34 The design process was discussed, with questions asked in regards to how the plans had taken Hanwell and the setting of the village into account.
- 3.35 Confirmation of the approximate distance between the existing homes in Hanwell and the proposed homes to the north east of the site was requested.

Consultation

- 3.36 The consultation process was discussed, with questions asked regarding the feedback received, how this might be considered and whether there would be a report to outline this.
- 3.37 It was questioned when the pre-application consultation period would end.

Sustainability

- 3.38 There was an interest in how the proposals would incorporate sustainability, including the site location and design of the new homes.
- 3.39 Fabric first homes were discussed, along with Vistry Group's wider approach to sustainability.

- 3.40 The settlement of Banbury was discussed, with questions surrounding what makes Banbury a sustainable settlement.

Facilities and services

- 3.41 There were concerns regarding Banbury town centre and the number of vacant units.
- 3.42 It was noted that there was pressure to keep the local Accident and Emergency Department open.
- 3.43 There were concerns that the closest maternity ward was in Oxford.

Highways and access

- 3.44 It was questioned whether future residents would use the sustainable links provided through, into and from the site.
- 3.45 The point of proposed vehicular access was discussed. It was questioned whether this could come from the existing development to the south of the proposed site, rather than Warwick Road.
- 3.46 It was questioned whether the speed limit along Warwick Road would be reduced up to the point of access to ensure safety.

4. Community Engagement

4.1 Engaging with the community was focused on the distribution of an information leaflet and hosting a project website. Further details on these activities are summarised below.

4.2 The pre-application consultation period was held between 14 and 30 June 2022.

Project website

4.3 A project website was launched at www.banburyconsultation.co.uk on 14 June 2022.

4.4 The website included:

- An introduction to Vistry Group
- Detailed proposals, including an illustrative layout plan
- Feedback facility, and alternative contact methods (Freephone telephone number and email address)

4.5 To date, the website has received a total of 825 page views by 325 unique users.

4.6 Screenshots of the website are included at **Appendix 1**.

Consultation leaflet

4.7 A leaflet was sent to residents on 14 June 2022 to introduce the Applicant, summarise the proposals and invite residents to share their feedback.

4.8 The leaflet also directed individuals to the consultation website or to use alternative contact methods to get in touch with the project team.

4.9 Leaflets were sent to 543 addresses. The distribution area can be seen in **Figure 4.1** overleaf.

4.10 A copy of the leaflet is included at **Appendix 2**.

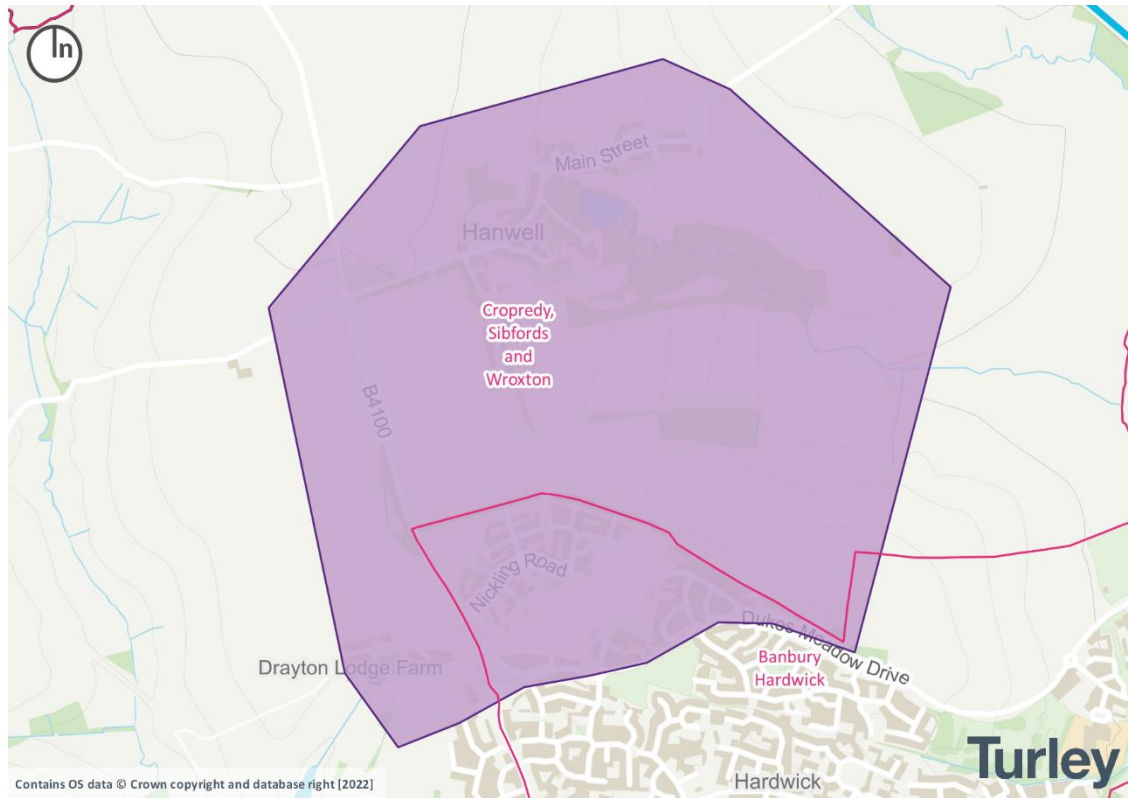


Figure 4.1 – Leaflet distribution area

Local media

- 4.11 The proposals were covered by the local newspaper, the Banbury Guardian² on 27 June. The article included details of the proposals and the pre-application consultation.

Social media

- 4.12 Details of the pre-application consultation process were shared on local social media channels, including the Facebook and Twitter accounts 'Keep Hanwell Village Rural', to encourage feedback.

² [Banbury Guardian Coverage 27 June 2022](#)

5. Consultation Feedback and Applicant Response

- 5.1 Feedback has been received via the project website and via email. All the feedback has been reviewed and analysed by the project team.
- 5.2 To date, 90 forms of feedback have been received with 38 respondents confirming themselves as residents of Hanwell.
- 5.3 A summary of the feedback received has been outlined by theme below along with the Applicant's response to this.

Table 4.1 – Summary of feedback

Theme	Summary of feedback	Applicant's response
Affordable homes	It was questioned whether the proposals included enough affordable homes to meet needs.	The outline plans would deliver up to 170 homes, 30% being affordable in line with policy requirements and the NPPF definition of affordable housing. This would be secured through a Section 106 legal agreement if planning permission were to be granted.
Character	<p>Respondents felt the development could impact on the existing character of Hanwell village.</p> <p>Respondents suggested that a new development could impact on the historic status of the village of Hanwell.</p> <p>It was noted that the proposals did not appear to integrate with existing listed buildings in the surrounding areas.</p>	<p>The proposed landscape-led layout has been designed to complement the setting and character of the local area.</p> <p>A heritage assessment has been undertaken which has guided the masterplanning process, to ensure existing heritage assets are taken into account and no significant harm caused as a result of the proposals.</p> <p>The detail of the new homes, including design and appearance, would be agreed through a subsequent reserved matters planning application subject to outline permission being granted</p>

Coalescence	<p>Respondents were concerned that the development would reduce the separation between Hanwell and Banbury which could set a precedent for future development.</p> <p>The separation distances between existing homes in Hanwell and the proposed development were questioned.</p>	<p>The layout has been sensitively designed to provide significant open spaces and landscaping to create a scheme that sensitively extends the settlement edge of Banbury to meet local housing needs.</p> <p>The landscaping proposals include boundary screening throughout the site featuring new planting, retention and enhancement of existing trees and hedgerows. This would include new native woodland belts to reinforce the northern boundary and provide a visual and physical separation to Hanwell village.</p>
Ecology	<p>Respondents were concerned that the development could impact on the conservation area to the north of the site.</p> <p>It was felt that the proposals could increase the carbon footprint of the area and impact the local area.</p>	<p>The site is currently predominantly arable land and is considered to be of low ecological value. The site is located outside of the Hanwell Conservation Area which is located to the north east of the site boundary.</p> <p>The layout has been designed to enhance the biodiversity of the site and includes opportunities for habitat creation including planting species-rich wildflower grassland, hedgerows and trees. Further details are included in the Ecology Assessment which has been submitted as part of the planning application.</p>
Existing site	<p>Respondents noted a preference for the site to continue to be used for arable farming and growing wheat as it currently is.</p>	<p>There is a need for sustainably located sites such as this to come forward to meet local housing needs across the District. Whilst the brownfield first approach is encouraged in national planning policy, it is unlikely that these sites alone are sufficient to meet housing needs and therefore greenfield sites will be required to come forward.</p>
Highways	<p>Respondents felt that there was not currently adequate public transport provision along the B4100. It was suggested that the</p>	<p>The proposed development would be served by a priority 'give-way' junction (with a right turn lane) off the B4100 Warwick Road. This section of the road is currently subject to a 60mph</p>

	<p>new development would require additional buses to facilitate transport in the local area.</p> <p>It was suggested that Warwick Road can currently be unsafe, and there was a concern that a new point of vehicular access could further impact this.</p> <p>It was questioned whether mitigation measures would be included as part of the proposals to minimise impacts on existing congestion.</p>	<p>speed limit, although proposals would likely see the extension of the 40mph speed limit as per the section alongside the new Hanwell Fields.</p> <p>The proposed development is not expected to generate a significant increase in vehicle movements.</p> <p>Any highways mitigation measures that may be required would depend on the considered impact of the proposed development on the junctions included within the study area and agreed with the Highways Authority. Further details on highways matters are included in the Transport Assessment which has been submitted as part of the application.</p>
Housing need	<p>Respondents felt that there wasn't a local need for new homes in Banbury.</p> <p>Respondents questioned whether the proposals had taken the current Local Plan into account.</p>	<p>The site has been promoted to the Oxfordshire Plan which will set the framework for planning in the county to 2050, as well as promoted to the Local Plan Review 2040 which will replace the current adopted Local Plan. There is a need for sites such as this, in a sustainable and strategic location, to come forward in order to meet identified local housing needs.</p>
Local infrastructure	<p>It was suggested that the infrastructure serving the local area was over capacitated</p> <p>Respondents felt that the number of secondary schools could be insufficient to serve the needs of the new and existing residents.</p> <p>It was felt that the proposals could impact on access to existing facilities such as GPs.</p>	<p>A legal financial contribution would be agreed subject to planning permission, through CIL / Section 106 towards local facilities where required.</p>
Open space	<p>Concerns were raised regarding the maintenance of the open spaces within the new development.</p>	<p>A management plan would be agreed, subject to planning permission, for the ongoing maintenance of the open spaces on the site.</p>

Privacy	Respondents questioned whether the development could impact on the privacy of existing homes.	Planting to the north of the site, including woodland and oak parkland planting, would create a significant landscape buffer between Hanwell and Banbury to filter the views of the new homes.
Principle of development	Respondents were not supportive of the principle of development on the site.	There is a need for sustainably located sites such as this to come forward to meet local housing needs across the District.
Public Rights of Way (PRoW)	Respondents felt that that the development could impact on local walking routes. It was questioned whether walking routes might become inaccessible during the construction process.	The existing PRoW will be retained and incorporated into the proposed layout within the green corridors of the development. During construction it may be necessary to temporarily divert existing PRoW for health and safety reasons to ensure that walkers are segregated from construction working areas.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Applicant has undertaken a comprehensive strategy for pre-application consultation with key stakeholders and the local community.
- 6.2 The consultation activities have been informed by local and national policy guidance relevant to the proposed development.
- 6.3 This engagement has enabled the project team to build an understanding of the local context and raise awareness of the proposals.
- 6.4 The Applicant has engaged with the community through a range of methods and techniques including:
- Contacting local political stakeholders offering briefings on the plans and providing updates on the development of the proposals;
 - Distributing information leaflets about the proposed development to raise awareness and encourage them to provide feedback;
 - Hosting a project website to provide information and an interactive feedback facility; and
 - Holding a meeting with representatives from Hanwell Parish Council.
- 6.5 A total of 325 users visited the consultation website with over 825 page views throughout the consultation period.
- 6.6 All of the feedback received as part of the consultation has been considered during the evolution of the plans and is responded to in this report.
- 6.7 In summary, the Applicant considers that the pre-application engagement undertaken with the local community and stakeholders has been timely, meaningful and effective.

Appendix 1: Website

Welcome

Vistry Group are bringing forward outline plans to deliver a new landscape-led residential development on land east of Warwick Road, Banbury. The development could deliver up to 170 new homes, 30% being affordable, along with significant areas of public open space.

This website provides further details about our **outline proposals** and invites you to share your **feedback** with us as we finalise our plans.

Background

The site is situated in a sustainable location to the north of Banbury, on land to the east of Warwick Road and north of Hanwell Fields. The proposed development area forms part of a wider site which has previously been promoted for residential development.

Banbury has been identified as one of the most sustainable settlements in the District in the Cherwell Local Plan, where the spatial strategy aims to strengthen the town's role as the centre of the local economy. The town is well located to provide access to a number of other settlements with a variety of employment, retail, and leisure opportunities.

We are preparing outline plans that will seek to establish the principle of development on the site. Subject to approval this application would be followed by detailed, or 'reserved matters', planning application(s) to finalise matters such as layout, housing design and landscaping.

You can find out more about the **proposals** on this website and share your feedback by clicking **here**.



Site location plan (click to enlarge)

Who are Vistry Group?

Vistry Group was formed in January 2020 following the successful acquisition of Linden Homes and the Galliford Try Partnerships & Regeneration businesses by Bovis Homes Group PLC.

With developments from Northumberland to Cornwall and Cheshire to Norfolk, Vistry is one of the top five housebuilders in the UK by volume. As one of the country's leading housebuilders, Vistry has an established reputation for quality that runs through their homes' design, build, specification and customer service.

You can find out more at www.vistrygroup.co.uk.



The proposals

The outline proposals would deliver up to 170 new homes to help meet Banbury's local housing needs, as well as providing significant areas of public open space and extensive landscaping. Key features include:

- 170 new homes, 30% being affordable
- Vehicular access from Warwick Road
- Large areas of public open space, including a neighbourhood green and children's play area
- New footpaths connecting to the wider pedestrian network
- A landscape-led layout, devoted to habitat creation to create a biodiversity net gain

The site, its setting and the character of both Banbury and Hanwell have been considered throughout the landscape focused design process. The aim is to create a scheme that sensitively extends the settlement edge of Banbury to meet local housing needs.



Illustrative Masterplan (click to enlarge)

Environment and landscape

The landscape-led layout of the scheme has been carefully designed to respond to the surrounding area. The site is bounded by mature hedgerows and established woodland which would be retained. Boundary screening is proposed across the site through new planting, including new native woodland belts to reinforce the northern boundary and filter views into and from the development.

Extensive areas of public open space would be provided throughout the site particularly towards the northern and eastern areas. Open spaces would include additional planting, featuring a wildflower meadow and oak parkland, a neighbourhood green and potential for a children's play area. The existing Public Right of Way that connects to Gullcote Lane would also be integrated and enhanced within a green corridor of the site.



Landscape Character Plan (click to enlarge)

Biodiversity

The layout has been designed to enhance the biodiversity of the site, by including opportunities for habitat creation such as planting species-rich wildflower grassland, hedgerows, and trees. The proposals will also include improvements to existing hedgerows, and the proposed attenuation basin could offer further biodiversity benefits to deliver a net gain for the site.

The attenuation basin would be located on the site's eastern edge to manage surface water runoff through a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS).

Transport and access

The proposed development will be served by a priority 'give-way' junction (with a right turn lane) off the B4100 Warwick Road. This junction will incorporate a pedestrian footpath connecting to a proposed footway running southwards along Warwick Road, providing onwards connection to the town.

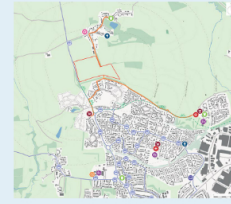
This section of the road is currently subject to a 60mph speed limit, although proposals would likely see the extension of the 40mph speed limit as per the section alongside the new Hanwell Fields.

Car parking provision, including electric vehicle charging, and cycle parking will be provided in line with local authority guidance.

Active travel

The plans have been designed to promote active travel, including footpath and cycle connections through and into the site. Several facilities are located within walking distance of the site, including a primary school, secondary school, pharmacy and convenience store which can be accessed via existing footpaths to the south of the site.

Public transport is readily accessible. Banbury Railway Station is located within a 20 minute cycle of the site and is also accessible by bus. The station provides regular connections to Oxford and regional services to London, Birmingham and Manchester. There is also an existing bus stop on Warwick Road and a proposed new stop that will run through the consented Hanwell Fields development area to the south.



Facilities Plan
(click to enlarge)

GET IN TOUCH



0808 1688 296



contact@banburyconsultation.co.uk

Have your say

As our plans evolve, we would like to invite you to comment on the proposals. Once we have had the opportunity to review your feedback, we will finalise our designs and will submit an outline planning application to Cherwell District Council for its consideration.

Share your views with us

You can share your feedback with us by completing the comments box below or by:

- Emailing us at contact@banburyconsultation.co.uk
- Calling our Freephone number on **0808 1688 296** and a member of the team will call you back

Please share your feedback by **30 June 2022**.

Name *

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
First Name	Last Name

Email * Postcode

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
example@example.com	(Optional)

Do you have any comments?

Type here...

Do you wish to receive project updates?

Yes - Please keep me updated on the project

The information you provide will be used only for the purposes of keeping you informed about this project and for understanding public opinion on the project. It will be stored securely until completion of the project, after which this information will be deleted. Your information will only be shared with third parties for the express purpose of keeping you informed of the proposals, and with Vistry Group and/or the relevant local authority where there is a legal obligation to do so. It will not be forwarded on to any other third parties. You can contact us at any time to request the deletion of your information. Please contact us at contact@banburyconsultation.co.uk

Submit

GET IN TOUCH



0808 1688 296



contact@banburyconsultation.co.uk

Appendix 2: Leaflet

Public consultation on proposed new homes in Banbury

Vistry Group is bringing forward plans to deliver a new landscape-led residential development on land east of Warwick Road, Banbury.

The sustainable development would deliver up to 170 homes, 30% being affordable, along with significant areas of public open space devoted to the creation of new habitats to deliver a biodiversity net gain for the development. The concept plan shows an illustrative layout, with the planning application area outlined in red.

Find out more about the proposals and how you can share your feedback overleaf.



Vistry Group

Who are Vistry Group?

Vistry Group was formed in January 2020 following the successful acquisition of Linden Homes and the Galliford Try Partnerships & Regeneration businesses by Bovis Homes Group PLC. With developments from Northumberland to Cornwall and Cheshire to Norfolk, Vistry is one of the top five housebuilders in the UK by volume. As one of the country's leading housebuilders, Vistry has an established reputation for quality that runs through their homes' design, build, specification and customer service. You can find out more at www.vistrygroup.co.uk.

Find out more and share your feedback

We are inviting the local community and other key stakeholders to comment on our plans. You can find out more about the proposals, and provide us with any further comments by:



Visiting our website
www.banburyconsultation.co.uk



Emailing us at
contact@banburyconsultation.co.uk



Calling our Freephone number on
0808 1688 296 and a member of the team will call you back



We ask that you share your feedback with us by **30th June 2022** and we look forward to hearing your views. Following the consultation and ongoing site assessments, we will finalise our plans and submit an outline planning application to the Cherwell District Council which would establish the principle of the development and, subject to approval, would be followed by detailed or 'reserved matters' planning application(s) to finalise matters such as layout, housing design and so on.