

Statement of Community Involvement

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Version 1

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PREFACE

The applicants (Taylor Wimpey UK, Barratt Homes and Bovis Homes) collectively seek to achieve planning consent efficiently, effectively and with control maintained over the management of the planning and engagement process.

Our approach to community-led planning is driven by the requirement to satisfy the statutory legal requirement for consultation and to build our reputation locally in response to the devolution of powers by Government to individuals and councils. We are committed to listening, responding and delivering community requirements viably and in the most appropriate way, giving communities confidence that we will behave responsibly, genuinely engage and deliver as promise.

Our aim is to be better informed; have a greater understanding and therefore enhance operational efficiency on every site. There are three stages to our proposed approach:

- **Planning and preparation** – gaining a full understanding of the community, including identifying the key decision makers, important local issues etc, in which our site is located to facilitate the most effective engagement strategy and reduce the number of surprises throughout the development lifetime.
- **Implementation** – undertaking a formal programme of engagement alongside the planning process and continue to provide accurate information and responses to the community.
- **Development and legacy** – ongoing communication with the community throughout the sales, construction and adoption process.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Taylor Wimpey UK, Barratt Homes and Bovis Homes are preparing an application for Reserved Matters Approval for phase 1 of the development at Longford Park, Banbury which was approved under outline reference 05/01337/OUT. The development contained within this phase is adjacent to the Oxford Road, Bodicote frontage and will comprise the erection of 215 new dwellings

1.2 The description of the proposed development is as follows:

“Reserved Matters application including details relating to sitting, scale, design, layout and external appearance and landscape relating to phase 1 of the development approved under outline application 05/01337/OUT for the erection of 215 dwellings and associated access and infrastructure.”

1.3 This document sets out details of the community engagement undertaken prior to the submission of the application and forms part of the planning application documents.

2.0 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 2.1 Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recommends that Local Authorities should encourage applicants (who are not already required to do so by law) to engage with the local community before submitting applications.
- 2.2 The Localism Act sets out three additions to the 1990 Planning Act on consultation, namely:
 - 2.3 A duty to consult: There is a new requirement for developers to carry out pre-submission consultation for planning applications where the proposal is of a description in a specified development order.
 - 2.4 A duty to respond: The Act outlines the duty of the person carrying out the consultation to take into account any responses it generates.
 - 2.5 Power to make supplementary provisions: Sets out further provisions which could be made through development orders – these would create a stronger requirement to consult, to respond to comments received and to prepare a statement detailing how consultation has been completed.
- 2.6 The aim of the Government in introducing new consultation powers is set out in “*A Plain English Guide to the Localism Act*” (Nov 2011). On page 16 it states:

“To further strengthen the role of local communities in planning, the Act introduces a new requirement for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning application for certain developments. This gives local people a chance to comment when there is still genuine scope to make changes to proposals”
- 2.7 Cherwell District Council adopted its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in July 2006 and as such forms part of the Local Development Framework for the district.

- 2.8 The council's vision for community involvement in the planning process is that:

“The aim of the Councils SCI is therefore to set out how the Council will maximise the opportunities for community involvement in the planning process. It will make clear for those less informed about the planning process how best to participate in the development of the Council’s LDF and individual planning applications.”

- 2.9 In relation to community involvement in planning application, paragraph 7.8 states:

“Where planning applications are likely to be of significant interest to the wider community the Council will encourage applicants to undertake community consultation exercises themselves before submitting the application.”

- 2.10 This statement and the community engagement undertaken prior to this application follow the guidance set out in Cherwell District Council’s adopted SCI.

3.0 CONSULTATION EVENTS

- 3.1 The principal public consultation event undertaken in relation to the proposals for phase 1 and the community park took place on 17 April 2013 between 1.30 and 7pm at Church House, High Street, Bodicote. This event was a public exhibition.
- 3.2 Approximately 2,300 leaflets were hand-delivered to local residents in Bodicote and also the Bankside area of Banbury and Bodicote Parish Council displayed an advert of their parish notice boards. The leaflet (a copy of which is attached at appendix "1") contained details of the date, time and location of the exhibition, as well as the dedicated email address for the project. (planning,twoxfordshire@taylorwimpey.com).
- 3.3 Members of the consultation team were available to answer questions, comprising representatives from:
- Taylor Wimpey
 - Barratt Homes
 - Bovis Homes
 - IDP (Project Architects)
 - MEC (Project Engineers)
- 3.4 A copy of the exhibition boards which were displayed at the consultation event are appended to this statement (Appendix2). In summary, they covered the following topics:
- Introduction
 - Constraints and Opportunities
 - Approved Masterplan
 - Phase 1a
 - Community Park
 - Drainage Matters
 - Highways Matters
- 3.5 In total around 197 people (recorded by a hand tally counter) attended the public exhibition, the majority of which were local residents.

- 3.6 A feedback form was made available for those viewing the schemes to complete, a copy of which is appended to this statement (Appendix3). This could either be left in a ballot box at the venue or posted back to Taylor Wimpey at a later date. In our experience, if attendees do not respond at, or immediately after the exhibition then responses are often not sent. All attendees were therefore encouraged to respond whilst in attendance.
- 3.7 Since the exhibition the Consortium have created a website which contains all of the above information along with the feedback form at www.longford-park.com
- 3.8 Following the public consultation exercise a meeting was held with Bodicote Parish Council at 7.30pm at the same venue and on the same day. Representatives of the applicants made a short presentation to the Parish Council to outline the current position of the development.
- 3.9 Finally, pre-application meetings have been held with representatives from Cherwell District Council (Jenny Barker, Caroline Roache, Caroline Ford and Clare Mitchell) and Oxfordshire County Council (Michael Deadman). The meetings have taken place on several occasions to discuss the principles of development and the layout given the strategic nature of this site within Banbury.

4.0 SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

- 4.1 The count for the exhibition as previously identifies indicates that 197 people attended the event (103 signed in) with 50 completed feedback forms being received thus far.
- 4.2 Each of the questions and the responses received are considered in turn below but please note that where percentages are provided this is a percentage of the respondents to that particular question.
- 4.3 The questions and their associated responses are set out below:

Q1. What is your interest in the area (please tick one)?

Of the respondents 26 (52%) live in Bodicote, 22 (44%) live in Bankside and 1 live in Banbury and 1 worked in Banbury.

Q2a. The principle of housing has already been accepted in this location. Do you support the principles of the illustrative layout that has been provided?

18 (36%) respondents supported the principle, 17 (34%) respondents did not support the development and 15 (30%) people were unsure.

Q2b. If yes, do you think that the layout creates an attractive development?

19 (38%) respondents thought the layout creates an attractive development, 6 (12%) felt the development was unattractive and 15 (30%) people were unsure.

2c. If no to 2a or 2b, why not?

The comments raised here included:

- Can not support the principle of development as objected to the scheme since day 1
- Plans change between design and implementation
- Scheme will have significant traffic impacts
- Need a range of flats, apartments and bungalows
- Concerns re: the quantum of affordable housing

- Need more tree planting along Bankside
- Open space should be at the Oxford Road end of the site
- Already too many houses in Banbury
- There is inadequate parking
- Too many trees will be lost
- Concerns re: risk of flooding
- The natural beauty of the area will be destroyed
- Need lower density development
- Should be an extension of Banbury and not Bodicote
- Northern block appears to be classified as an area liable to flooding
- Doesn't reflect the character of the village

Q3. What type of housing would you most like to see?

Houses: 19.2% considered that houses were not required but 80.7% considered houses were required.

Flats: 50% of people considered flats were required and the same number felt they were not required.

Bungalows: 18.5% of people considered bungalows were not required, 7.4% were unsure and 74% felt they should be provided.

Mix of the above: 21.7% felt no mix of unit types were required, 4.3% were unsure and 73.9% considered a mix was required.

Q4. What size properties would be most appropriate?

1 bed units: 50% felt these were not required and the same felt these were required

2 bed units: 16.6% didn't want these, 4.1% were unsure and 79.1% felt these were required

3 bed units: 6.6% didn't want these and 93.4% did want these

4 bed units: 9.3% didn't want these and 91.7% did.

5 bed units: 35% didn't want these, 5% were unsure and 60% didn't want these

Q5a. Do you support the appearance of the dwellings as shown on the illustrative elevations?

46% of respondents supported the appearance shown, 22% did not and 32% were unsure

Q5b. If no to 5a, why not?

The comments raised here included:

- Concerned re: loss of view
- No variety to the appearance and doesn't reflect adjoining houses
- Unimaginative
- Need more than 30% affordable
- Scheme will cause traffic bottlenecks
- Layout is too tight
- Not enough parking provided
- Houses should front the Oxford Road
- Scheme itself is not required
- Scheme should be built on slope not the Oxford Road area

Q6a. Do you support the principles being put forward for the Community Park Area?

78.5% of respondents supported the principles, 9.5% did not and 11.9% were unsure

Q6b. Do you have any other comments on the Community Park?

The comments raised here included:

- Need open space for play
- Should use small hedges so views are retained
- Phase 1 should be open space with the development next to Banbury
- Need lots of trees to be planted
- Like the concept of ponds being provided
- Excellent idea
- Will be a great asset for the town
- Need pathway links into Banbury
- Need to ensure its well drained
- Looks very promising
- Will it create extra traffic
- Need sports pitches
- Need facilities for children
- Glad to see ecology still has a place to go
- The Community need to own it long terms

- Will there be adequate lighting
- The area is already green fields
- Need allotments
- Whos responsible for maintaining football pitches
- Consult village on features of the country park

Q7. Do you have any other comments on the development proposals?

The comments raised here included:

- Concerned re: traffic impacts in Banbury and around the overall Masterplan developments site
- School should be located closer to Banbury than Bodicote
- Need to ensure that Canal Lane is protected and not used by the development
- Employment area should not be industrial and should be relocated away from existing residential units
- Bodicote will loose its identity
- Pleased to see adequate provision for surface water drainage
- Can Thames Water ensure adequate water supply and sewage capacity for the development
- Needs to be less than 10 houses per acre
- Development is against the wishes of the residents
- Consultation event was developer propaganda
- Scheme will have a great impact on local infrastructure
- No consultation between developer, Council and local community
- School needs to be built soon
- Need to provide bungalows
- Why is the community park not next to Bodicote
- Bankside roundabout is too close to the flyover
- Ignores previous Judicial Inquiry
- Parking should be provided at the rear of units
- Highways Agency need to reconsider the decision
- Need to have regard to adjoining properties in the area
- No mention of social housing
- No mention of canalside pub
- Access needed over canal to towpath

- Need allotments
- Need a marina
- Need mix of properties including bungalows
- Keep ridge heights down adjacent to existing houses
- Need smaller properties
- Noticeable improvements since outline scheme
- Need to maintain communication with residents
- Need to listen to residents views
- Will destroy the village of Bodicote
- All positive
- Asbestos in soil adjacent to Spinney Drive
- Need to protect ecology
- Need to reinforce buffer / green open space with tree planting
- Needs to reflect character of village

Q8. How useful have you found this exhibition?

53.4% of respondents found the exhibition very useful, 41.8% found it quite useful and 4.6% did not find it useful.

5.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Of the issues raised during the initial consultation process, the most widely held concerns related to the density of the proposed development, the location of residential development in Bodicote rather than closer to Bankside and the impact on the local highway conditions. The majority of the matters raised related to the principle rather than the design but it must be accepted that the principle of development and the overall Masterplan was accepted through the previous outline approval granted by Cherwell District Council.
- 5.2 In terms of density, the scheme makes provision for xxx units at a net density of xxx dwellings per hectare. The density of this phase is fully in accordance with the approved Design Code which allows for a density of up to 42 dph for this area of the overall Masterplan site. The proposed density is therefore considered to be appropriate for its location.
- 5.3 In terms of the principle of development this has previously been accepted by the Council. Through that application it was demonstrated that the site is located within a sustainable location and is within easy walking distance of all the key facilities and services within Bodicote and those on the western side of Banbury. Furthermore, the site is conveniently located in terms of public transport with a well serviced bus stop a short distance from the site. It has therefore been shown that the site has excellent sustainability credentials and therefore falls firmly within the definition of sustainable development.
- 5.4 Finally on the key issues raised the overall development will undertake various highway improvement works within the vicinity of the overall Masterplan site. These works along with the spine road that will serve the overall development will help in ensuring that the development will not have a detrimental impact on the local highway conditions.

- 5.5 In the feedback questionnaires available at the public exhibition and online at the dedicated consultation webpage, residents were asked for their comments on the initial proposals for the community park. The details provided were met with good support with further work to be undertaken to resolve the quantum of parking, footpath links and the detailed design of this area.
- 5.6 The applicants have sought to keep the local residents informed of their intentions for the site and have provided an opportunity for public engagement. This application submission responds to matters raised through this process and as such is considered to accord with the initial objectives of our consultation strategy i.e. to engage with and respond to comments raised by local residents.