

**SAIGHTON CAMP LIAISON GROUP**  
**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 7pm**  
**Huntington Primary School**

**Attendees:**

Chair: Cllr John Moore	Chester City Council
Gerry Choat (GC)	Commercial Estates Group (CEG)
Gareth Owen (GO)	Bryant Homes
John Blythyn	Headmaster, Huntington Primary School
Graham Sheen	Headmaster, Saighton Primary School
Ann Treloar	Huntington Parish Council
Mark Williams	Huntington Parish Council
Virginia Hammond	Huntington Parish Council
Dorothy Moore	Huntington Parish Council
John Ackerley	Local Resident
Lonn Landis	Local Resident
Jean Mitchell	Local Resident
Robert Mitchell	Saighton Parish Council
Eileen Williams	Saighton Parish Council
Ken	Local Resident
I Stevenson	Local Resident
Ruth O Brian	Local Resident
Phil Handley	Local Resident

**Apologies:**

Ann Farrell	Boughton Heath Parish Council
Paul Knight	Chester & District Housing Trust
Dorothy Woffenden	(Rev)

**1. Introductions**

Gerry Choat from CEG welcomed attendees to the first Saighton Camp Liaison Group and explained that the purpose of the group was to meet quarterly, for CEG to provide updates on any progression in terms of the development of the Camp and for the attendees to raise any issues or questions from the local community.

GC explained that the planning process for Saighton Camp was likely to take at least 2 -3 years to develop a strategy for the site. CEG would work with Chester City Council in its preparation of the Local Development Framework, which will guide development across the whole city from 2011 onwards.

**2. Update from Bryant Homes, Phase 1 Development**

Gareth Owen from Taylor Woodrow announced that detailed planning consent had been obtained and brought artist's impressions and a siting plan of the 101 new Bryant Houses that are currently under construction as part of the Phase 1 development.

The timeline for this development was explained as:

Demolition and archaeological works     July – Sept 06

Reserved matters approved	Oct 06
Access road construction commenced	Oct 06
Main site works	Nov 06
Sales and marketing suite opens	Jan 07
Show homes open	Mar / Apr 07

Sales contact number: 0800 0288888

A separate access road to the phase one site will be constructed from Sandy Lane. This site will be entirely separate from the remainder of the development and no through roads or access points will allow access between the sites.

The circumference of this site will be fenced and landscaped.

Out of the 101 homes under construction, 25 will be affordable homes in two separate locations. These are to be delivered in the earliest part of the scheme.

The Phase 2 area of Saighton Camp will be subject to Chester City Council's affordable housing rulings, which is currently 40 per cent of any new development.

The question was raised as to what is affordable housing?

Bryant Homes is in discussion with Chester & District Housing Trust for the allocation of these 25 units which will be three bedroomed, two-storey mews houses. Chester & District Housing Trust allocates homes on a referral system through the council, prioritising local needs.

This particular scheme will be shared equity; none of the homes on the scheme are available by way of rent only.

The details on the affordable homes will be finalised by the time the show suite opens in January.

GO announced that the name Crown Fields had been given to the new development following a conversation with a relative of the former owner of the site who lives nearby.

### **3. A55 Link Road Update**

Saighton Camp is currently identified in Chester City Council's adopted Local Plan as "white land" with no specific allocation for industrial or residential use. An earlier draft of the Local Plan had allocated employment uses across the whole site. The Ministry of Defence had previously proposed a new link road from the site to the A55 (T). This was never brought forward as the employment allocation for the site was deleted following the Inspector's recommendations after the Local Plan public inquiry. However, as a major brownfield site within the urban area it is a very high priority for redevelopment in the longer term as it will reduce the need to develop in the Green Belt.

The overwhelming majority of local residents who attended the Saighton Camp Public Exhibition at the end of 2005 were keen to see a new access road to the A55 (T) provided before the main part of the site is developed.

CEG has, therefore, been liaising with the Highways Agency as they hold responsibility for this trunk road. The Highways Agency's currently policy restricts new access points onto the country's trunk roads.

CEG has spend the last 12 months persuading the Highways Authority that this new access point is required and has worked closely with Cheshire County Council, Chester City Council and the Government Office for the North West to highlight the importance of this link in order that the site is able to contribute to meeting the future employment and housing needs for Chester. CEG now has approval in principle from the Highways Agency to explore design options for such a link.

Engineering solutions are now being examined which will look at safety considerations, engineering issues, ecological and environmental factors and the impact of the link on traffic and noise levels. This process is likely to take a further 12 months.

Once a new route is accepted by the Highways Agency, landscape and ecological impacts will also be assessed. CEG is seeking solutions for a two-directional link onto the A55 (T).

The remaining roads in and around Huntington are governed by Cheshire County Council, which has agreed that they have capacity for some temporary uses for Saighton Camp.

However, full development of Saighton Camp will not go ahead until access to the A55 (T) is agreed.

Transport solutions will also be sought to prevent the development of any new rat-runs and to guide traffic onto and off the A55 (T) as the main point of entry and departure into the site.

#### **4. Temporary Uses on Saighton Camp**

GC explained that he had informed the Parish Council meeting earlier in 2006 that as it is likely to be at least ten years before any development will take place on Saighton Camp Phase 2, CEG is seeking planning permission for a number of temporary uses for the site to encourage activity and tackle security and environmental issues. GC highlighted that the reason for encouraging temporary uses was make it commercially viable to have 24 hour security on the site.

The police are already using the site for dog training and sign boards have recently been erected to market the site for new uses.

A general use application for storage was registered with the City Council but has been withdrawn as it was considered by the County Highways Department to be too general. Specific applications for each identified suitable use for the site will now be submitted, which will give much clearer indications about the volume and nature of traffic generation.

GC explained CEG is seeking uses for the site that operate outside of the normal commuter morning and evening traffic peak flows.

The application for temporary use by the driving school was approved in August 2006 and this use will spread any traffic movements into and out of the site throughout the day.

An application was also submitted for Lock Stock Self Storage for those moving house for example. This included the temporary storage of up to 120 containers. This application has been refused due to local objections about HGV movements.

GC explained this application sought access from approximately 10 HGVs movements into the site a day.

Liaison group attendees highlighted the concern is the speed and direction HGVs approach the site. Worries include safety and use of short cuts with HGV drivers ignoring weight limits.

GC queried if there had been any misunderstandings in terms of the numbers of vehicles with some reports mentioning 50 HGVs rather than the 10 within the application. GC explained that there is potential for CEG to appeal against the refusal as the County Highways Department felt this was not deemed excessive use of local roads.

GC explained that each individual application would be considered by the County Council Highways team to establish suitability and use of the local road network. Councillor Moore agreed to speak to the council representatives.

Attendees responded that applications with car movements into and out of the site were not a problem but HGVs posed a big issue and they would continue to object to applications on this basis. It was felt storage would be a better use elsewhere in the district and not near Huntington.

GC explained CEG was also considering temporary caravan storage with the aim of bringing more activity onto the site and deterring vandals and travellers.

GC highlighted that interest had also been expressed from a model airplane enthusiasts club and a box fabrication company.

GC agreed that prior to submitting any future temporary use applications CEG would write to members of the Liaison Group and the Parish Council with a

clear outline of the application and its implications. GC apologised for any misunderstandings with previous temporary use applications.

When questioned about the terminology of the advertising boards GC explained that the purpose of the boards was to encourage companies with any potential interest in the site to come forward. The uses are then examined by CEG's agents for suitability and applications drawn up if that level activity is likely to support the site in terms of time of use, security and viability.

Bryant Homes were asked if it supported many of the temporary use applications adjacent to its new housing development. GO responded that they are working closely with CEG on each of the temporary use applications and any concerns they have will be put to CEG. An exclusion zone also exists as a buffer between the new development and any part of the site that might be put to use temporarily.

Residents did not feel that the Bryant Homes activity was posing any traffic issues at the moment.

A comment was made to Chair, Councillor Moore, that Christine Russell has called for another 400 homes on the site and residents felt they would like those to be built rather than have any HGV use on the site.

A local photographer is seeking a studio on site but had made enquiries and found the rents prohibitively high. GC explained they are potentially negotiable and are set by a local agent. GC highlighted some of the queries that had been made for the site had been rejected as unsuitable uses. Enquiries have been made for both the open land and some of the buildings on site.

## **5. Masterplan Timing**

GC announced that CEG is hoping to have an alternative link to the A55 (T) designed by spring of next year for discussions with the County Council and the Highways Agency.

A draft masterplan could then be created later next year for discussions with the City and County Councils. This would incorporate community facilities supporting a mixed use development providing new homes and employment space.

When asked about provision of schools, GC said they would discuss this requirement with the County Council. Councillor Moore suggested that someone from the City Planning team could be invited to the next liaison group meeting.

Councillor Moore highlighted that the Local Development Framework planning policy documents will be prepared over the next 12 – 18 months. The council is expected to start debating housing and employment numbers required for Chester's future early next year.

## **6. Date of Next Meeting**

It was requested that Abbygate Primary School, Alford Junior School, Bishops High School and Christleton High School should be invited to the next meeting.

It was felt that CEG should not host another full community consultation exhibition until some decisions had been made with regards to the A55 (T) link.

The liaison group meetings will be held quarterly and the next meeting was proposed for Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2007.

The meeting would be held at Huntington Primary School and GC thanked Headmaster John Blydon for his hospitality and everyone for attending.