

SAIGHTON CAMP LIAISON GROUP
6th November 2007 - Huntington Primary School

Attendees:

Chair: Mark Williams	Chester City Council
Charles Johnson	CEG
Kate Ginks	CEG
Pamela Hall	Chester City Council
Lyn Turner	Parish Council
Nick Dodd	Parish Council
Adrian Tofts	Chester City Council
Virginia Hammond	Parish Council
Philip Hammond	Local Resident
Gareth Owen	Bryant Homes
Ann Treloar	Local Resident
John Ackerley	Local Resident
Lonn Landis	Local Resident
Ian Hutchings	Reverend
Ruth O Brian	Local Resident
Jackie Creswick	Local Resident
Chris Handley	Local resident
JR Handley	Local resident
Victoria Walker	Beattie Communications

Apologies:

John Moore & Dorothy Moore & Paul Knight

1. Introductions

Charles Johnson from CEG explained that Gerry has now left the company and he and colleague Kate Ginks will be the key contacts at the development company.

2. Temporary Uses of the Site

The police are using the site on an ad hoc basis for dog training. The MoD is also using the site, again on an ad hoc basis, for bomb disposal squad training. The Driving Standards Agency will be using the site for car control training on the front parade ground. This is a 10-year lease and the site will be in use 6 days a week.

CEG has consent for the back of the site for vehicle storage but does not have a tenant at the moment. CJ confirmed that Iveco has found an alternative site elsewhere in the city.

Ground investigation works are underway on the site. These are archaeological investigations and are assessing contamination as well. As a result of this CEG is not actively marketing the site for any other temporary uses at the moment.

3. Update from Bryant Homes

The development is underway and the show homes are now open on site. The parish council raised some earthmoving concerns and queries. JA provided photographs of the vehicles blocking the bus stop. It is estimated that 30 vehicles an hour are accessing the site rather than the 30 a day promised. The sweeper is only cleaning the road around the site and is stopping before reaching the residences. Gareth Owen agreed to look into the road cleaning and also the numbers of vehicles and will provide feedback via VW.

Phase 1 will be completed in 2011 and the first residents will be moving into the site at Christmas. To date 4-5 reservations have been made and the first phase of affordable homes released.

The first phase of (16) affordable units should now hand over just before Christmas. Bryant Homes had over 150 enquiries and launched exclusively to those living in Huntington first. To date 4 reservations have been made by local people, out of a total of 5/6 with a few more going through at the moment (local RSL tenants/ waiting list and first time buyers are being given priority.)

The second phase (9 units) will be complete around February time. Prices are circa £195k (full open market value) with shares of 50% being sold as a rule of thumb. Where someone fits the eligibility criteria, but is struggling to afford the 50% share, we are able to reduce this share slightly. This is being considered on a case by case basis.

All properties are 3 bedrooms, and sold with 1 parking space (and some visitor parking provision.) If there is anyone interested in purchasing a property, the Crownfields sales team can be contacted on 01244 349629. Becky and Marina are the sales people and they will be happy to answer any queries.

BH queried the use of the £136,450 of S106 money that Bryant paid the council in January 2007 and how this would be spent by the council. He queried if there was an opportunity to create a new play area adjacent to the nature park entrance / car parking area as this space always seems to be underused. There is also another large green space further up the road which again could benefit. Bryant is keen to see enhancement and provision of new facilities near to the site which will benefit the residents of the existing immediate community as well as being accessible for the new residents. Local residents agreed. MW to provide feedback.

4. A55 Link Road

CJ explained that CEG is currently liaising with the Highways Agency (HA) and planning authority with regards to a new link road to access the A55. Three options have been designed by a transport consultancy, one using the existing road under the A55 and two others utilising a new road over the A55.

CEG agreed to look at noise reduction and this will form part of the ongoing liaison with CCC and the HA.

Residents preferred the lower road option rather than an elevated bridge or crossing and highlighted noise issues they are experiencing elsewhere. Concerns were also raised about the damage to the area of biological interest.

The HA will now assess the safety, environmental, ecological and economic issues associated with the three options and report back. They will appoint an independent engineer and this will take up to three months. They then go through a NATA process to assess the preferred options in more detail and this will take a further 9 – 12 months.

In terms of the link road between the new junction and the site, CEG is liaising with the local highways team at the County Council. A number of options have been created. The first route follows a dip in the landscape creating a low level road to access the far end of the site. This does however have the biggest impact on the area of biological interest.

Two other options have been created to reduce this impact and the challenge has been to avoid the ponds and hedgerows in the area. The council is considering the options in terms of design, environmental and ecological impact as well as landscape and visual impact. The aim is to seek an agreement in principle.

JC queried the land ownership between the proposed new roundabouts adjacent to the A55. CJ confirmed this is likely to be CCC or HA owned. CEG confirmed that there will be new planting as part of the road development but it is too early to outline

the types of plants and trees. MW is also looking into the proposed extension of the Calder Valley Walk. The link road required to reach the site from the new A55 link is only approximately 500m.

R.IH raised the issue of the pressure on Boughton Heath roundabout and asked if this could be improved. He felt that the new roads could reduce the issues at Vicars Cross. Residents queried if an EIA would be produced for the road. CJ confirmed that the planning application will include this as will the NATA process.

5. Update from Chester City Council planning team

AT highlighted that the Local Development Framework will replace the current local plan and will outline a strategy for the whole of Chester.

The first document will be the core strategy – this will be broad and outline the number of new houses needed and roughly where in the district they might go and it will identify major sites for development, such as Saughton Camp. A number of options will go out for consultation early next year. PH outlined that she had just received an early draft.

These options are then submitted to the Sec of State and a public enquiry will be held and the document published in 2009.

The unitary authority issue was raised and AT confirmed that the council has been instructed by Government to push on with the LDF as normal, but is doing additional liaison with nearby local authorities such as Ellesmere Port.

The Government is currently assessing an East West split of Chester and if financially this proves beneficial, the City of Chester will join West Chester, Ellesmere Port, Vale Royal and Neston as one authority. A decision will be made next month for implementation in May 2009. A shadow authority would be set up next year and there would be another election next May to vote for this.

Council is currently working with EP and VR on a flood risk strategy. The LDF would be completed by 2011 and it was confirmed that it was unlikely building work would commence on the site until that time.

6. Public Exhibition

It was agreed by attendees that spring 2008 would be the best option for the next exhibition, once the HA has agreed its preferred option for linking to the A55. PH and MW agreed that they'd received no enquiries from local residents recently.

Residents preferred this to be held on site in order to allow the opportunity for people to see phase 1. VW confirmed that there would be a leaflet drop in Huntington and some of BH. IH also suggested advertising in the Huntington Handbook and the Vicars Cross Voice.

7. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in January or February 2008 prior to any exhibition. The meeting would be held at Huntington Primary School and CJ thanked Headmaster John Blydon for his hospitality and everyone for attending.