

North Abingdon Developer Forum – Monday 20th November at 9am

Notes and Actions

David Wilson Homes and Barratt: currently 2 sales outlets. Soon to be 3 sales outlets. Totalling 425 plots.

Bellway: More recently started on site. Totalling 371 plots.

Central parcel: discussions underway on care home, retirement living and local centre. Applications in 2024 anticipated subject to progress on legals.

School: opening no earlier than September 2026 in discussion with OCC education planning. Anticipated start of construction on site 2024.

Convenience retail store: following a question from Cllr Rooke, CEG confirmed discussions underway with potential end users. Pub: more difficult to market in the current market although this seems to be changing.

Lodge Hill – OCC is working through the infrastructure grant funding agreement with Homes England, whilst also preparing contract documentation for design and build works. The County Council hopes to be into contract with Homes England in early January 2024, followed by entering into contract with the D&B contractor as soon as possible after that. Construction is anticipated to start in summer 2024, and last approximately 2 years.

DWH development: all consented. Highway works package 5 (Oxford Road Roundabout) underway and programmed for completion by September 2024. Highway works packages 1, 2 & 7 completed (but currently not on maintenance – undertaking remedials, working with OCC). Intention to complete internal roads and footpaths to a base course to allow access to the remainder of the Central Parcel and roads will be topped with the wearing course once the main construction works are complete. OCC confirmed that if wearing course was laid before the end of construction that this would need to then be remove and re-laid (central parcel (including school site, local centre etc.)

Oxford Road Roundabout: HWP5. A detailed understanding of phasing, the completed works and future works would be welcome. **Action: DWH to provide a programme for HWP5, suitable for wider sharing on websites. DWH to advise on progress against the programme milestones (albeit recognising that weather and other events may see some delays, that will then be caught-up). Suggested placing information on VoWHDC, OCC, Town Council and Civic Society websites.**

Bellway development: started on site in August 2023. 1st occupations expected July 2024. Highway works package 4 will begin as soon as possible – currently at the OCC technical approval stage. Potential for construction to commence summer

2024. **Action: Bellway to provide a phasing plan for HWP4 for wider sharing on websites.**

Highways and mud-on-road: developers have followed up with on-site contractors to ensure jet washing of vehicles is being undertaken properly. All agreed the situation should improve with proper cleaning. Following a suggestion, developers are reluctant to use large wheel washing tanks as these are detrimental to wildlife and cause other issues. **Action: Bellway to ensure contractors are cleaning vehicles correctly and will continue to monitor and liaise with on-site team. Action: Following a request from Councillors, Bellway to consider how best to provide suitable on-site contact details.**

Watercourses: Councillors raised the issue of silt in the streams through Peachcroft and into the Thames. Noting exceptional rainfall recently, all agreed this was a concern due to the impact on biodiversity etc. Bellway confirmed extensive silt barriers are in use, including a 'silt buster' machine where water is discharged into the watercourse. Bellway have investigated and there were no obvious management issues. **Action: Bellway to continue to monitor watercourses with regards to silt – further discussions with the Council agreed if there is a further problem.**

Oxford Road temporary pond: Application is now approved to provide the connection into the watercourse. Appropriate consents will be secured in the context of the current planning approval. Works are being procured currently for this to be undertaken when weather conditions allow. It is a priority for the developers to complete these works. Water levels are being monitored on site and temporary pumping continues. With recent high rainfall, residents have noticed changes to highway drainage. This is likely to be temporary whilst works are being undertaken.

Attenuation pond safety: Councillors raised a point about ensuring attenuation ponds are safe. DWH are likely to fence an attenuation pond first and will consider the use of life belts, although these are not always used correctly. DWH take a fencing first approach to safety. This is already being considered in accordance with corporate responsibilities.

Sunningwell Bridleway: recent concerns with flooding of the bridleway were discussed. After investigations this has been identified as a blocked culvert on National Highways owned land. Planning officers have contacted National Highways to raise the issue and will continue to follow up. Oxfordshire County Council public rights of way team as relevant body for highways were copied in. Support is requested. **Action: Officers to follow up with National Highways to unblock culvert.**

Bellway site bridleway: the condition of the bridleway is challenging for walkers. Noting this was an unsurfaced route previously. Bellway will continue to monitor and assist by topping up the surface where possible for the full available width.

Tilsley Park: DWH have provided a footpath and gate up as far as possible. Approvals from the Environment Agency are required. There has been a wait for these approvals before the works can proceed.

Foul drainage: Thames Water as a statutory organisation have confirmed adequate sewerage capacity.

Community groups on site: CEG have a community liaison lead who would be happy to be involved in supporting the establishment of community groups on the site. DWH would be happy to share details of appropriate community groups to new customers where possible (potentially in welcome packs). Notice boards were suggested as a way to share information, not just online. **Action: Councillors and CEG to liaise further on how best to facilitate community groups.**

Communication and meetings: Councillors and community groups requested further information on a variety of topics to be shared on information boards and websites. **Action: All to consider options for sharing more information as the development progresses.** To arrange a meeting in Spring 2024. CEG also suggested smaller virtual meetings more frequently as required. **Action: Planning officers to facilitate an in-person meeting in Spring 2024 and to discuss virtual meetings as appropriate before that date.**

Meeting closed at 10:30am.

Attendees

Hanna Zembrzycka-Kisiel – Principal Major Applications Officer VoWHDC
William Sparling – Senior Major Applications Officer VoWHDC
Michael Deadman – Highways Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr Andy Foulsham – VoWHDC
Cllr Mike Pighills – VoWHDC
Cllr Alison Rooke – Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr Mark Giddins – Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council
Robin Tucker - Coalition for Health Streets and Active Travel
Hester Hand – Abingdon Civic Society
Bobbie Nichols – Abingdon Civic Society
Sophie Pryor – CEG
Ian Gillespie – Igloo Planning
Tim Foxhall – Glanville
Sian Keeling – David Wilson Homes
Ant Edgley – David Wilson Homes
Jack Johnson – Bellway
Charles Burt – Bellway

Apologies

Cllr Nathan Ley – Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr Oliver Forder – VoWHDC
Cllr Max Thompson – VoWHDC

Agenda items:

1. Introductions
2. CEG, DWH, Bellway introductions to the development proposals
3. Lodge Hill update
4. Development timescales and forthcoming works or applications
5. Drainage and flood risk
6. Highways – planned works and management of impacts
7. Supporting community groups to establish on site
8. Key contacts, next steps and next meeting
9. AOB