



Day 1

Session 1: Specialist Briefings – Knowledge Exchange

Session 2: Specialist Briefings – Chalgrove Village

Graphical Interpretation

Session 3: Specialist Briefings – Chalgrove Airfield

Technical Team

Graphical Interpretation

NB: these notes have been updated following feedback from attendees.

Purpose: This note provides a summary of information and findings from Day 1 of the Chalgrove Airfield Enquiry by Design event on 19 January 2017. Day 1 included the following:

- Session 1: Opening presentation from HCA, consultant team and SODC
- Session 2: Presentations about Chalgrove Village
- Session 3: Technical presentations about Chalgrove Airfield
- Design Session 1

Session 1: Specialist Briefings – Knowledge Exchange

The session was introduced by the Homes and Communities Agency and members of the consultant team to provide an overview of process so far, the purpose of the Enquiry by Design event and a review of the work that has been done with regard to strategic infrastructure.

South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) provided an update on the South Oxfordshire Local Plan and confirmed that the Council are seeking to deliver 3,500 homes on the Chalgrove Airfield site. The presentation was followed by open discussion. A summary of the comments and questions raised is set out below.

Provision of Infrastructure

Q: infrastructure provision in the District is not keeping up with the growth, how do we address this issue?

A: the HCA is seeking to provide infrastructure at the right time during the development of the site in line with the needs of a development. This is something to work through in detail with Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council as the planning process progresses.

Q: An edge street around one settlement would impact upon surrounding parishes. How does one continue to mitigate the impacts of this ripple effect?

A: The work so far has brought together the ingredients for an infrastructure strategy. This will be fed into the strategic traffic model and further refined to understand what the impact of certain mitigation in one location might be on places elsewhere.



SODC Local Plan Timeline

Q: The Preferred Options Stage 2 consultation is planned for March but all of the evidence base reports won't be finalised at that point.

A: SODC responded to confirm that some final reports will be in draft and will have a sound understanding of what the conclusions are likely to be. Some of the evidence will be published with the Preferred Options 2 document for consultation. There will be another stage in the draft Local Plan process later in the year where the final evidence base will be published in full for consultation.

Position of the runway

Questions were raised about the retention of the runway on site and the position shown for the Enquiry by Design process.

Q: How far is the existing runway from the existing village and how many movements are there on the runway? Has a noise survey been commissioned?

A: The design team took measurements of the proximity and concluded that the existing active runway is 200 metres from existing housing. The runway position identified for the Enquiry by Design exercise would be at least 100 metres from any proposed housing. Part of the Enquiry by Design process is to work through how the design works along the edges and what types of uses are proposed along the boundaries. This would then be taken forward to technical testing through the planning application and would include a noise assessment.

Q: What is the position with discussions with Martin Baker Ltd?

A: We have been in ongoing discussions with representatives of Martin Baker. More information will be provided when these discussions have concluded.



Session 2: Specialist Briefings – Chalgrove Village

Presentations were given from the following representatives about Chalgrove Village. A summary of their presentation is provided below.

- The village and community services - Ann Pritchard – Chalgrove PC
 - Ann started with a letter from the Parish Council emphasising that the majority of the village residents were against the proposed development and attendance at the Enquiry by Design was without prejudice to their opposition to the principle of a development proposal.
 - Evidence of occupation at Chalgrove goes back to 4000 BC. Development came about due to clean drinking water in the springs. These still cause flooding in the village. Water table is high and flooding is the main concern. Main item is flood alleviation and issue of capacity of the pumping station. New development needs to work closely with Thames Water.
 - Chalgrove is a compact community with most services within reach of the population. Village built around the Church, doctors surgery, post office, primary school, shops. Key issue is poor public transport. Bus services have been cut. T1 service is still running and a service to Thame for market day. Also includes a volunteer car service.
 - 1960 population was 300. Today it is 3000. Long medieval strip housing has been given up for housing. The Neighbourhood Development Plan is nearing completion and both sites that are identified as options have applied for planning permission with a total of 320 houses proposed.
 - Village life is thriving. Fear that this will be lost with a development treble the size. Most would prefer this to be a separate settlement.
- The Parish and the Church - Reverend Ian Cohen
 - St Mary's Church is the only worshipping venue in the community and has just had £1.1 million spent on it. New development could have multi-faith building but not a church. The church needs to work out how it can welcome new residents. Current church has 8 years more burial space. If there is to be a neighbourhood that relates to Chalgrove then it needs to provide this space.
- Recreation - Mark Wasmuth
 - Considered sports activities in Chalgrove. CCFC organise football and netball for youth and adults. Have a lot of participation within the village but also drawing participants from surrounding villages. Club has had success with being inclusive. Pretty much at capacity in terms of football facilities. Would like football pitches and recreation space to be incorporated into any housing development.
- Flooding - Janice Russell (Chalgrove Flood Alleviation Group (CFAG))
 - Flooding is a major issue. Very important and very stressful. Affects elderly people and everyone in the village. Some have flooded over 3 times since 2008. Between 3-5 flood warnings each year. Mill Lane and parts of the high street have flooded a number of times. Brown trout, crayfish and otters use the Chalgrove Brook. Village drains can't cope.



Substantial runoff will be caused by 3,500 houses. Adds to flooding at the western end of the village. SuDs won't work. Gault clay runs 2 feet down throughout the site. All water will flow towards the village as the airfield sits higher than the village.

CFAG has re-mapped the flood zones in the village. This needs to be properly mapped on the airfield site. CFAG has worked closely with statutory bodies to sort out areas of risk (culverts, drains etc). Concerned about maintenance of a drainage solution.

- Current Chalgrove Neighbourhood Plan - Simon Reynolds
 - The Neighbourhood Development Plan Group has written a letter to the HCA regarding involvement in this process. The NDP identifies a maximum sustainable quantity of homes for the village area. The Group is wholly opposed to the proposals. The Group commissioned a flood report for the village which confirmed the results of the CFAG. This needs to be taken into account.
- Monument Business Park - Mike Jennings
 - About 600 people work in Monument Business Park at the moment. The majority live in Chalgrove or other local villages. Monument is a site for very small businesses, mainly transit vans but not HGVs. Enterprise economy is growing and has always provided local premises for local people. Will need to respond if more people start living in the area and there is probably capacity for another 400 jobs. Any future expansion would be for small businesses.
- The Brook Surgery - Dr McManus
 - The practice has around 7,600 patients split between two sites, at Chalgrove and Watlington. It is committed to running two sites, despite practical issues. Concern about the level of service the surgery can provide with additional development, particularly given the difficulty in recruiting new GPs and the cost of housing in Oxfordshire. The sustainability of a practice requires 8,000 patients. Physical expansion of the existing Chalgrove surgery would be difficult due to flooding issues and physical constraints. There would therefore need to be consideration for a new healthcare facility on a development site. **NB:** The HCA is in ongoing discussions with about future healthcare provision in Chalgrove. There is no suggestion that current facilities will be withdrawn before a new facility is provided.

Session 2 presentations were followed by open discussion. A summary of the comments and questions raised is set out below.

Community Facilities

Design team Q: should a new church be planned for within the proposed development?

Discussion: A new community facility is considered important. A new church would be problematic. Current parking at the church is an issue and people in new development might drive as it is too far. This will be an evolving village community that will develop over a number of years, which needs to be considered. The immediate concern for the Church is burial space, which should be planned for.

A new settlement does need social infrastructure and a focus to build a new community. Additionally, the landscape needs to encourage walking and cycling rather than travelling by car.



The design should also consider the relationship of new facilities as currently people can't move around in villages without a car.

Proposed uses on the site

Q: How would secondary schools and primary schools work? Public transport needs to be run as soon as first house is built as otherwise habits won't be developed. How would commercial development work as new shops wouldn't be viable if put in too early? Would the development of employment also occur?

A: the HCA is able to plan to provide the physical space but trying to get someone to run a business is difficult. In other developments, the HCA has facilitated the foundation of a Community Trust as soon as possible into the development to ensure that the community develops and grows as the housing is built. In terms of employment, the proposals would seek to incorporate elements of small scale employment with potential opportunities for home working. The proposal could also connect into other existing employment opportunities to the southeast of Oxford, Culham and at Monument Business Park. The Business Park could accommodate an additional 400 jobs with expansion.

Flooding

Comments: there are significant concerns about the flooding issue as the psychological and emotional impacts of flooding are great. There needs to be consideration of a joined up strategy as water flowing into Haseley Brook or Chalgrove Brook would also impact upon other villages downstream such as Stadhampton or Little Milton. The CFAG has been gathering information since 2007, which should be used to inform a proposal.



Session 3: Specialist Briefings – Chalgrove Airfield Technical Team

This session included presentations from the HCA technical team about the Chalgrove Airfield site itself. A summary is provided below.

- **Site Character - Andy Ward (NEW Masterplanning)** presented images of the airfield site and an overview of the key technical opportunities and constraints.
- **Landscape – Geraint Hughes (NEW Masterplanning).** The airfield falls within the Clay Vale character area according to SODC landscape assessment. This area is characterised by a mix of landscapes and nucleated villages. Chalgrove is linear in character. Chalgrove and Benson airfields are excluded from the landscape assessment as they have different qualities and are described as disrupting the natural features within the landscape. It is considered important to address edges of the development. Key features in the surrounding landscape are identified within the SODC landscape assessment and provide a number of issues and opportunities to consider within the design, for example, the typical pattern of field boundaries, improving the landscape structure or creating strong landscape edges.
- **Site history and heritage – Orlando Prestige (AECOM).** A baseline study of heritage information has been compiled and is provided in the Briefing Pack. This shows that the use of the site since 1943 has been as an airfield. Features to note on the early maps include the former roads and some small buildings. Medieval coins have been found on the site. An Iron Age coin has also been found. ROC post noted in the southwestern part of the site used during the 1950s. Aircraft shelter also on site. The Chalgrove Battlefield is also noted, which falls outside of the developable area boundary. It should be noted that the Battlefields Trust could not be at the Enquiry by Design event but have confirmed that they are opposed to development on the Airfield site due to its impact on the Battlefield. The settings of the Battlefield and listed buildings near to the site should be considered within a proposed design. Currently surrounded by grassland. Key assets are the airfield itself and the WWII and cold war uses on the site.
- **Local Accessibility – Chris Carter (AECOM).** In terms of the design, there is a need to focus on how to get in and out of the development and how people pass the development as well as how to facilitate connectivity. This will impact where facilities are sited and how they interact with the existing village. Average speeds along the B480 are just above 50 mph, there are no footways and very little frontage along the road. Therefore, there is a need to reduce speeds along the B480 to enhance connectivity. It is important to look at the volumes of traffic to help consider what form access junctions should take. There are opportunities to balance priority between traffic coming in and out of the airfield site and along the B480 with a view that junctions lend themselves more to a roundabout form, however, this would need to be tested through the strategic traffic model.
- **Ecology - Darryn Nash (AECOM).** Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey has been undertaken to classify habitat types and consider what important or rare protected ecology could be on site. This is shown in the Briefing Pack. There is an aspiration to have no net loss of ecological value on site. The majority of the site is covered by Improved fland which has been subject to fertilizers



etc.) and Semi-improved (low level species diversity) Grasslands. These are seen to have relatively low ecological importance. There are some habitats around the edge of and near to the site including woodland, trees, ponds, and hedgerow. Opportunities for ecological enhancement should be incorporated into the development.

- **Ground conditions and contamination – Mark Rowney (AECOM).** A baseline review of data to assess the site has been undertaken. This shows that the site was in military use during the Second World War. There is some potential for remnant unexploded ordnance, however, the majority of the site has low potential and a strategy could be developed to assess and deal with any unexploded ordnance. The site is underlain by superficial deposits and historic borehole records have been assessed. A Gault formation underlies the superficial deposits, which is a negligible groundwater resource therefore there are likely to be shallow groundwater levels.
- **Aviation – Marcus Scrafton (AECOM).** The objective of the development area shown for the Enquiry by Design process is to provide an indication of a runway alignment that could maintain the operational capacity for aircraft to fly in and out of the site and would not overfly the existing Chalgrove village. There are two key factors for runway design: prescribed distances in terms of health and safety and the dimensions of the runway itself (dependent on the capabilities of the runway).
- **Drainage – Bruce Fyfe (AECOM).** There are three main water catchments for the site. In planning policy terms, the proposal is required by the National Planning Policy Framework to discharge at greenfield run off rates. Catchment assessments would need to be developed and put into a strategy in line with different SuDs solutions. There are two methods for dealing with foul water: increase size of existing pumping station but would need to control discharge to the ditch or treat on site with a separate treatment plant on site. This would need to be agreed with Thames Water and the Environment Agency.
- **Land uses – Jo Davis (GVA).** This proposal is not simply about developing a housing estate, it is about delivering a community. The HCA is seeking for this to be a housing-led mixed use development and, in this case, the vision is to provide some small scale employment opportunities on site but connect into existing employment that sits around the site. There is a need to consider what the qualities are of a new community by looking at walking distances, proposed uses and facilities that would help that community to establish and grow.
- **Education – Jo Davis (GVA) and Mat Hunter (Icknield Community College).** Meetings have taken place to discuss what education facilities on the airfield site might look like. This needs to be viewed in a wider context of the external influences for development in the education sector. There is a view strategically that there is going to be a need for further secondary school in the area. Therefore, for the purposes of the design exercise, this should assume that a proposal would have space for a new secondary school with additional community facilities. The current Icknield site is 5ha and there is an aspiration to move to an 11-18 provision. The size of the school would need to double to accommodate a development of this size. At this stage, the HCA will plan for a larger site, which could be reduced once a decision is made. OCC has identified a need for at least one new primary school.



- **Icknield Students – Alex Baker/Andy Ward (NEW Masterplanning).** Alex and Andy provided an overview of the workshop that had been done with students at Icknield Community College. The students provided a different perspective on the design of the development. It was clear that the students were influenced by a lack of bus services and distances to travel to get to facilities and services. The students split into groups to look at a proposed design. Some put new facilities or community uses in between the site and Chalgrove village and others demonstrated that they were conscious of the need to be able to walk between places.

The presentations were followed by open discussion. A summary of the discussion is provided below.

Transport and Access to the development

Q: Will single means of access be from and to the B480?

A: the predominant access will be via the B480 but there is an opportunity to consider options for more than one point of access. It is envisaged that there will need to be at least two points of access.

Q: concerns about traffic volumes on the B480. There is a suggestion to provide a new road to and from the M40. There is also a need to consider road infrastructure with OCC as well as national infrastructure projects.

A: there is ongoing work to develop a sub-regional transport strategy, which is to be reviewed with OCC and SODC, as part of a strategic traffic model to inform the Local Plan. This would include consideration of infrastructure proposals that are planned.

Education provision

Q: The senior school within Watlington needs more space, possibly on site within Watlington or on the airfield. If removed from Watlington this might affect business in the town.

A: a representative for education at OCC clarified that there are a large number of permutations for education provision with the number of housing sites being discussed. The key issues are to what extent provision should include expanding existing schools and where new schools should be coming forward. Changes in the education sector are leading to an increasing number of academies. This means that the ultimate decisions are not with OCC but with a separate decision-making body – the Regional Schools Committee. The HCA will continue to work with OCC and Icknield Community College as the proposals develop.

Environmental considerations

Q: Will considerable earth modelling be required?

A: During the design development and technical review there are different issues to address including landscape, visual ecology, drainage etc. There is likely to be some bunding and planting



required as part of the development but this would be developed in more detail once a design is established.

Q: the ecologist at SODC commented that survey work would usually be front loaded in the process.

A: the process is intended to be iterative with an initial design tested further and refined. The Enquiry by Design is the beginning of the process for designing the site, therefore, further work will be undertaken to inform this iterative process.

Afternoon Session

During the lunch break, the design team discussed the principles of a drainage strategy with Janice Russell from the Chalgrove Flood Alleviation Group. This provided a basis for the afternoon discussion regarding a drainage solution.

As she was unable to attend the morning session, Anne Lankester from Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) provided an overview of healthcare from the CCG's perspective.

- In general terms, the CCG considers that a Practice requires at least 8,000 patients to be sustainable. The Chalgrove Airfield site would provide an additional population of around 10,000 patients on the site. The CCG would support the provision of one Practice in the area with a view that the Chalgrove practice could grow and expand. In terms of design, this could be considered in different formats with a Practice split over more than one premises (as it is currently) or with a site on the Airfield that could accommodate a larger Practice with additional Primary Care services.



Design Session 1: Graphical Interpretation

The HCA design team lead the session to focus on the constraints and opportunities that had been heard and discussed throughout the morning. The design team prepared constraints plans as the discussions took place.

A summary of the discussion is set out below.

Drainage

The HCA team measured the site areas, which demonstrated that there is a drainage catchment measuring 73.07ha falling towards Chalgrove Brook within the southern drainage catchment with 50.66ha within the drainage catchment towards Haseley Brook.

Having discussed the principles of a drainage strategy with the CFAG, the team outlined that a drainage strategy would need to include a solution to draw water towards the west of Chalgrove within the airfield site. Drainage ponds or places for water to collect in the lowest part of the site would then need to be included. This would help to alleviate any run off from the airfield site towards the village. To the north of the proposed settlement, water would need to be piped under the runway, with capacity for a flood event by using oversized pipes, an open water pond or an underground tank.

Comments: there is an issue with flooding from the Chilterns, therefore, to solve the problem in full there would need to be a solution upstream.

Landscape and heritage

The HCA team considered whether there are opportunities within the design for any of the historic routes to be reinstated. The Battlefield falls outside of the area of the site to be developed but it would be important to explore any an opportunities to connect with Monument Business Park to the east. The impacts on the Battlefield would need to be considered.

Other important historic features include Rofford Manor and Rofford Hall, which have views into the airfield site. It was considered that opportunities to include landscaping / ecology / drainage within the site should be explored to enhance the setting of the listed buildings.

In terms of landscape, the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is also important. There may be opportunities for a landscape screen between the existing hanger buildings and the proposed development site but there is a need to consider how to keep the long views out of the site to connect with the landscape beyond. There is also a need to consider the relationship between southwestern edge of the airfield site and the countryside.



Connectivity and separation

A representative of OCC raised the question of whether the B480 could be realigned. The current road does not provide a liveable environment and would not be permeable for movement between the settlements.

There was discussion about whether the new development should be physically separated from the existing village. There would need to be connections to facilities in a new development but there was a view that Chalgrove has a rich community and doesn't want to become a 'poorer cousin'. The HCA team proposed that it is an issue of identity rather than physical separation because there is going to be a relationship between the two in terms of physical connections.

There was a view that if the new development is the same size as Chalgrove then it would be easier to have separate identity. As a larger settlement, if integrated with the new development, this would impact upon the character of the village.

The urban design officer from SODC considered the need to think about future generations living in the settlement. Integration between the two and planning for there to be shared services and facilities is important to ensure sustainability.

Character

The HCA team questioned whether there is a strong opinion about the form of the settlement. There are different options:

- Nucleated village – this would be easier to soften from a landscape perspective.
- Linear settlement – this would help to spread facilities along a longer area to meet any additional development.
- Poly-focal – this would provide more than one centre and urban area along a route.

Comments: wouldn't want to see the existing B480 as a new high street because houses are backing onto the road. The green space and landscape element is essential. The SODC landscape officer was of the view that a nucleated structure would help to integrate into the surrounding landscape.

The evening of Day 1 was held in Chalgrove Village Hall. Boards were presented including the constraints plans and sketches that had been drawn during the discussions throughout the day. The event was open for attendees to provide views and comments on the emerging constraints.