

## **Direction for Growth Public Meeting**

**Wednesday 17 July 2013**

**Best Western Leicester Stage Hotel – 7.00pm**

Attendees on behalf of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council:

Cllr John Boyce (Chair) – Leader of the Council

Adrian Thorpe – Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager

Kirstie Rea – Senior Planning Policy Officer

Attendees on behalf of David Wilson Homes:

Richard Edwards – Strategic Land Project Manager, David Wilson Homes

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Cllr John Boyce opened the meeting and thanked everyone in the audience for their interest and sparing the time to attend. Cllr Boyce explained that the meeting had been called in response to a recent public consultation carried out by David Wilson Homes in relation to a masterplan for proposed residential and employment development south of Newton Lane, Wigston (known as the Direction for Growth) which David Wilson Homes are the developers for. Cllr Boyce introduced Richard Edwards from David Wilson Homes and Adrian Thorpe from Oadby and Wigston Borough Council and explained that he would provide some background and context to the subject of the Direction for Growth and that Richard Edwards and Adrian Thorpe would provide support in answering questions raised; Richard Edwards in relation to technical aspects of the masterplan and Adrian Thorpe where questions related to the Borough Council's Local Plan.
- 1.2 Cllr Boyce gave a background to the Direction for Growth in terms of how it came to be recognised as an area for future development in the Borough Council's adopted Core Strategy (2010) and why this area was essential to meet the housing and employment needs of the Borough of Oadby and Wigston. Cllr Boyce further explained that the current consultation was being carried out by the developer David Wilson Homes as a pre-cursor to submission of their planning application for this site. Although the current consultation was not being undertaken by the Borough Council, Members of the Borough Council felt it was important to hold this public meeting in order to hear residents concerns. Questions and concerns raised at the meeting would be taken note of and would feed into the wider debate on development within the Direction for Growth. Cllr Boyce stated that following the submission of any application a further public meeting would be held. Cllr Boyce then opened the floor to questions and comments.

### **2. Questions and Concerns**

- 2.1 Questions raised by the audience and the response given where appropriate on the night have been summarised as follows:
  - Object to the leaflet only being sent out on Monday and only sent to those homes nearest to the fields that are proposed to be built on – *Richard Edwards confirmed that leaflets advertising their consultation had been*

*hand delivered by David Wilson Homes staff to most of the homes that bounded the Direction of Growth and that at least a weeks notice to their consultation event was given.*

- Object to a representative from the developers being present and that the meeting was convened during school holidays.- *Cllr Boyce reiterated that David Wilson Homes were invited in order to clarify technical aspects of the masterplan should such questions arise.*
- General objection to how the Public Meeting has been advertised. - *The Public Meeting was convened at relatively short notice in response to the consultation undertaken by David Wilson Homes. Posters were placed at key junctions surrounding the site to advertise the event.*
- Advertising notices had been taken down prior to the meeting.
- David Wilson Homes website has not been accessible. – *Richard Edwards confirmed that the David Wilson Homes website was fully operational.*
- Posters have been seen advertising the Public Meeting in the area but not along Cooks Lane. – *Adrian Thorpe confirmed that posters were erected along Cooks Lane prior to the meeting.*
- Concern that Newton Lane is already traffic constrained and this will be exacerbated by the new development. – *Richard Edwards clarified that mitigation of traffic issues on Newton Lane was a key aspect of the masterplan and this had been looked at in conjunction with Leicestershire County Council Highways department.*
- General lack of advertising of the event
- Surprise that this is being publicised as a David Wilson Homes consultation when it is the Council that has earmarked the land – *Cllr Boyce reiterated that the Direction for Growth was designated within the Borough's adopted Core Strategy but the current consultation was by David Wilson Homes in order to promote the masterplan that they were planning to submit a planning application for.*
- Query as to why no bungalows have been planned for the Direction for Growth. – *Richard Edwards confirmed that consideration could be given to development of bungalows at the detailed stage of the application if there is evidence to support their provision in this area.*
- What about the amount of water that is likely to be generated by these homes  
  
*Water companies are consulted on the Borough's development plans*
- What about other brownfield sites in the Borough, for example the Heating Element site (Moat Street, Wigston) that are derelict and could be used. *It was confirmed that sites such as this had also been identified to meet the Borough's development needs*

- General concerns about the Newton Lane's capacity to cope with the extra traffic
- What about empty homes? Why aren't the Council bringing these back into use?
- The current estate adjacent to the site has many houses for sale that aren't selling so why do we need more homes? Oadby has a better town centre whereas Wigston town centre is very poor. What about health facilities (i.e. a doctor's surgery) have these been considered as capacity in the existing surgeries to serve new development is low? - *Cllr Boyce clarified the development requirements that the Borough Council needs to meet within a plan period and why.*
- Are we aware that there is a natural aquifer in the middle of the fields?
- Have the developers identified who is going to live in the properties? Is it true that Wigston has the highest conurbation of schools in Europe?
- Tythorn School does not have a full enrolment roll at present. If all the houses proposed in phase 1 and 2 were built there would be a new school built also which would force Tythorn to close.
- What about jobs for all the incoming households, where will these people work? - *Cllr Boyce referred to the employment development that would also be delivered in the Direction for Growth as contributing to potential jobs destinations for incoming households.*
- How have the developers considered local ecology and hedgerows? – *Richard Edwards referred to the evidence base that has been prepared to support development within the Direction for Growth where it related to ecology and hedgerows.*
- With regard to the employment proposed on the site, what about the impact of cars parking on residential streets to access this employment?
- Can bungalows be affordable housing?  
*Councillor Boyce confirmed that the developer will be required to provide a proportion of affordable homes on the site.*
- Concern about access routes – seeking confirmation about whether phase 1 is a single access off Newton Lane and phase 2 is a single access off Cooks Lane?  
*Richard Edwards said that phase 1 was likely to be accessed from Newton Lane. Phase 2 is likely to be accessed off Welford Road.*
- Will the houses be three storeys as they are in Kibwoth?
- Has Lifetime homes and energy efficiency been taken into account?  
*Yes, the Council require these matters to be taken into account.*
- Have heard a rumour that part of the site has been identified as a site for Travellers

- General concern about what density the site will be built to.
- How will the impact on current residents bordering the site of potential over-looking and spacing be dealt with?  
*The Council has specific guidance relating to these matters*
- Concern that double decker buses on proposed new bus routes would potentially lead to passengers on top decks being able to overlook homes, how can this be prevented?
- General concern that Cooks Lane becoming a rat run for the new estate.  
*Richard Edwards said that he was aware of a number of potential rat runs and that further consideration would be given to this.*
- It is clear that developer's long term aim is to develop both phases quickly.
- Has account been taken of Guthlaxton Way? This is currently a rat run and this will increase.
- What other sites were considered for development?  
*Adrian Thorpe explained the process that the Council had followed in relation to identifying land for development.*
- My home on Bronzebarrow way backs onto open fields which I was guaranteed when I bought it wouldn't be overlooked, what compensation will I get from the developer?
- Concern about the logistics of heavy plant movements especially how this will effect Newton lane.
- Does the Oadby site have any problems with water (e.g.surface water flooding)?
- What will be the impact of the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase on Kilby Bridge and has this been taken into account?  
*The Local Plan does consider the relationship between the direction for growth and Kilby Bridge*
- Primary school children expected not to travel more than ½ mile to school. The Meadows and Tythorn are further than this from the development and would have to be accessed across main roads.
- What type of employment is proposed to be allowed on site?  
*Businesses and general industry uses would be permissible (but not large scale storage and distribution.*

2.2 Councillor Boyce concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and re-iterated that following the submission of any application a further public meeting would be held.