



# EYNESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Curtin & Co

14 October 2021

Dear [Curtin & Co contact]

## **Eynsham Parish Council and EPIC/GreenTEA joint response to West Eynsham Masterplanning meeting on 30 September 2021**

While we welcome the attention paid to some issues, such as the pedestrian and cycle network and the Chilbrook valley, we still have many concerns about the process. We wish to contribute meaningfully to the masterplanning process with two-way communications, to ensure the best possible outcome in the long term for existing and new residents. We must acknowledge that the process is not working and that there is significant miscommunication which is leading to frustration.

### **1. Consultation & Masterplan**

- 1.1. The Parish Council reiterate its willingness to host/co-host with developers, consultation type events if material is supplied. Covid risks will be considered and mitigations implemented.
- 1.2. What will the Masterplan include – the contents remain sketchy? Please detail exactly what it will contain and provide explanations for reasons why other detail will not be included. If a draft Masterplan is available (or any draft agreements), please share this with us and the community without delay.
- 1.3. We expect WODC and the developers to provide a comprehensive description of the scope and contents of the documentation and a clear timetable of how this will be consulted and approved; the community needs to achieve as much certainty as possible. We expect clear phasing of infrastructure and supporting facilities as well as different types of tenure such as social housing, other specialist housing (eg for the elderly) and sites for self and custom build. Will some infrastructure proceed outside the phasing by ownership of land areas? We expect a methodology to ensure that individual applications comply with and are co-ordinated with this masterplan. It is unclear who takes responsibility for this over the longer term. We also asked if a social housing provider was in place and did not receive any answers.

*Continued*

## Aspects we welcome

### 2. Active travel

- 2.1. We acknowledge positive attempts to avoid the spine road becoming a rat run or a bypass and ensuring attractive active travel options, such as: traffic light connection to the A 40 with weight restriction; active frontages; speed limit of 20 MPH; designed in traffic calming; junctions giving cyclists and pedestrians precedence over roads; a network for active travel within the SDA and connections with Eynsham; commitment to retain Chilbridge road as a bridleway with restriction to through traffic into Eynsham (this is a high priority for residents); and provision for suitable buses. We do query how a bus would get into Eynsham with the tight junction of Acre End and Station Roads and connection with Hanborough station is also needed.
- 2.2. For the proposed spine road 'boulevard' we prefer the option of a two way cycle path set back from the carriageway behind the tree line, rather than alongside the carriageway. This is more likely to encourage families to cycle safely.
- 2.3. However, we were worried to hear the vagueness of the reply about the 'developer roundabout' further to the west, as part of which a southern arm has been extended as a potential future access to the development in the north-west corner of the SDA. Is this in fact going to be the bypass? How can a masterplan come forward without explaining where all the roads in the area are going to be?

### 3. Connected greenspace and biodiversity

- 3.1. We appreciate steps taken to provide public green space and access to the countryside by enlarging the green space along the Chil. Connection of this green park to the Fishponds and the green edge of the Garden Village is important and we expect the masterplan design to create (or facilitate as appropriate) connections to the north, west and south.
- 3.2. However, we are concerned about long term delivery; we need to see evidence that biodiversity net gain, as well as habitat protection and enhancement, will be achieved in the whole development especially if the detail on this is broken down into individual planning applications. Which developer will take responsibility for what, allowing a coordinated biodiversity strategy?
- 3.3. There is concern about ongoing management of green spaces. Can the masterplan define who is going to manage public green spaces, or at least for the Parish to be involved at an early stage with this, and help make sure management is co-ordinated between different sites for the benefit of the community?

- 3.4. There is mounting concern about water quality in the Chilbrook. A member of Eynsham's Nature Recovery Network has been testing water testing in and around Eynsham. Recent testing has shown an alarming rise in contamination of the Chil, with very high nitrate readings from the Chil and the Lymbrook. The Chil reading was 19.6ppm, the highest she has seen, and while the water looks clear, the rocks are covered in brown gunge and there do not appear to be any signs of life. All the nitrate readings were up on previous months, and while some seasonal variation and post rainfall effects are expected, the state of the rivers does seem to be deteriorating substantially and rapidly just within the year I have been testing. We expect that the masterplan will take account of this. Further information is available.

### Where we have significant concerns

#### 4. Infrastructure and zero carbon

- 4.1. We note that an Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be part of the Masterplan.
- 4.2. Infrastructure planning should include energy and the potential for zero carbon energy as part of the Eynsham Zero Carbon Energy Action Plan, which is progressing. This topic needs to be SDA wide and we are alarmed that it will be ignored at this stage, as was explained at the meeting, and opportunities lost if it is only considered on a site by site basis. The Local Plan Policy EH6 requires an energy feasibility assessment for SDAs. How will this be achieved for the SDA as a whole? Janson's own Sustainability and Energy Statement (November 2020) submitted as part of their OPA suggested higher standards than these liaison meetings and also highlighted potential as follows (bold added):
- 4.2.1. Opportunities for creating centralised 'energy hubs' with communal battery storage could be investigated further during detailed design with the possibility of co-locating the battery storage with EV charging points. This will also open up the prospect of **collaborating in a meaningful manner with local energy groups such as Project Leo and the Low Carbon Hub and the wider West Eynsham Strategic Development Area to support the energy hubs and smart grid delivery. Eynsham's Smart and Fair Futures panel supported by the Low Carbon Hub, has been put in place to assist developments such as this to move towards and achieve net zero carbon targets.**
- 4.2.2. There are no existing or planned district heat networks within the vicinity of the application site. However, if a district heating network was considered a viable option **for the larger SDA site**, the opportunity of integrating it into this application site could be reconsidered.
- 4.3. How will the masterplan ensure that these are followed through on an SDA site-wide basis?

- 4.4. We ask that the developers attend another meeting with the Smart and Fair Futures group soon. We are now considering how Eynsham can achieve carbon budgets and there is a risk that these will be jeopardised if homes requiring retrofit continue to be built. We need to ensure that local opportunities to improve energy performance and clean energy supply are not lost and that the development is fit for the future. We were shocked that your masterplanner described low carbon housing as 'nuanced details'. We are offering to work with you on this crucial and fundamental issue. We had no answer about a meeting.
- 4.5. There is enormous local concern about action on the climate and ecological emergency, as evidenced by our recent [Great Big Green Week](#) which saw over 60 well attended events and activities, over 200 people involved in making it happen and many more engaged participants. The developers were invited to attend, to see the strength of local expertise and commitment. We are not aware that any attended, although we did have a reply from Sam at Sol Environment.

## 5. Local centre(s)

- 5.1. We query the proposed location of a local centre (eg convenience store, community space/ co workspace etc) south of the spine road at the southern part of the site. It seems common sense that this should be in an early phase and located conveniently to the largest number of people and other facilities eg the primary school. A location here would also be convenient for residents on other current development sites (Nursery site and Thornbury) and would avoid unnecessary car trips into congested central Eynsham. It would also support the ENP principle of a walkable neighbourhood which we strongly support.
- 5.2. There was no mention of other community facilities: burial ground, sports pitches (potential of joint or shared use of school facilities), doctors, etc. We expect that community growing space- allotments, community gardens and orchards will be included in the masterplan.

## 6. Flood risk

- 6.1. The slides about S106/infrastructure commitments mentioned only attenuation ponds for surface water. Has flood water rising from the Chil Brook, rather than water running off higher land into it, been assessed? Is there still a commitment to examine the high level of groundwater in the south-west? What if this proves to be difficult to accommodate? Will the masterplan change as a result? Who will establish cumulative impacts across the SDA?

## 7. Communication

- 7.1. We have only received draft minutes of the 19<sup>th</sup> August meeting. We still have not received minutes, draft or otherwise, from 16<sup>th</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup> September meetings.

We look forward to your considered response to the matters raised.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. Doughty". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "K" and a decorative flourish at the end of the word "Doughty".

Mrs Katherine Doughty  
Clerk to the Council