

## **SW Bicester (Kingsmere)**

### **Public Consultation Strategy**

#### **Condition 9 of 06/00967/OUT requires the following:**

*A strategy for public consultation in respect of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. The public consultation strategy shall include details of the consultation process to be undertaken during all construction and other works on the site including provision of infrastructure and mitigation as well as in respect of design codes, reserved matters applications and construction management plan.*

*Reason - To ensure that the public are consulted in an appropriate and structured form. The Government places importance on the carrying out of early consultation and the provision of a consultation strategy will enable a clear position on community consultation to be set out at the beginning of the process in accordance with the advice contained in PPS1.*

#### **Front loaded consultation:**

Considerable community engagement and stakeholder consultation has already taken place with regard to the proposed development at SW Bicester.

The master plan forming part of the outline application was prepared with the involvement and participation of the local community, members and officers of the local authorities, and representatives of local interest groups. They were engaged through a series of events organised and facilitated by an independent/specialist consultation company, Kevin Murray Associates. These included 3 workshops:

- 29 June 2005: "Growth in Bicester" followed by public meeting
- 18 July 2005: Workshop with Bicester Chamber of Commerce
- 19 July 2005: Design Workshop "Growing Bicester" followed by public meeting

A summary report entitled "Growing Bicester: Planning for a Sustainable Future" gives further detail regarding the community engagement events.

The outline planning application was then submitted in May 2006, whereupon the council undertook extensive public and stakeholder consultation. In addition to this, Countryside Properties (Bicester) Ltd undertook a public exhibition of the proposals between Saturday 13 and Tuesday 16 May 2006.

#### **Design Code:**

Planning permission was granted on 27 June 2008. Conditions attached to the Decision Notice required, amongst other things, the provision of a Design Code for the site (conditions 6 and 7).

A Steering Group was set up to oversee the production and agree the content of the Design Code, and the group (and other sub groups) included various stakeholders from not only Cherwell and Oxfordshire councils but also the Environment Agency and Thames Water. Two stakeholder workshops were held to consider the content and nature of the Design Code in June 2007 and January 2008. Various other stakeholder groups/individuals were invited to these events, including local members, RSL's, representatives of the PCT, emergency services and the local Wildlife Trust. The feedback and findings of those events helped inform the final Design Code.

Following the production of the final draft Code, the council then also undertook an extensive public consultation exercise before reporting to their Planning Committee. The responses from this consultation, and further stakeholder consultation were considered by members before the Code was approved by committee on 17 July 2008.

***Future consultation, engagement with the new and existing local community and availability of information:***

***1) Reserved matters applications***

The Council will carry out consultations in accordance with its normal practice on reserved matter applications.

There will be effectively two types of Reserved Matters applications.

Countryside Properties (Bicester) Ltd are responsible for obtaining reserved matters approval for the strategic infrastructure to serve the site, such as the major highway, drainage and landscape infrastructure. As the details contained within these proposals will accord with the principles already agreed within the planning application and mandatory coding set out within the Design Code, it is not intended to undertake additional public or stakeholder consultation over and above that which the council would expect to undertake when consulting on the applications submitted.

The second type of reserved matters application will relate to detailed proposals for residential, employment, hotel, health village, local centre and other land uses within the site.

As the site will be split into a number of residential land parcels, and a number of those parcels will be sold off to other developers, such applications may not be submitted by Countryside Properties (Bicester) Ltd. The Health Village and some of the other land uses will also be provided by other developers. As with the strategic infrastructure applications referred to above however, it is not considered necessary to undertake specific public or stakeholder consultation over and above that which the council will undertake when they receive such reserved matters applications. Individual developers when submitting their applications, will need to demonstrate how their proposals accord with the mandatory and other requirements set out in the Design Code. As the Design Code has already gone through extensive consultation, there should be no changes to the principle of proposals already consulted upon.

However, we will keep the public updated on the reserved matters that are submitted and construction progress on site (See "website" and "information bulletins" below).

## **2) Development updates**

### **a) Website**

Countryside Properties (Bicester) Ltd will be setting up a website for Kingsmere prior to the commencement of any development on the site. This website will probably remain until development on the site is complete.

The website will, amongst other things, identify the location of the site and give directions to it, and contain broad information on the site and the local area (including key places to visit), and have a link to Countryside Properties website which provides more information about the company.

Importantly, it will act as an information update on progress with development and activities at the site. There will be a "development update" page. This will be updated regularly to give development news. Such news could include information on significant construction activities on the site, which developers have started to commence work on site, not only for residential parcels but for the other permitted uses on the site. It will inform the user of applications submitted to the council, and we hope that there will be a link to the relevant council website page which will enable the user to view the planning application details if they desire and advise them of where to submit comments. It will inform the user of the opening of key facilities, open space, buildings and completion of works where significant.

We currently intend to have a plan attached to this page (similar to the approved Master Plan) which will identify land parcels/areas that are currently being developed or have been completed, or identify those parcels/areas on which planning applications have been submitted. This plan will also therefore need to be updated fairly regularly.

Details will be given of how to contact the sales offices on site, so that further information can be sought on particular development parcels. This will include a link to/a website address for other websites set up by individual developers on site. Such websites will have further sales information and contact details regarding those particular parcels.

The contact details for the Development Manager for this site will be given on the website as well as provided within the Construction and Environmental Development (CEMP). This person should be the contact for any on-site queries relating to construction matters etc. He will be based at Countryside Properties head office, and will be able to pass complaints/matters onto the site managers if necessary.

Key planning documents will be available to view on the website (or there will be a link to the Council's website where key documents are held there), including the approved Design Code, Travel Plans, Master Plan, Ecological Management Plan (EMP) and Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

Certain contact details will be provided, such as those for other developers on the site, the key contact at Countryside Properties (Project Manager, see below), and the Travel Plan Co-ordinator, and key contact details at the local authority and county councils.

During the life of the project, there will be a project manager at Countryside Properties who oversees the running of construction and development progress on the site. There will also be a site manager, present on site and responsible to the project manager.

If a member of the public has a query about construction works or matters affecting development on the site, there will be a contact number at Countryside Properties for them to use. This will initially be picked up by the Project Manager or support officer, who will then decide who will be responsible for dealing with the enquiry. Dependant upon the nature of the enquiry, the matter could be referred to the Countryside Properties (Bicester) Ltd site manager, a site manager acting for other developers, or other contacts such as the Travel Plan co-ordinator, Ecological Clerk of Works, Cherwell District Council or Oxfordshire County Council where appropriate.

Further information on complaint procedures is covered in the Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). A record of all complaints and actions taken/feedback made will be maintained at all times during the construction works on site (this will not be available on the website of course).

There will be contact details for the Travel Plan Co-ordinator on the website. People resident on the site/thinking of moving to the site can use this contact to find out about travelling and the public transport services in the area. There will be links to other websites which hold travel information e.g. bus and train companies, and users will be able to download resources such as a local walking map.

#### b) Newsletters

We have confirmed with Bicester Town Council that we will provide them with development updates so that they can be included within the Bicester newsletter "Bicester Gareth Gazette" (currently published quarterly). Such updates will cover key events and activities affecting the site, such as the start of significant construction activities, the opening of new open space and public areas/the community centre, the commencement of new bus services, marketing and key contact information, and possibly key community activities/events e.g. public art competitions. This will also give details of the Countryside Properties (Bicester) Ltd website, where more information can be found.

The development updates passed to Bicester Town Council will also be passed to Chesterton Parish Council and any other adjacent Parish Council's who express an interest in receiving them.

#### c) Starter Packs

Each individual developer will issue a householder/starter pack for new residents moving to the site. This pack will provide various information and contact details, and will include travel plan information or travel details which raise awareness of the sustainable modes of transport available in the immediate area (see the Residential Travel Plan for further consultation and publicity arrangements in this regard).

#### d) Community Centre

It is hoped that, once open, the Community Centre can also be used to help keep the local community updated on key events and development progress. A notice board and perhaps an information stand within the centre could be used to display key information and provide contact details (this and any other arrangements in terms of use at the Community Centre will be subject to the council's approval).

#### d) Sales Offices

These will also be utilised to display some of the key information referred to above, including copies of the Bicester Gareth Gazette, travel information and master plan or plan showing progress of site development/construction. Sales offices may have a pc available for visitors to use to access the Countryside Properties website (Dependant upon the individual developers arrangements). Sales staff should be able to answer questions regarding progress of development and broad construction issues relating to their particular development parcel or area.

SP 21.01.10