
COMMERCIAL ESTATES GROUP

30th August 2013

Dear Councillor,

Stratford-on-Avon District Council Consultation on Core Strategy

You may be aware that Stratford-on-Avon District Council is currently consulting on 'New Proposals' for its District Plan. The Parish Council has until **Friday 13th September 2013** to have your say.

The most significant proposal comprises a new settlement at Gaydon / Lighthorne Heath, adjacent to the M40 and former RAF Gaydon; now home to the major employers Jaguar Land Rover and Aston Martin.

There have been a number of local and national press reports relating to the proposal over the last few weeks. The proposal for this site is being considered by the Council following a review of the alternative development options around the District. Commercial Estates Group has a development interest in the site and I wanted to clarify the key aspirations of the new settlement that have not been made clear in press articles.

Why is the Council opting for a New Settlement

The concept of a new settlement within the District is not new. In the District Council's Housing Growth Scenarios consultation (Summer 2009) a new settlement option was consulted upon as a way to accommodate a number of housing scenarios (7,500, 10,100 and 15,000 new dwellings). Alternative options included a wider dispersal approach and urban extensions to the larger settlements in the District. Feedback to that consultation concluded that in all growth scenarios, the approach favoured by more than half of all respondents was a new settlement.

At that time a panel of experts, who were asked by the Secretary of State for the Environment to hold an examination into the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, concluded that 7,500 dwellings within the District could be accommodated without major strategic sites. But, additional housing (2,500 - 3,500) would be needed post 2021 and the District needed to consider either major additional housing growth at Stratford-upon-Avon or a new settlement.

Although, Regional Planning has now been abandoned, district councils must accommodate housing growth. The level of housing is therefore set by the District Council, but needs to be based upon clear evidence; evidence that will be tested by an independent inspector.

The District Council's evidence indicates that 9,500 new dwellings are needed in the District for the period up to 2028 (the Plan Period). It is important to note that there will be an inevitable need for more housing post 2028 due to the national trend of increased population over time.

To accommodate this additional housing (over and above that originally planned for 7,500) the Council needed to look at options. These options included:

- 1) Major additional growth at Stratford-upon-Avon (over and above that originally considered).
- 2) Additional housing growth to the villages and towns (over and above that originally considered).
- 3) Or a new settlement.

The Council commissioned independent consultants to test the strategy options. The Consultant's conclusions indicated that a new settlement at Gaydon / Lighthorne Heath provided the most appropriate way to accommodate the additional housing growth based upon a number of environmental and sustainability indicators.

It must be stressed that if a new settlement option is dismissed following this current consultation, one of the alternative options will need to replace it i.e. additional dwellings to the towns and villages or additional major housing growth at the District's principal town, Stratford-upon-Avon.

Facts about the New Settlement Proposal

Major new development proposals are, by their nature, contentious especially at a very local level and articles can sometimes fail to articulate the proposals fully. The following points set out a number of key facts.

- 1) The site is immediately adjacent to Lighthorne Heath Village and the Jaguar Land Rover / Aston Martin automotive facility.
- 2) The current employment facility employs approximately 7,000 employees, the majority of whom commute on a daily basis. Providing significant new housing within the area provides the potential to allow people to live close to where they work.
- 3) Traffic generation figures quoted in the Stratford Herald on the 29th August are misleading. The figures were based upon a total of 13,000 new dwellings within the District by 2028 including 5,000 at the Gaydon / Lighthorne Heath new settlement. The article infers that the traffic impacts quoted are generated by the proposed new settlement. This is wrong. Furthermore the Council's current proposals are for 9,500 new dwellings up to the period 2028 with 1,900 new dwellings at Gaydon / Lighthorne Heath i.e. 3,500 dwellings less than those tested in the quoted scenario.
- 4) Traffic generation figures in the technical report examine a 'worst case' scenario with no account being taken of the potential to contain trips i.e. new residents working locally at the existing or proposed employment, green transport measures or facilities being provided on site. Detailed transportation modelling is currently being undertaken by Warwickshire County Council to examine the specific impacts of the Council's development strategy together with mitigation requirements.
- 5) The proposed development for the period up to 2028 will comprise 1,900 dwellings, a new two form entry primary school, a community centre incorporating local community health provision, a local retail centre, a 150 acre Country Park including allotments and potentially playing fields, new employment and contributions for a potential secondary school / academy.

6) The 150 acre Country Park separates the village of Lighthorne and Lighthorne Heath. The park will be in community ownership thus preventing any opportunity for longer term built development i.e. it will provide a permanent 'gap' between Lighthorne and the new settlement.

7) Beyond 2028, other phases could be delivered when additional housing land is needed by the Council. These additional phases will provide facilities commensurate with the scale of the overall development. The post 2028 phases will reduce the need to accommodate additional housing in other locations throughout the District. It therefore provides a longer term certainty.

8) If the site is confirmed and included within the District Council's Local Plan, full engagement will be made with the local communities in the masterplanning of the development.

This means we can work with local people to evolve the mix of uses and layout of the proposal as well as looking at broadband and gas connection in Lighthorne Heath.

I hope you find the above summary useful. If you would like to find out a bit more about the kind of place we want to create please visit our web site at:

www.lighthorneheathgardenvillage.co.uk.

The deadline for comment is **Friday 13th September 2013** (27th September for those Parishes within which the proposal falls) should you and / or your parish council wish to support or object to the District Council's proposals. Please contact planning.policy@stratford-dc.gov.uk or visit www.stratford.gov.uk/csnew2013 to make your comments.

Should you or your Parish Council wish to discuss the content of this letter in more detail or meet the developer to discuss the project please feel free to contact Victoria Walker or Michael Sargood on 08448 425270 or email ceg@beattiegroupp.com .

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Burke', written in a cursive style.

Richard Burke
Commercial Estates Group