

Taylor Wimpey - Former Wisley Airfield

Community Liaison Group – Meeting Minutes – Thursday 12th
August

Planning Programme Update and Naming Strategy

Date: 12th August 2021

Time: 5pm

Venue: Zoom

Project Team:

- Antonis Pazourou (AP) – Taylor Wimpey
- Camille Soor (CS) – Taylor Wimpey
- Katy Bennett (KB) – Cratus Communications
- Susie Gray (SG) – DPQ (Dallas Pierce Quintero)

Group Members:

- Richard Ayears (RA) – Ripley Parish Council
- Malcolm Aish (MA) – Ockham Parish Council
- Martin O'Hara (MO) – West Horsley Parish Council
- David Tipping (DT) – Cobham Heritage
- Frances Porter (FP) – Elm Corner Residents
- Alistair Smith (AS) – Guildford Society
- Robert Taylor (RT) – East Horsley Parish Council
- Louise Punter (LP) – Surrey Chamber of Commerce
- Steven Wood (SW) – Cobham and Downside Residents Association

Apologies:

- Ian Smith (IS) – Effingham Residents Association
- David Alexander (DA) – RHS Wisley
- Alex Beames (AB) – Send Parish Council
- Nigel Burke (NB) – Guildford Bike Users Group
- Colin Cross (CC) – Guildford Borough Councillor, Lovelace Ward, Surrey County Councillor and Ripley Parish Council
- Doug Clare (DC) – Guildford Bike Users Group
- Chris Deane (CD) – West Clandon Parish Council
- Clare Goodall (CG) – East Clandon Parish Council
- Hugh Gear – Ockham Parish Church
- Basil Minor (BM) – Guildford Ramblers
- Kevin Travers (KT) – Enterprise M3
- Euan Harkness (EH) – Wisley Action Group

1. Introductions

- AP introduced the topic for the meeting – planning programme update.
- AP provided an update on the naming strategy workshop held previously, and explained that Taylor Wimpey wants to update the CLG on the process before discussing potential names for the three neighbourhoods with Guildford Borough Council.
- KB took a roll call of attendees.

2. Planning Process

- AP provided an overview of progress.
- Taylor Wimpey has been working through three chapters of community consultation. There has been a change in the planning timeline, and the team now proposes to submit the hybrid application in Q4 2021 – previously it was Q3 2021.
- AP explained that the team is also waiting to share findings from the transport models and future scenarios with the CLG later this year, ahead of the submission.
- AP noted that the stub road application submitted October 2020 was heard at Planning Committee in May 2021 and was recommended for approval by Officers and included a Grampian condition linking it to the DCO. However, the decision was made to defer this decision until the DCO decision is received from the Secretary of State in November.
- AP informed the group that Taylor Wimpey will now be submitting an appeal on the grounds of non-determination, and this has been submitted to PINS.
- In addition, a new application has been submitted to Guildford Borough Council which will provide access from both sides of the Wisley Lane diversion into the Taylor Wimpey land – north and south. Taylor Wimpey is awaiting validation of the application and will share details of that once validated.
- AP noted that the full masterplan allocation includes CBRE and Hallam, and discussions about the masterplan are progressing well. AP thanked everyone who has been part of the journey.
- MO asked about the school and health provisions.
- **Response:** AP said it is Taylor Wimpey's intention to plan for a secondary school at the former Wisley Airfield, and it has included it in the masterplan, but the decision is with Surrey County Council. Similarly, Taylor Wimpey has set aside space in the masterplan for a health provision but this decision is up to the Clinical Commissioning Group. If there is not an onsite provision, it may be that a financial contribution is provided to upgrade health provisions surrounding the site.
- SW said the appeal for non-determination is a relatively aggressive thing to do, and asked what Taylor Wimpey hopes to achieve through it?
- **Response:** AP said that it is because the application works with Highways England's proposal, and if the decision is made to grant the DCO in November or before, then Taylor Wimpey needs to ensure that it has the right approvals to ensure the road is coordinated and constructed at the same time. Digging up circa 300m of the Wisley Lane Diversion to install a roundabout after the road is completed is not a good thing for the community.
- AP said he hopes it is not perceived as aggressive but can understand the thinking, adding that there were no statutory objections to the application. In addition, due to the Grampian Condition, if the Secretary of State refuses the DCO proposed works for the Wisley Lane diversion, Taylor Wimpey cannot implement its consent.

- MA said that AP is referring to an all-party meeting with Guildford Borough Council, and asked will the CLG hear anything – will there be meetings or feedback? Why is the CLG being told about it?
- **Response:** AP said it is to inform the CLG that as part of Policy A35, Taylor Wimpey is masterplanning the full allocation and therefore AP wanted to tell the group that discussions are progressing well with the other landowners.
- MA asked if the other landowners are submitting planning applications.
- **Response:** AP said he cannot comment, although they are likely to submit once Taylor Wimpey's outline application has been submitted.
- AS asked about the planning application, and whether that will have the Design Guide as part of it. AS also asked whether the Design Guide will cover the other landowners.
- **Response:** AP said that it will not include the Design Code – this will be coming as part of the Reserved Matters application. Taylor Wimpey is applying for outline permission for the built form and site as a whole. The only detail may be accesses and the SANG.
- Taylor Wimpey is working with Guildford Borough Council and currently discussing key areas of the masterplan that they may include in more detail to provide more comfort. AP added that there will be a Design Framework plan which will accompany the outline submission.

3. Transport Update

- AP provided an update on transport.
- AP explained that the planning submission has been moved into Q4 2021, mostly due to ensuring that the traffic modelling information is ready.
- AP noted that the model has been validated and Taylor Wimpey is now working on progressing and forecasting future year scenarios.
- There will be further interim update on transport matters at CLG 13, followed by a summary of the transport position in CLG 14 in October prior to submission. CLG 14 is when the most detail should be available for discussion with the group.
- AP said that a key thing to note is that the application will be submitted in Q4 2021, but Taylor Wimpey still hopes to continue the CLG to ensure that the group can continue to discuss the submission through the determination of the application.
- CS joined, and commented on the earlier conversation about the Design Code Framework. CS added to AP's earlier response that this is a strategy that has been led by Guildford Borough Council, who would rather see the detailed Design Code come once the outline has been agreed so that Reserved Matters applications help to develop the full Design Guide.
- AS said that this is interesting given the current situation with Weyside about the Design Code and Design Guides where they are validating the process with the MHCLG.

- CS asked if Guildford Borough Council's advice matches with what is going on with Weyside i.e., leaving the detail to a later stage.
- AS said it is hard to judge as the programmes for the former Wisley Airfield and Weyside are different, but he hopes that the former Wisley Airfield applications will get to the same level of detail as was produced for Weyside, as it is a lengthy process and if other developers are involved there will need to be consistency across the scheme.
- CS said she understands and said it comes down to making sure that the detail can be developed in line with the vision for the scheme if approved at a later date.

4. Naming strategy overview and feedback

- AP introduced SG.
- SG explained that she is working on the Culture and Place strategy for the former Wisley Airfield and as part of this, she is looking at the heritage of the area. She is also looking at public art opportunities for people to get together for creative activity, social connections and landscaping in permanent community spaces.
- SG explained that cultural strategy is important when looking at place names because culture is what distinguishes one place from another.
- SG added that some of this is being developed now because it is about place identity and the fact that names help to define the characteristics of the place and its relationship to the surroundings. If the planning application is approved this exploration could underpin the approach to further naming.
- SG discussed the work so far, explaining that the team has looked at existing place names and explored policy and planning.
- SG added that the recent stakeholder workshop focused on thinking about the names of the three neighbourhoods, as well as the names of different aspects of the site if the planning application is approved. SG explained that the current focus is only on key headline names – namely the east, west and central neighbourhoods and how they fit into the wider Ockham existing naming.
- SG explained the discussion around the western neighbourhood first, which would be the first to come forward in the scheme. 'Stratford Bridge', 'Stratford Farm', and 'Stratford Hyde' were suggested. Other options included incorporating 'Gate', which signified a gate entrance to the three neighbourhoods, or 'Stratford Oak' to reflect the veteran oak on the western side of airfield.
- SG said that there is no clear winner for the western neighbourhood name yet, with 'Stratford Hyde' and 'Stratford Green' both being popular.
- SG explained that for the central neighbourhood, there was a preferred choice in the workshop. This neighbourhood is not on the highest land (that is over the southeast corner), but the land does rise in the central area, so 'Upper Ockham' came out strongly.

- For the eastern neighbourhood, 'Upton End' and 'Beacon End' were discussed. SG added that it was generally felt that if the term Ockham was going to be used it should uniquely be for the central neighbourhood.
- AP and SG asked for feedback on the naming discussion.
- MO said he would be interested to hear MA's take on them.
- MA said he does not recall the conclusion about 'Stratford Hyde' but recalls 'Upper Ockham' and felt that was a sensible option and preferred 'Upton End' for the eastern neighbourhood as an option.
- MA added that he is not entirely satisfied with 'Stratford Hyde' as it is a complicated name that does not roll off the tongue and there were other alternatives. It doesn't have the same ring as 'Upper Ockham', which is straightforward as you go up a hill to get there – fairly natural. 'Hyde' is a rather convoluted name for what will be quite a small area at the end.
- AP agreed that 'Hyde' does not have a natural ring and invited the team to put any thoughts forward.
- SG said there was an option to call the western neighbourhood 'Stratford' plus another word – possibly 'Stratford Brook.'
- MO said Ockham Parish Council should be happy with the names chosen. MO added that 'Stratford' has a certain ring to it because of the farm, although he does not feel strongly about what comes after it – noting that he likes 'Oak' because of the proximity of RHS Wisley.
- MA said there is a popular misconception that Ockham is connected to oak but this is not the case, adding that it could be confusing if oak is introduced as if there is a connection.
- RT shared that he prefers 'Stratford Oak' to 'Stratford Hyde.'
- SG agreed that it sounds quite poetic but understands MA's point.
- AP said that the western neighbourhood is the one where they could feature the most influences from RHS Wisley as they share the same road.
- AS said he knows it is a farm at the moment but asked if it was previously heath land, as 'Stratford Heath' might work.
- AP said that they can speak to the team about this.
- MA said it is important to remember that if development starts, for the several years the houses will be built on the west end so this place will rise in importance early on in the development. Therefore it is important that it is given something people recognise and accept before moving on to other areas.
- AP agreed with MA and said he liked what MA mentioned about people saying that it begins on the west end.

- MO said that 'Stratford West' sounds like a tube station.
- SG said that East and West is appealing but it would need to be the same name and then East/West, e.g. 'Stratford East' and 'Stratford West', otherwise it will not make sense.
- AP suggested 'Stratford Water' or 'Stratford Waters' as Stratford Brook has water and there will be ponds and infinity gardens elsewhere in the site - this neighbourhood would be surrounded by water.
- MO said 'Cotswolds Water' exists in Cotswold but they have water sports on their waters so it is significant, and asked if Stratford Brook is out of the question?
- MO said it is an element of the area but a differentiating element of the area.
- RT said that people know the name so why not use it?
- MO agreed with RT.
- AP asked MA about 'Stratford Brook'.
- MA said it seems strange to have the name apply to the brook and the village.
- FP agreed with MA that as 'Brook' is known as water, it would only refer to the brook and bridge so to call an area 'Stratford Brook' isn't right.
- AP said they are all suggestions and all feedback is welcome.
- SG asked FP to share her thoughts.
- FP understands that this process is useful but said that until planning permission is received, it is difficult to think like that.
- AP discussed the preference for the central neighbourhood being called 'Upper Ockham'.
- MA said that he does not think that the centre of Ockham is the church, but it is instead where there used to be a post office and parish rooms in that centre of Ockham.
- MO asked whether there will be an overriding name for the whole site.
- **Response:** AP said that this has not been established yet, although all the feedback says that Wisley Airfield is in Ockham. So it could be that the site is the former Wisley Airfield, Ockham – with three neighbourhood names to follow which are in keeping with the current settlement pattern of the hamlet.
- MO said that 'Upper Ockham' has a dominance and asked AP whether that was the intention as that area will be the dominant area in Ockham.
- SG said that she would also be interested in thoughts on this, as from her perspective it is a way of indicating that it is the larger neighbourhood where the

key facilities will be. SG added that it is not meant to indicate dominance but in terms of the identity of the three neighbourhoods, it is the centre.

- RT said that it will be the largest single hamlet by far.
- AP discussed 'Ockham on the Hill' and 'Ockham Ridge' and asked the CLG members whether the group was right to put 'Upper Ockham' above these suggestions, or whether any other names be considered.
- DT asked why 'Middle Ockham' was turned down – was it because the historic centre of Ockham has been the church?
- **Response:** AP said that it was one of the reasons, but it also did not have the same ring.
- FP mentioned it goes back to saying it is the middle of Ockham. It is the middle of Ockham but as it has not always been, it may be confusing.
- FP asked why the name must include Ockham.
- SG said it does not have to. It is about a place that traditionally has been referred to as Wisley when it is located in Ockham being positioned in Ockham.
- FP suggested that if it will be the hub perhaps it would be better to have something to reflect that.
- AP mentioned the school and community centre and questioned what their names would be. AP noted that using Ockham as the name of the neighbourhood would make sense as the name of the school could be Ockham Primary School, for example.
- SG added that in discussions about cultural strategy and place identity the single strongest message was that this place is Ockham and not Wisley.
- DT asked whether they are aware of what all the people of Ockham think.
- MA said that they consider the naming strategy redundant and there are more important things than names to discuss.
- AP replied that this is an opportunity for the community to make it the best place it can be – the community's input is extremely important. Taylor Wimpey wants it to be integrated into the local community.
- SG added that the council is keen to see this work take place, as often neighbourhoods are given generic names which have to change when it becomes no longer appropriate.
- MA said it would be a great mistake to start using any names before there is an answer to the earlier question – what do the local people think about it? Otherwise, there will be resistance, as there already is, but to start using names without consideration of local people will be a mistake.

- AP said that MA and FP are representatives of the community, so it is useful to include them in the process as much as possible. Taylor Wimpey is continuing to ask for community feedback through methods such as the newsletter.
- AP continued to explain that historic groups were invited to participate but could not attend, but Taylor Wimpey is trying to include as many local neighbouring communities as possible. AP added that hopefully the CLG can appreciate that Taylor Wimpey is trying its best to engage widely for this naming process. The overriding aim is to deliver something of quality and the CLG meetings are the best place for this discussion to begin. Taylor Wimpey does not want to start using names if the planning permission is granted if they have not been discussed with the community, as it is not the right way to engage.
- FP said that there are a lot of people in the community who do not support the scheme, so it might be inflammatory to name it because then it comes across like a done deal. As MA said, it is right to continue with the process doing what is needed and explain that these things are in progress, rather than finalised.
- AP replied that although Taylor Wimpey is submitting an outline application, meaning much of the detail will be delivered later, the team want to show that this will be a site of quality – this can be demonstrated by showing a detailed consideration of the place which includes naming proposals which take cues from the local area to shape the proposals.
- AP understands FP's view but explained that Taylor Wimpey to involve the community where possible. SG added that the name is an important part of the vision for the site.
- SW said that as a retired property developer, it does seem premature, adding that at Committee, Taylor Wimpey could explain how it did engage but the naming process was inconclusive as people did not want to make a decision prior to approval of the planning application.
- LP said that she did not know how much work was involved in naming and that it is fascinating. However, she added that given the amount of work that has been done and potential names which have been gathered, work could be paused on naming until a planning decision is made. The work is positive and is 3/4 done, which will make it easy to pick up if and when it is needed.
- AP said the naming was to be started post-submission and determination, but as Taylor Wimpey is working on the vision this was brought forward. AP agreed with LP that Taylor Wimpey may be able to pause and consider it again post-submission or determination.
- AS agreed that the team should pause, have the suggestions ready and tell the council that it has narrowed the field of names. AS provided the example of a development in the centre of Guildford where the North Street development has suddenly come with a new name of the Friary Quarter and Debenhams becoming St Marys Wharf – everyone is surprised and is asking where this came from.
- AS added that Taylor Wimpey needs to be careful with timing, especially with this development, and restart engagement with the community once decisions are made about the future.

- AP thanked AS, and said he will speak to CS and come back with an update on the naming process.
- FP agreed with LP that it is the right time to pause and maybe do a survey after.

5. AOB

- AP asked if there is any other business that needs to be covered.
- AS asked if Taylor Wimpey is getting sufficient airtime with Guildford Borough Council. He is hearing repeated reports that the Planning department is overloaded and not responsive, and was curious if this would delay the plans.
- CS responded that earlier on it did slow down but recently they have had more feedback from them. Recently a new member was appointed to the team who can dedicate more hours on a weekly basis. Taylor Wimpey is having almost weekly meetings with the council and working with them on the pre-application phase.
- MO asked AP if they circulated notes of the May Design Review Panel meeting notes.
- AP answered that this should be on the website. It took some time to get approval from everyone. AP asked KB if they've been updated.
- KB said that GDPR permissions were granted recently but was unsure if it was on the website yet.
- MO asked for the notes to be circulated directly to them once available.
- KB and AP said they are happy to do this.
- SW said that he has heard that a Councillor has reported that Elmbridge Council officers are not engaging with the proposals, and asked if there was any direct engagement taking place or whether it was through Guildford Borough Council.
- CS said she is surprised at the feedback as they have met Elmbridge Council a few times and have a meeting scheduled in the next couple of months. CS said they are dealing with them directly so there are separate pre-application discussions taking place, mainly focused on infrastructure.
- SW said that Elmbridge Council's views on this will be greater than any of the other CLG members so it is important for them to be fully informed and able to comment. SW said that in terms of naming, Ockham Field could be an option as it is an airfield.
- FP said there is an Ockham playing field so it may be confusing.

6. Next meeting

- SG said the next steps are to review feedback, and discuss internally and with the council. Then a naming report will be submitted, but it could reflect only the process so far in terms of discussion, without any confirmed names.
- AP thanked SG and everyone else for their time and said that he will be on leave for 3 weeks. AP asked CLG members to let KB know if there are any enquiries and she will put them through to the wider project team.

AP closed the meeting.