

Minutes of the meeting of Hungerford 2036 project team held on Monday 19th April 2021 virtually on Zoom at 12.30pm

Present – Chris Scorey, Tony Drewer-Trump (Co-chair), Cllr John Downe (Co-chair), Chris Bowden, Town Clerk, Cllr Helen Simpson (Mayor), Chris Bowden (Navigus Planning), Philip Simmons (PS) (Donnington Homes), David Neame (DN) (Sutton Neame)

Apologies: Cllr Richard Hudson, Denise Gaines, Steve Bickell, Cllr Claire Winser

The Clerk advised the meeting was being recorded. The minutes will be made public.

Cllr John Downe introduced everyone. David Neame advised he acts as the planning consultant for Donnington Homes and Philip Simmons introduced himself as Land Manager for Donnington New Homes. The purpose of the meeting is to present details on the site HUN7. DN also requested a few minutes at the end of the meeting to refer to sites HUN8, 9,10.

DN shared his screen to show a power point presentation for HUN7 forming a potential housing allocation in the emerging NDP.

A map of the site was presented and one showing proximity to the town. (Refer to the second and third slides below). Access will be to the north. Residential properties border north and open land borders the south. DN advised there is good level pedestrian connectivity to site.

DN advised an ecological appraisal showed the site to have low ecological value as it stands and there are no headline constraints in ecological terms. Top right-hand corner of site has potential to achieve bio-diversity net gain.

This is an initial concept, and they are working on taking this to the next stage, to include an energy strategy and use of solar gain. The plan gives an idea of potential spatial configuration. The site will have a capacity of 30-40 dwellings. They have no fixed layout at this stage. There is an importance of maintaining and enhancing the boundary to south and west and an opportunity to enhance the east river boundary, which is within the area that Donnington Group control.

Glanville Consulting Engineers have looked at access requirements for a site of 30/40 and a T junction meets with the Highways adoption requirement, therefore the appropriate access can be achieved. In terms of speed limit, the required visibility can be obtained. There would be a dropped footway curb to connect to housing on north side of road.

A slide was displayed laying out the planning benefits/opportunities. (Refer to last slide)

DN summarised points made above adding they would be looking at mix of market and affordable homes. There are opportunities for traffic calming, for photovoltaics and good potential for natural screening for existing dwellings to the north.

The following questions were asked by the project team:

Between the site boundary on east side and access side, there is space for one house there?

The plans are indicative only but yes there is space, and it addresses the street scene.

Is the area within the red line Donnington Homes ownership?

Yes. Beyond that is out of their control.

Is it possible to provide an upgrade to the boundary through engagement with the landowner?

Donnington homes are content to do that and we could jointly discuss with the landowner but permission would be required.

With reference to their energy strategy, are there any particular areas they are looking at?

The key approach is through building design and construction – the fabric of the building. PVs are part of the strategy. Heating of the building is yet to be explored. Air Source Heat Pumps are a possibility. They are being used in the development in Kintbury which is the first development where

they are using newer technology. Heat Recovery Systems are being used in smaller properties there recirculating heat from a bath for example. On another scheme they committed to energy saving of 10% above the norm of CO2.

Would they consider community heating system based on ground source? In the emerging West Berks Local Plan, energy standards specified in 'home quality management (HQM) and also the Building Regs (Future Homes standard). One would expect these to be in place before HUN7 is developed?

HQM is a follow on from 'code for sustainable homes' 10 years ago - now ditched. It is very new. WBC are one of the first few looking to adopt this in their local plan. HQM will achieve more than the new building regs. Community heating, they haven't looked at it. Do we envisage one pump for the whole site? They only become viable on sites of 100s or 1000s. Also, would need to look at mortgageability of houses and needs to be manageable.

Is there any way of making a pedestrian cycle route to Salisbury Road to facilitate access to the schools?

There are only 2 landowners between their site and Salisbury Road. They can approach landowners, but it would be outside of their control. Strip of woodland to the east is split up between many owners.

Is it worth a discussion on the topic of self-build?

Very rarely does this happen on small sites like this. e.g. 3% of the 2500 dwellings for the Thatcham development (so 75 dwellings are self-build). Why WBC only proposed them there and not on other sites, they don't know. DH are happy to understand our own needs. On this site 3% will equate to one self-build plot.

The following questions were asked by the promoters of HUN7.

Have we had any interest in self-build?

Only the self-build register that WBC has to maintain. No specific demand. Cllr John Downe declared his interest as when looking for a site for himself there were none available, and he knocked down a building in order to rebuild. If we are looking for high standards of energy efficiency self-build would encourage it.

You mention community housing, would you elaborate?

What are options around more public ownership/ land trust schemes? We don't have a clear demand.

DN advised if we are offering houses for community, we need to have an operator to ensure they are there for the community in the future and managed in terms of ownership and occupation. The starting point would be to provide affordable houses for local need.

They are looking at traffic calming and would need to agree this with the Highway authority. What are your thoughts on this and any particular issues?

It is a new site with a new access point on the edge of town with a 50mph speed limit.

What is the timetable for the next step?

We haven't set a timetable yet but would like to do a public consultation before or after the summer holidays. WBC need to get their own plan finalised before we finalise the NDP. The District Plan target for completion is end of 2022.

We have a bit more detail on landscaping, energy strategy, highway discussions and layout to complete. When will you need this info by?

We will come back to you with a date for receiving this.

Feedback on the site layout is welcome? 2 bed, 3 bed, flats etc?

From a development point of view its preferable to have larger houses. From a local development point of view it would be better to have smaller houses e.g. starter homes. We don't have any particular numbers in addition to what WBC would require.

DN wished to make clear HUN7 is being promoted in its own right. We have received the info on other 3 sites. There is potential for open space and he would point out the net biodiversity gain with inclusion of HUN8/9/10. He understands the area that is currently used as an allotment is probably a sticking point. The new proposed allotment site would have security of tenure and the existing allotment space would house over 55s.

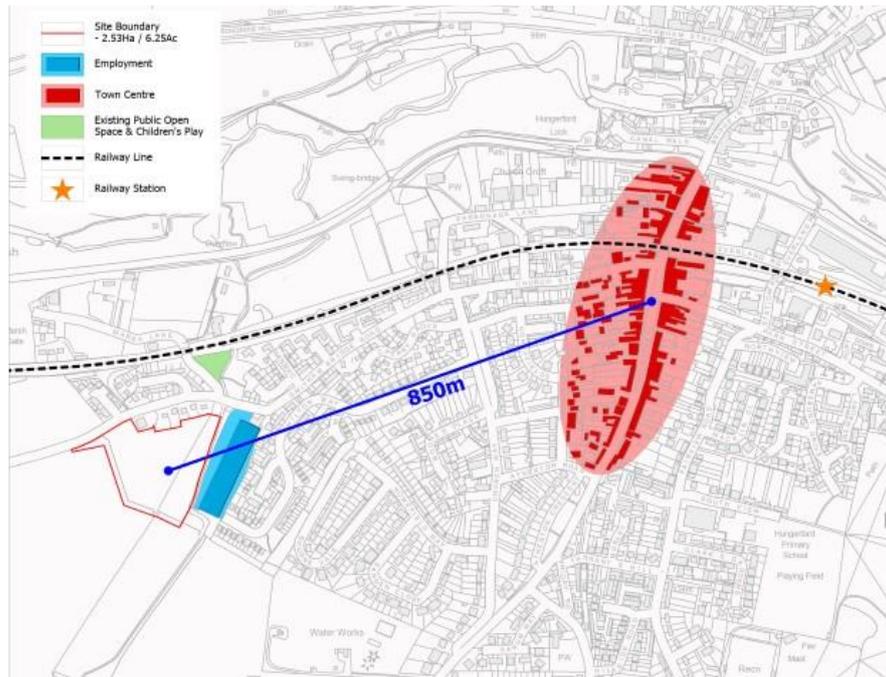
DN will send through his power point slides to the Clerk.



Site HUN7:



Proximity of HUN7 to Town Centre

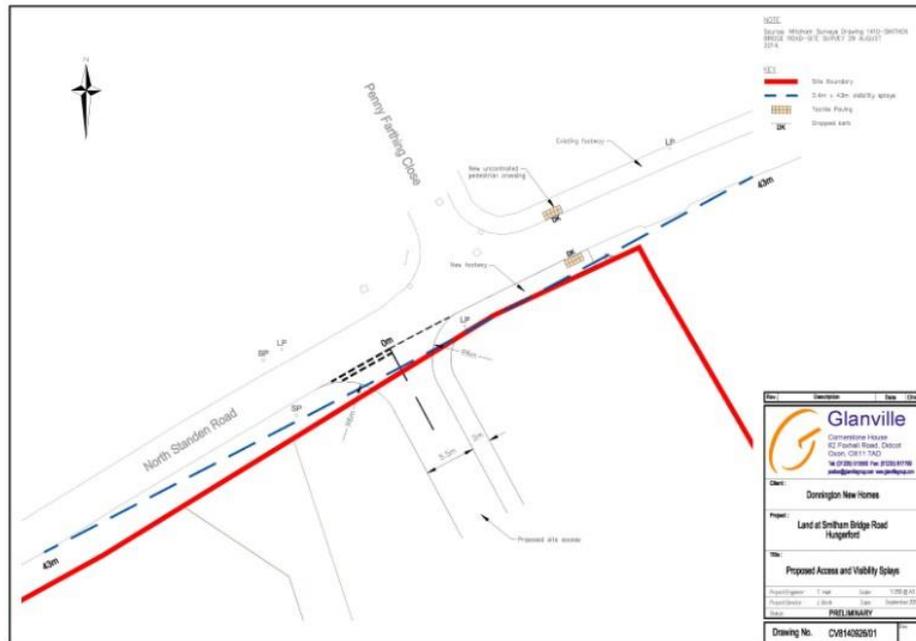


Ecological Appraisal:



HUN7 – Initial Concept Site Plan:





HUN7 – Planning Benefits/Opportunities

- Well related to existing settlement pattern
- Opportunity for level walk into town centre
- Provision of mix of market and affordable homes (including consideration to self build options)
- Opportunity for enhancement of Shalbourne River waterside
- Opportunity for traffic calming to north of proposed site access (exact detail to be discussed and agreed)
- Opportunity for PV systems (scheme design currently being prepared)
- Potential for natural screening for Smitham Bridge Road residents