

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND LAND FOR CEMETERY AT THE FORTY AND CHELWORTH ROAD, CRICKLADE

ON BEHALF OF HANNICK HOMES AND DEVELOPMENTS LTD

NOVEMBER 2023



**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004**

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared by RAW Planning Ltd to accompany an outline planning application which is submitted on behalf of Hannick Homes and Developments Ltd ("The Applicant"). The application relates to land south of The Forty and land north of Chelworth Road, Cricklade ("the Application Site").

1.2 The description of development is as follows:

"Outline planning application (with all matters except access reserved) for up to 49 dwellings and associated works and provision of a cemetery together with access and associated works".

1.3 The Applicant has been engaging with Cricklade Town Council regarding the application site and the delivery of land for a cemetery since 2015 and a public community consultation event was held in July 2023.

1.4 This Statement sets out the local engagement that has taken place prior to the submission of the planning application and how this has informed the application proposals. Section 2 sets out the relevant planning policies surrounding community engagement, Section 3 then outlines the engagement process that has taken place before Section 4 provides a summary of the comments received by the local community as part of the recent community consultation and how each of these comments have been addressed as part of the proposals. Section 5 then provides a summary of the process and how this has informed the application proposals.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

2.1 Under Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). As part of the SCI, LPAs are required to encourage participation from local community groups when development is proposed.

2.2 Policies relevant to the preparation of an SCI are as follows:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Wiltshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.3 The NPPF outlines national guidance and the Government's policies on the many different aspects of planning. The latest version of the NPPF was published in September 2023. Paragraphs 39 to 46 set out national planning policy on pre-application engagement. Paragraph 39 states that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Paragraph 40 goes on to state that applicants should be encouraged to engage with the local community before submitting their applications.

2.4 Paragraph 132 (within the Section entitled 'achieving well-designed places') states that early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. The paragraph goes on to state that applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

2.5 The NPPG highlights that pre-application engagement by prospective applicants offers significant potential to improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system and improve the quality of planning applications and their likelihood of success. The NPPG states that this can be achieved through a number of factors including working collaboratively and openly with interested parties at an early stage to identify, understand and seek to resolve issues associated with a proposed development (paragraph number: ID: 20-001-20190315).

- 2.6 The NPPG continues to state that pre-application engagement with the community is encouraged where it will add value to the process and outcome (paragraph number: ID- 20-010-20150326).

Wiltshire Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (July 2020)

- 2.7 The latest version of the Statement of Community Involvement was adopted in July 2020. The SCI is mainly focussed on how Wiltshire Council will consult with the community during Plan preparation and the consideration of planning applications. The Statement does not refer to engagement from the side of the Applicant and as such does not provide any guidance that should be taken into account by the Applicant as part of the application.

3. THE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PROCESS

Engagement with Cricklade Town Council

- 3.1 The Applicant started engaging with Cricklade Town Council regarding the application site and the delivery of land for a cemetery in 2015. The Applicant attended the Town Council's Planning, Conservation and Transport Committee meeting on 5th October 2015 to discuss the application site and how it could be promoted through the Cricklade Neighbourhood Plan. The potential to deliver community benefits such as land for a new cemetery were also discussed at the meeting.
- 3.2 The Applicant then attended further meetings with the Town Council on 17th October 2016, 13th May 2019, 15th February 2021, 26th September 2022 and 24th July 2023 all of which have focussed on providing updates to the Town Council and discussing opportunities to deliver new cemetery land as part of any proposals. The Town Council have also provided feedback regarding sketch proposals which have included a desire to see bungalows provided and for the front field facing onto The Forty kept clear of development. Other matters raised by the Town Council include the need to address traffic along The Forty, the provision of safe routes to school, surface water drainage and sewage infrastructure and the need to provide mitigation for the North Meadow SAC.

Community Consultation Event

- 3.3 A community consultation event was held on Friday 14th July between 2pm and 6.30pm at The Jenner Hall, Bath Road, Cricklade.
- 3.4 Leaflets were distributed to 502 properties in the immediate vicinity inviting residents to attend the event. A copy of the leaflet was also displayed in the window of the Town Council's offices along the High Street in Cricklade and placed on the Town Council's Facebook page.



- 3.5 A copy of the leaflet is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.6 The District Councillor and Town Councillors were also invited to attend the consultation event from 1pm in order to understand the proposals and ask any questions before the event was opened publicly.
- 3.7 Four exhibition boards were displayed at the event identifying the application site and setting out an overview of the proposals including an Illustrative Site Plan. A copy of the exhibition boards are attached at Appendix 2.
- 3.8 Two representatives from Hannick Homes attended the event alongside Kerry Pflieger from RAW Planning Ltd and David Fletcher from Evoke Transport Consultants. The consultant team were available to discuss the proposals and answer any questions people had.
- 3.9 The event was very well attended. The attendance sheet that was placed at the entrance to the hall was signed by 74 people, although it was observed that a large number of people did not sign in and as such the actual number of attendees is estimated at circa 150.
- 3.10 Comments forms were provided at the event for people to complete on the day and return to a comments box or to take away and return by post or to email comments. A total of 24 responses were received.



Photos taken at the event showing attendees studying the exhibition boards



4. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 4.1 The aim of the consultation event was to provide local residents with an opportunity to view the proposals for the site and to ask questions of the consultant team and raise any issues they may have.
- 4.2 As set out above a total of 24 comments forms and / or emails were received.
- 4.3 A table summarising the comments received is set out below. The table also provides a column in which the Applicants response is provided, including how the proposals have been amended (if applicable) to address an issue raised. The issues are addressed in summary form below with full answers provided through the technical reports that accompany the application. Reference to a technical report is made where applicable.

COMMENT	RESPONSE
Highways Matters	
The Forty and The Fiddle are very narrow and 2 cars cannot pass especially with informal parked cars	The application proposals would be estimated to produce a maximum of 19 extra vehicles on to The Forty at peak times, equivalent to less than one vehicle per three minutes. This low increase in traffic flows, combined with the proposed traffic calming measures which are designed to help reduce speeds along The Forty, will ensure that the development should not lead to unsafe usage of the road with flows still expected to measure less than 100 vehicles per hour which is the limit for roads which are designated as "Shared Surfaces". Whilst there are a couple of areas along The Forty where the width decreases and is therefore not suitable to accommodate two-way vehicle flow, there is suitable forward visibility for vehicles to see other vehicles coming in the opposite direction and sufficient informal waiting spaces to allow for a vehicle to wait and allow another vehicle to pass.
The Forty and The Fiddle do not have any footpaths. Lots of pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders use the roads. Not all pedestrians walk towards Church walk with people walking along The Fiddle to access the leisure centre	A new footpath link is proposed along the frontage of the residential site which will connect into Church Walk to the north and the footpath through to the Hitchings development to the south providing footpath connections to both the south and the north. The proposed traffic calming along The Forty and Chelworth Road will also benefit pedestrians and cyclists using these roads as it will reduce traffic speeds.
There is very poor visibility to the right of the proposed site access	The submitted Transport Statement demonstrates that the required visibility splays can be achieved from the residential development site and cemetery land within land controlled by the Applicant and highway land.
Access should be via the B4553 and field to the south	This land lies outside the Applicants control and in any event it has been demonstrated through the application materials that a satisfactory access can be achieved along The Forty.
Can The Forty become one way or traffic calmed?	The application includes proposals for traffic calming along The Forty, including three flat top humps to reduce speeds,

	signage and enforced narrowing on the eastern approach on The Fiddle to improve visibility at the junction. An enhanced footway and visibility would also be provided at The Forty / Purton Road junction.
Can the Chelworth Road access from The Forty be closed as this is used as a cut through? This would mean those living on Chelworth Road would only have one way access.	The application proposals do not require or justify the closure of the Chelworth Road access from The Forty, however the proposed traffic calming measures are designed to help reduce speeds along Chelworth Road as it turns into The Forty.
The Forty cannot cope with construction traffic and it has a 7.5 tonne weight limit which could restrict construction traffic	Construction traffic would be a short term event and the Applicant will submit a Construction Management Plan to the LPA for agreement prior to any construction work taking place which would detail matters such as construction operating hours, vehicular routes, wheel washing etc.
If it is proposed to upgrade The Forty are Hannick aware that some verges are privately owned?	To inform the proposed accesses to the residential and cemetery land as well as the traffic calming measures the Applicant has undertaken a Highway boundary search and can confirm that all land required for the access visibility splays and traffic calming measures is either in their control or is owned by the Highway Authority.
If The Forty is improved it is important that the 7.5 tonne weight limit restriction is retained otherwise The Forty will become a shortcut to Chelworth Industrial Estate	This is a matter for the Local Highway Authority although the Applicant is not proposing or seeking any increase to the weight restriction.
The junction of The Forty with the B4533 Purton Road is already a major hazard. What will be done to improve this junction?	As part of a package of highway improvement works an enhanced footway and visibility would be provided at The Forty / Purton Road junction. In addition, the submitted Transport Statement confirms there have been no reported vehicles collisions at this junction over the latest available five year period (2018-2022).
Support for new footpath creation along the site frontage and a pedestrian crossing point	The in principle support for a new footpath along the site frontage and a pedestrian crossing point was acknowledged and the proposals will provide this with a flat top hump providing a crossing point across The Forty connecting with Church Walk.
Drainage	
The Forty already floods	The proposed residential site has been identified as being at risk of pluvial flooding due to previous ridge and furrow agricultural practices. Areas at risk of pluvial flooding are shown to be located within the depressions in the topography associated with this, as well as at the ditches in the north and east of the site. Profiling of ground levels as part of the proposals will remove this risk, and direct surface water runoff to the proposed attenuation basin. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment also confirms that the proposals would not increase the risk of surface water flooding off site.
Houses next to the Hitchings (Giles Avenue) have flooded since Hitchings has been built.	The circumstances surrounding flooding elsewhere in Cricklade is unknown, however as set out above the reason

Locals claim surface run off from gardens used to run into Hitchings fields.	for on site fluvial flooding is understood and the application proposals would remove this risk resulting in betterment.
Thames Water have advised the Bloor scheme that they only have capacity to provide cold water pressure for another 50 homes	Thames Water have advised they are currently working to deliver off site water infrastructure needs for future development in Cricklade. Thames Water have confirmed there is currently capacity for 49 more houses in the town after which a condition would have to be attached to any planning permission limiting occupation of any further dwellings until any upgrade works are complete or a phasing plan has been agreed. The application proposes 49 dwellings and as such could be accommodated within the existing water infrastructure.
There have been local issues with sewage disposal	Investigations by the Applicants drainage consultants has not identified any issues with foul water disposal.
Cemetery	
Accept land for a new cemetery is needed	Noted
A new cemetery does not come anywhere close to compensating for the proposed level of housing	The cemetery is not proposed to compensate for the residential development. The residential development would meet an identified local need in a sustainable location and would provide an opportunity to deliver land for a cemetery as well.
There are other sites that would be preferable for a cemetery in terms of access (i.e. the land controlled by Hannick along The Forty)	The Applicant has commissioned specialist testing of the proposed cemetery land as well as other land owned by the landowner and the application site was the only parcel of land considered technically suitable to accommodate a cemetery.
The cemetery is too close to existing residential properties (i.e. in terms of peoples mental health looking towards a cemetery).	The existing Cricklade Cemetery is adjoined by St Sampsons Primary School and the back gardens of residential properties along White Horse Road. The proposed cemetery land would be adjoined by the long gardens of just 2 residential properties; 60 and 61 The Fiddle.
Biodiversity and Open Space	
What wildlife adaptations will there be (i.e. bat and bird boxes and hedgehog holes)?	An Ecological Assessment is submitted as part of the application which sets out suggested biodiversity enhancement measures including bat and bird boxes and hedgehog highways. Full details will be provided as part of future reserved matters applications.
Residents of Chelworth Road properties are pleased to see the plans show open space at the front of the site backing onto their properties. One resident referred to being pleased this would be secured by way of a S106 agreement (???)	The retention of this parcel of land has been a request of the Town Council and local residents and the Applicant is committed to delivering this as shown on the submitted Illustrative Site Plan.
Welcome retention of boundary hedgerows and trees	This is a fundamental part of the proposals and is considered important in terms of biodiversity and the protection of residential amenity.
Other Matters	
Need 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings	The exact size and type of dwellings would be determined through future reserved matters applications, however it is

	anticipated that the proposals would incorporate 2 bedroom dwellings.
Local facilities (i.e. doctors and schools) can't cope	St Sampsons Primary School has capacity for 420 children although at May 2023 it recorded 315 children on roll. The proposals would provide family homes that would bring additional families to Cricklade to support the ongoing viability of the Primary School. The emerging Wiltshire Local Plan Review identifies an outstanding need over the forthcoming Plan Period for 52 dwellings in Cricklade and as part of this need the capacity of the doctors surgeries will be managed by the Primary Care Commissioning Trust.
Cricklade doesn't need all the housing proposed from this and 2 other applications	The emerging draft Wiltshire Local Plan Review identifies an outstanding need for 52 dwellings in Cricklade over the forthcoming Plan Period. The proposals provide an opportunity to meet this need on a single site.
Cricklade doesn't need more social housing	The proposals would comply with Wiltshire Local Plan Policy 43 that requires the delivery of 40% affordable housing.
Will solar panels be fitted to the properties?	The properties would be built to Building Regulations standards at the time of construction which could include solar panels.
Will rainwater butts be fitted to the front and rear of properties?	The properties would be built to Building Regulations standards at the time of construction which could include water butts.
What financial contributions will be made towards infrastructure and services?	The proposals will be CIL liable which will make financial contributions towards infrastructure with 25% of the payment made going direct to the Town Council by virtue of a Neighbourhood Plan being in place. The submitted Planning Obligations Heads of Terms set out other contributions that are expected to be requested by the LPA as part of the application.
Need 2 and 3 bedroom bungalows not just 3 bed	The application is submitted in outline and the size of the bungalows would be determined at the reserved matters stage which could include 2 bedroom bungalows.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Hannick Homes have sought to engage with the local community through the Town Council and through a public consultation event to seek views and input from the community before submitting the planning application.
- 5.2 The overall response to proposals for new housing in Cricklade has been positive, subject to site specific issues being addressed. One of the main issues raised was the capacity of The Forty to accommodate additional housing in terms of vehicular movements and pedestrian access, particularly considering its existing use by users of the Chelworth Industrial Estate. As part of the application a package of highway improvements is therefore proposed, including:
- A new footway alongside the residential access and a new pedestrian crossing across The Forty which is supported by a flat top hump to prioritise pedestrian movement.
 - A traffic calming scheme at The Forty / The Fiddle junction and its approaches from both directions, involving two further flat top humps to reduce speeds, signage and enforced narrowing of the eastern approach on The Fiddle to improve visibility at the junction.
 - An enhanced footway and visibility at The Forty / Purton Road junction.
- 5.3 Local concerns regarding drainage have also been fully explored and the accompanying Flood Risk Assessment addresses the existing situation and how the proposals would affect this in detail. The proposals also retain the field fronting The Forty as open space and continue to propose a good proportion of bungalows as indicatively shown at the consultation event.

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