

NW Bicester Eco Development:
Open Planning Week
5th-12th June 2010

Community Feedback Session
Wednesday 16th June 2010
6-8pm, The Garth

Open Planning Week: Purpose

- Launch the 'Masterplanning in Partnership' approach
- Let people know we are here and what we are doing
- Start as we mean to go on
- Gather vital information for our professional team
- Involve local residents, community groups and representatives
- Expect everyone else to play their part in making this work

Open Planning Week: Format

- Public drop in days – on Saturday 5th, Friday 11th and Saturday 12th
- A Community Masterplanning Workshop on Wednesday 9th and Thursday 10th
- This feedback session
- Launch of the 'Friends of NW Bicester Eco Development' mailing list
- An onward offer to meet with community groups

What were we asking?

- For comments on 6 topics which correspond to our workstreams
- For ideas about what services and facilities would complement what Bicester has already
- For general comments

What happens to your comments?

- Every comment written on a flipchart, a post-it or flag has been written up and will be passed to the professional team to inform their work
- We will report back on what we are able to deliver and what we can't – we will be honest with you
- We will work our hardest to keep you involved and think about what more we need to know from you to make sure that the NW Bicester eco development is the best it can be

The 6 Topics: Our Project Workstreams

Based on the Government 'Planning Policy Statement' on Eco Towns:

- Masterplanning, Design and Sustainable Construction
- Waste, Energy and Water
- Open Spaces and the Environment
- Transport
- Training, Business and Jobs
- Social & Community Facilities

What we were told about Masterplanning, Design and Sustainable Construction

- It should be:
 - innovative
 - different
 - the highest standards of sustainability
- Holistic approach to Bicester being part of the programme
- Transport is fundamental
- Need for education to all Bicester residents about eco lifestyles and information about what is happening
- The Farrell 'village' approach was welcomed as was the retention of existing hedges, water courses and other natural features wherever possible – to mitigate building on green fields
- Construction should use local people, materials and businesses

What we were told about Water, Energy and Waste

- The need to reduce demand:
 - Energy efficiency and use of technology
 - Education and lifestyle
 - Design to make conservation easy
- Standards should be beyond the norm
 - viability vs aspirational
 - does there need to be a starter strategy as an intermediate step?
- Keep up with fast moving technology and include it over the life of the project
- Think about individual (e.g. house recycling collection) and communal (e.g. central recycling points) solutions
- Waste can be used for: energy creation, produce new products – or repaired and re-used.
- Local services, products and facilities will help – but need to think about the wider local area: other energy and waste developments and the need not to impact on the existing infrastructure
- Water provision needs to be carefully managed: storage, danger of flooding, climate change impact, existing capacity

What we were told about Open Spaces and the Environment

- This is a chance to educate about and enjoy nature and wildlife – making sure it is accessible is important: possibly through organised activities
- Sports and recreation is important:
 - Should complement the existing town
 - Should include natural and informal spaces
 - Should be safe
 - Include a 'green gym' which the town already has
- Community should be involved – e.g. community management, communal allotments/garden clubs, city farm
- Support for keeping hedgerows, water and protecting existing biodiversity
- Allotments and food production – working with farmers, farmers' markets, teaching people, working together, provide as much as possible
- Make sure they are accessible, including for existing residents
- Quality landscaping and careful strategy to make sure there is variety
- Concern about destroying green fields, farmland and eco systems/wildlife by building – why not brown field?
- A cemetery/woodland burial space should be included
- Must consider the impact of light pollution

What we were told about Transport and Access

- Local services, including good employment opportunities to stop commuting, are vital to make sure there isn't more traffic. Good communication structure is vital to it (i.e. good broadband)
- Public transport, walking and cycle ways need to be:
 - Secure and well managed
 - Reliable
 - Affordable
 - Convenient
 - Varied
 - Well resourced (e.g. good, safe cycle storage)
 - Accessible to everyone
 - Work all year round
- Non-car travel needs to be actively promoted, including via school green transport plans, car clubs/car sharing, good information about bus and train times

What we were told about Transport and Access

- Use communal facilities where possible: e.g. local delivery hubs for shopping, post etc
- Other local developments are important: road changes locally and the new Chiltern Railway link
- Needs to be good from the outset to help create good transport patterns – even if that means investment
- Relationship with the existing town is important: break the ring road and encourage people away from cars in the existing town. Also an opportunity to link the surrounding villages.
- Make the most of what is already there – walking and cycling routes, trains and buses.
- Concern about the traffic impact, which is already a strain for Bicester without more housing

What we were told about Training, Business and Jobs

- Bicester needs to be marketed, using 'Eco Bicester' as a catalyst: encourage inward investment
- Focus on eco innovation
- Support home working:
 - Live-work houses
 - Central work space
 - Social activities to stop isolation
 - Good ICT infrastructure (and help rest of town if possible)
- Make sure there are training and skills to support the new jobs – link to schools and employers/businesses
- Think about what's already there:
 - Business directory
 - Transparent supply chain to help local businesses access opportunities
 - Use local
 - Integrate with the existing town, and use empty industrial buildings and shops

What we were told about Training, Business and Jobs

- Needs to be a shared commitment: town, district and county councils and local businesses and business groups as well as the new development
- Use regional position: transport links and proximity to Oxford (including both universities)
- Make sure there's a range of jobs: high tech to shop worker, including different sectors and including rural/agricultural skills and jobs and craft
- Think differently about work: flexible working patterns
- Jobs have to keep pace with the development – to help Bicester and stop traffic problems getting worse for more commuters

What we were told about Local and community facilities and services: Strategy

- Community facilities from the start – don't overload what's already there
- Facilities which match the development at every stage
- Link facilities to transport so that they are accessible
- Multi-use building and facilities to make the most of them
- Recognise funding difficulties – but make facilities affordable
- Get the community involved – make sure there are ways for people to join in and run services: community governance which lasts, but also individuals responsibility
- Think about what there is in Bicester already
- Make sure they are safe – work with the police to 'design out crime'
- Think about who they serve and are able to adapt and be sustainable long term: maybe a school building which starts as a primary school and becomes a secondary
- Think about a range of activities and services for old and young, families, those with disabilities
- Focus on activities which minimise the need to travel

What we were told about Local and community facilities and services: List of 'wants'

- Pubs
- Public toilets
- Drop-in centres
- Play areas and also parks
- Health, GP surgery and alternative health
- ICT
- Car clubs, bike clubs
- Cemetery / burial ground and garden of remembrance
- Theatre, arts and culture
- Facilities for older people, including sheltered and independent housing
- Access to history and local information – a museum and/or library
- Spiritual provision
- Community bus
- Local shops with local produce
- Recycling facilities
- Cinema
- Sports space – including formal outdoor space (pitches), a swimming pool and outdoor exercise space
- Nursery schools
- Facilities for young people

Overall

It is clear that people are asking us to think about:

- Making this development truly pioneering, setting a benchmark for eco towns
- That it should be an exemplary project using the very latest green technologies
- Making the new development very much part of Bicester, not simply a bolt-on to the existing town
- Building for the future to make the development truly sustainable
- Make sure that infrastructure – both physical and social – starts early and keeps apace with development
- Transport and employment go hand in hand and the balance needs to be right