

BOUGHTON HEATH, VICARS CROSS & OVERLEIGH COMMUNITY FORUM

SPECIAL MEETING FOR HUNTINGTON & GREAT BOUGHTON

Update on the Saughton Camp Development and Associated Road Improvement Works

All those attending the meeting held on Thursday 21st July 2011 were invited to submit their questions and comments after the meeting to Cheshire West and Chester Council and their local MP; these are reproduced below together with the responses given:-

Question and Responses to Written Questions:	
1	<p>Why hold a public meeting in a place that does not allow residents to be heard?</p>
	<p><i>The venue chosen was as it was in the immediate location and based upon the numbers attending previous meetings. Every effort was made to accommodate all the residents who attended and everyone who wanted to ask a question was able to. A larger venue will be arranged for the next meeting but it may not be in the immediate location</i></p>
2	<p>We continually receive flyers from all political parties about what they have done, etc. The first we heard about these works was a letter from a surveyor offering to act for us regarding compensation. Was this a deliberate attempt to keep us 'in the dark' until it was too late for returns? This is certainly what happened.</p>
	<p><i>Over the past 4 years local Councillors from all political parties have sent out details about the status of the plans and our position against all planning proposals. The Conservative Councillors sent out 4-6 leaflets per year which have given updates at every stage. In addition there have been updates at all local meetings which are advertised in local buildings newspapers notice board and web sites. In addition both Huntington and Great Boughton Parish Councils have put information in their leaflets. (Huntington hand delivered and Great Boughton has most recently been sent along with the weekly Standard.)</i></p> <p><i>At no time have we kept residents in the dark. Good news that the plans were rejected and bad news that the Inspector allowed them all them all went through our leaflets. In addition there were also articles and front page news of the Standard</i></p>
3	<p>Please can you clarify the implications of the need for a judicial review required to grant permission for a new slip road on the A55. Am I correct in assuming that the new phase (B) will be going ahead regardless of the lack of an A55 junction? What about any future phases - will this go ahead if a judicial report is unsuccessful?</p>

	<p><i>Proposals for a new slip road from the A55 to serve the development of the Saighton Camp site have been advocated by the Council, the developer and the Local MP for many years. It has not, however, proved possible to advance proposals that would meet the national requirements for a new slip road. Whether a slip road should be allowed and the specification (and so cost) of any slip road and associated ancillary works are matters entirely at the decision of the Highways Agency. If an aggrieved party considered that the Highways Agency were exercising that discretion unreasonably, in the legal "Wednesbury" sense, then they would have to challenge the Highways Agency's decision or requirements through a high court action known as judicial review. To succeed in a challenge it would have to be shown that the Highways Agency were acting in a manner that was irrational or perverse. There is currently considered to be no basis upon which Judicial Review proceedings could be brought.</i></p> <p><i>The mixed use residential led permission that currently exists for 375 houses (and employment/retail uses) on part of the Saighton Camp site was granted by the Secretary of State. An inspector appointed on his behalf took the view that a connection to the slip road was not required to accommodate that development as the existing highways network, with some improvements, could accommodate the traffic generated by that scheme. Any future proposals would be considered on their merits and in view of all relevant planning policies at the time that any such application is submitted. The ability of the local highway network to accommodate traffic associated with the proposed development would be one of the considerations of any planning application for additional development</i></p>
4	<p>Are there any plans for development of Sainsbury's land? This MUST be considered in conjunction with current developments? We need more schools! and consideration for the people (children) accessing them - crossings! Caldly Valley Road will be a death trap and it is likely to be a child. Is anything proposed for the Vicars Cross junction?</p>
	<p><i>The Council is not aware of any plans for Sainsbury's land apart from the permission they already hold (subject to the completion of a s106 agreement) to extend the store. As an aside until they actually sign up to the section 106 agreement they don't technically have planning permission.</i></p> <p><i>The Vicars Cross signalled junction is also being upgraded as part of the works for Saighton Camp. Although there will be few obvious physical changes to it the computerised operating system will be state of the art and more able to deal with the traffic demands</i></p>
5	<p>What are the provisions for the relocation of the Driving Test Centre. When will it be moving?</p>
	<p><i>The use of part of the Saighton Camp site for a driving test centre is the subject of a limited lease from the landowner. The DVLA will need to consider proposals for the centre when the landowner's lease expires.</i></p>
6	<p>Is there provision to petition the current Secretary of State to reverse the decision on the A55 slip road made by the S of S in the last Government?</p>
	<p><i>There has been on-going discussions between the Council and both previous and current Ministers about the additional A55 junction, but there has been no change in government policy which would allow the new junction.</i></p>

7	Do Sainsbury's plan to change the road layout, i.e. mini roundabout?
	<i>Sainsbury's have not submitted any proposals for changes to the road layout approved as a result of the planning appeal. The Council do not have any plans to change the mini roundabout</i>
8	1. Huntington is a great place to live - why change it! 2. Will we get a reduction in Council Tax? I back on to Gorse Way - noise, pollution, accidents, etc.
	<i>Unfortunately there are no provisions within the legislation to allow for reductions under these temporary circumstances or for a temporary lack of any services. If there have been material permanent changes that would affect the value of a property then an appeal can be lodged with the Valuation Officer on the grounds that the changes have affected the value therefore the banding placed on the property should be revisited. It should be noted though that as the bandings are so wide a reduction in value can still leave the property in the same valuation band therefore paying the same charges</i>
9	Could the plans for the 3 phases of Saighton Camp AND the associated ROADWORKS be put up in the local area for people to see who are not able to get into the Council offices and/or have no Internet connection?
	<i>Phase 1 was the development of about 100 houses approved on the former officers housing site, which is partially complete and is now known as Crownfields. Phase 2 is the 375 house development approved in outline form on appeal, and for which the roadworks are currently being carried out. No application for the detailed proposals has yet been submitted to the Council. Phase 3 is the proposed development of the remaining part of the Saighton Camp site. No planning application has been submitted for the housing development intended for this site by the site owners. Details of the Phase 2 proposals, which also showed the Phase 1 development and indicated the developer's future intentions for Phase 3, have been available for viewing through the Parish Council, the Local Planning Authority and the developer's public forums for some time. These details can also be made available to anyone on request.</i>
10	As most traffic coming from Tarvin Road to Boughton Heath goes to A41 Whitchurch Road or Caldley Valley Road and towards centre priority traffic lights should be for this traffic rather than to A55 slip. Timing of lights should allow this.
	<i>The traffic signals are set out and designed to maximise the capacity of the junction and each movement through the junction has been modelled and the traffic signals phased to cope with the expected traffic flows</i>
11	How it is proposed to deal with the inevitable congestion of all the extra traffic which will be generated by all the new dwellings as changes to Boughton Heath roundabout will not resolve it?

	<i>The signalled junction has been designed and modelled to cater for the existing and additional traffic</i>
12	Reduce speed limit on Chester Road through the village from 40 mph to 30 mph. Two crossings for children to go to school and residential area. Vital this is reduced.
	<i>The Traffic Regulation Order to lower the existing 40mph speed limit to 30mph along Chester Rd Huntington is to be advertised in the near future</i>
13	Other roads in the area will bear the brunt of the extra traffic other than Caldly Valley Road. "Rat runs" like Platts Lane, Chapel Lane (Saighton) are not fit for the extra traffic that will use them. Are there plans to upgrade them?
	<i>There are no plans for works to Platts Lane/Chapel Lane as part of the development. The new Boughton Heath junction has been designed to cope with the increased demand along Caldly Valley Road</i>
14	I am very disappointed that the A55 junction didn't go ahead. I am also disappointed that the projected pedestrian crossing on Caldly Valley Road got dropped. I look forward to seeing traffic calming or lower speed limit on Caldly Valley Road. I will certainly resist taking the scheme to 900+ houses. (1) Who do we have to talk to about traffic calming on this road? (2) In your surveys of <u>volume</u> and <u>speed</u> of traffic on Caldly Valley Road what has been found?
	<p><i>As part of the assessment of the planning application the issues of impact on Caldly Valley Road were considered in depth by the Council. Whilst there will be a significant increase in traffic brought about by the development it is considered that Caldly Valley Road will continue to operate as effectively as before and that there should not be any undue impact on the ability or safety of pedestrians/cyclists crossing the road or for vehicle access/egress from the side roads.</i></p> <p><i>In relation to the question about speed limits the current Council position of the setting and reviewing of speed limits was set at the Full Council meeting on the 17th March 2011 and is as follows: "Work with partners, including the emergency services, to reduce the problem of speeding; Deliver the Council's Speed Management Strategy and implement revised speed limits identified by the Speed Limit Review; and Consider the introduction of 20 mph zones in appropriate areas." with the following: "Address speed management issues on the basis of 'localism' particularly for residential and rural roads; working closely with partners in the Police, Fire & Rescue and other agency and third sector partners, based on extensive consultation with all relevant road users".</i></p> <p><i>The recent debate held at full council on 28th July 2011 with the motion proposed of setting 20mph speed limits as a default speed limit for urban areas was not ratified as the issue had been discussed within the previous 6 months and it is not possible under the rules and regulations of the committee structure to re-visit an issue within a 6 month timescale. See the minute below from the Full Council meeting .</i></p>

	<p><i>Minutes: "Councillor David Robinson had submitted a Notice of Motion seconded by Councillor Marie Nelson relating to the feasibility of introducing a default 20 mph speed limit for residential areas throughout Cheshire West and Chester. The Chairman advised Council that this Notice of Motion related to an issue which had been the subject of a decision at Council on the Local Transport Plan on 17 March 2011.</i></p> <p><i>Procedure Rule 14.1 provided that no motion or amendment should be moved which rescinded any resolution of the Council which had been passed within the preceding 6 months. This motion if passed would effectively rescind the decision of Council on 17 March 2011 and therefore would not be debated.</i></p> <p><i>The Chairman further advised that as the next Council meeting would be more than 6 months after the March meeting it could be moved at that meeting and the Procedure Rule would not apply"</i></p>
15	A crossing on Caldly Valley Road to access the new cycle path - we have twins of 11 years who love to cycle but I would be very unhappy for them to cross such an increasingly busy road without a safe crossing.
	<i>Please refer to the response to Q14 above</i>
16	Caldy Valley Road is an accident waiting to happen now. Does someone have to get killed before a crossing is put in, especially with more traffic.
	<i>Please refer to the response to Q14 above</i>
17	Speed humps or chicanes should be built along Caldly Valley Road to reduce speed of all vehicles <u>OR</u> install average speed cameras at either end of Caldly Valley Road.
	<i>Please refer to the response to Q14 above</i>
18	20 mph on Caldly Valley Road. Traffic calming measures on Caldly Valley Road. Crossings needed on Caldly Valley Road. Children cross this road to get to school. A 20% increase in traffic will make it very dangerous.

	<i>Please refer to the response to Q14 above</i>
19	While we understand the planning applications have been approved and the "new" roundabout is supposed to deal with the traffic at that end, this does not deal with all the traffic issues. Should the Council, etc, not be looking at the safety of residents and therefore additional options for controlling traffic throughout the area including SAFE crossings AND access to and from junctions, whether this be speed restrictions in certain areas, for instance Stocks Lane, and additional SAFE crossings?
	<i>Please refer to the response to Q14 above</i>
20	We touched upon the need for a crossing (already in demand) on Caldly Valley Road by Robinsons Croft. It is already feeling like we are taking our lives into our own hands. Kids need to cross for schools. This is NOT POSSIBLE at present. Would you install a crossing?
	<i>Please refer to the response to Q14 above</i>
21	1. I live very close to Caldly Valley Road and crossing this road is more and more difficult - cars can't get out of the junction and estates either side of this road - are/will become no longer like a community. 2. I have waited and waited 5 minutes or more in the middle of the day to cross Caldly Valley Road. My concern is children and elderly, etc, are going to be hurt. We need crossing!!
	<i>Please refer to the response to Q14 above</i>
22	Speed cameras on Caldly Valley Road please plus a crossing. 20 mph.
	<i>Please refer to the response to Q14 above</i>

23	There should be speed limits on Sandy Lane to Saughton Village. It is already a race track for young drivers. School runs by parents use this route. More houses mean more speedy drivers. Cyclists, horse riders and joggers face great dangers.
	<i>Please refer to the response to Q14 above</i>
24	As a pedestrian and a regular member of Caldly Valley Church to and fro 5 or 6 time a week it is difficult to cross the road safely. How will I manage with the extra traffic as I am 71 and can not keep running. Also we do not have a car. A pelican crossing near the roundabout on Caldly Valley Road is essential
	<i>Please refer to the response to Q14 above</i>
25	Our suggestion is that a slip road from the Saughton Camp to the A55 is imperative if traffic is going to be managed and the risk of congestion, pollution and road danger to local children and adults is to be managed.
	<i>Please refer to the response to Q14 above</i>
26	Could a speed limit of 20 mph be put on Caldly Valley Road with average speed cameras fitted? A survey by Huntington Parish Council revealed that 85% of cars travelling north are speeding and 37% travelling south.
	<i>Please refer to the response to Q14 above</i>
27	Additional noise of traffic, waiting for lights to change constantly. This will affect churches and homes indoors without double glazing to a high standard
	<i>Comments noted</i>
28	What is being done to prevent sun blindness at the new hamburger junction when approaching from Vicars Cross direction? The trees prevented blindness in winter when the sun is low in the sky in the evening - now the trees have gone there will be increases in the number of accidents without doubt. How will you prevent this?

	<i>It is not considered that this will give rise to an accident issue. The traffic signals themselves will be highly visible regardless of the height of the sun.</i>
29	Why were residents not informed of the compounds that have been put up on Gorse Way and to store vehicles in at the back. There are no signs to say who residents should contact should they need to do so (phone call after meeting)
	<i>Highways land has to be used for storage during road works and this land does belong to the highways. It is the closest to the works taking place so it makes sense to use this land to avoid the least disruption – we have asked for contact detail signs to be erected on the compounds.</i>
30	1. If the proposed 20 mph speed limit throughout residential areas is <u>not</u> passed, will there be any change to the 40 mph limit through Huntington Village? 2. Parking south of The Red House pub causes a dangerous situation as I and my neighbours try to get onto Sandy Lane. Will anything be done about this?
	<i>1. The Traffic Regulation Order to lower the existing 40mph speed limit to 30mph along Chester Rd, Huntington is to be advertised in the near future. 2. There are no plans as part of the works for this development to look at this issue as it is not considered that this will exacerbate the situation.</i>
31	Why does no one realise that a lot of the traffic going from Sainsbury's roundabout to Huntington is actually going towards one of the biggest business parks in Europe on the outskirts of Wrexham? The Wrexham Business Park is just outside Holt. What is the speed limit going to be on the slip road? Please can we have some reassurance regarding the drains via Caldry Brook that there is no further surge in rats disturbed.
	<i>The assessment of the traffic impact for the development considered how the traffic would be distributed across the various affected roads including the A55. The speed limit on the A55 slip roads will remain as it is (70MPH). Can't answer the drainage element - but have we not had a similar question/answer?</i>
32	How will offices in the proposed retail area contribute to a sense of community in the Saughton development? Lively, small community retail units would make more sense. Comment: with the increase in traffic already evident on Sandy Lane and Caldry Valley Road simply from Phase 1 of the development, I wish to reiterate how absolutely vital an exit relief road to the A55 is. This situation is only going to get worse. When will the 'powers that be' realise that this situation will not simply disappear in time?
	<i>As yet there are no clear indications from Government as to the level of financial support that may be available for communities to prepare Neighbourhood Plans. There are other sources of funding that are being made available to communities through organisations such as the Princes' Foundation. Funding sources can be looked at if the community decide that they wish to pursue a Neighbourhood Plan.</i>

33	Question to Stephen Mosley MP - Will there be extra funding available from the Government to implement the neighbourhood scheme? Many of us have been volunteering for years and we would like the funding to be available to allow all the good ideas to be implemented.
	<i>The Council are currently preparing the Core Strategy which will set out planning policy for the borough up to 2028. The Council are preparing the Preferred Options report which will be available for consultation in Spring 2012 when there will be plenty of opportunity to get involved. If people contact the Spatial Planning Team then they can be added to the mailing database so that they can be kept informed on progress on the Core Strategy.</i>
34	As a resident of the area I would be very interested in being involved with the Neighbourhood Plan. When this area was developed by Whelmar & Wimpey play areas were to be built by the developers. This did not happen. My plea would be that somehow this is a priority to happen!
	<i>No. The starting point for planning applications is always the up-to-date development plan including any adopted Neighbourhood Plans. Even if a Neighbourhood Plan is adopted, then developers can still put forward proposals that are not in conformity with that plan. However, if proposals are contrary to the plan then detailed justification has to be submitted to suggest why the Council should go against that policy.</i>
35	Will the new local planning laws mean that the local residents (via Parish Councils) will in future be able to block ridiculously inappropriate planning applications?
	<i>No. The starting point for planning applications is always the up-to-date development plan including any adopted Neighbourhood Plans. Even if a Neighbourhood Plan is adopted, then developers can still put forward proposals that are not in conformity with that plan. However, if proposals are contrary to the plan then detailed justification has to be submitted to suggest why the Council should go against that policy</i>
36	Once the new Neighbourhood Plan is agreed what is to stop the developer appealing if the plan is for no more houses?
	<i>There will still be an appeal process for all planning but they will have to consider the neighbourhood plan</i>
37	Please can the development consider the provision of healthcare, i.e. new doctor's surgery?
37b	Will there be provision for sheltered housing for the over 60's on the Saighton Camp development? This opportunity was missed years ago when the new Huntington-Great Boughton area was built by the housing developers.

	<i>The community could suggest this through any consultation on any planning application for further housing on the site. In addition, this could also be investigated through a Neighbourhood Plan</i>
39	Is it possible for provision to be made for a small sheltered housing/bungalow Saighton Camp development as Huntington is one of the only villages in Chester without provision for our elderly residents.
	<i>This can be investigated through the Neighbourhood Plan</i>