



**MINUTES  
OF THE FULL MEETING OF THE ALPHINGTON FORUM**

**9 SEPTEMBER 2012  
ALPHINGTON SCHOOL HALL**

**ACTION**

**1.0 APOLOGIES**

1.0.1 Jenny Frost and Peter Rowe

**2.0 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

2.0.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2012 were confirmed to be an accurate record.

**3.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

3.0.1 Item 4.0

The Treasurer confirmed the bank account has now been opened.

3.0.2 Item: 5.0 – Ombudsman Update

We have received an initial response from the Ombudsman which essentially finds that the Council were not at fault. We have been invited to respond to that initial finding and these responses must be submitted by 17 September 2012. Anyone wishing to make a response through the Forum, should let Peter Phillips have their views on Monday, 10 September 2012.

3.0.3 The chairman of the meeting recommended that other matters arising from the Minutes, in particular with regard to tree preservation orders and an organised walk around the development site should be deferred until the next meeting to allow enough time in this meeting to consider the master plan.

3.0.4 Item 6.0 – Flyers

Flyers had produced an increase in numbers of attendees at this meeting and the Chairman took the opportunity to ask the street representatives to introduce themselves to those present.

**4.0 SOUTH WEST EXETER MASTER PLAN**

4.0.1 The Chairman introduced the South West Exeter Master Plan, a document commissioned and led by Teignbridge District Council in association with Exeter City Council and Devon County Council. The Chairman informed the meeting that Richard Short, the Assistant Director City Development for Exeter City Council has agreed to attend the meeting from 8.00pm onwards and the Chairman therefore suggested that the opportunity should be taken to consider the Master Plan and questions to be put to Richard Short.

4.0.2 For ease of understanding the questions are listed below together with Mr Short's responses.

1. **Consultation**

**Exeter City Council's core strategy was implemented with, in the opinion of Alphington residents, no consultation. We have now been presented with another document which puts more detail on the proposals again apparently with no consultation. What is the status of this document and why has there been no consultation?**

RS Response: The master plan is in effect a feasibility study which demonstrates that the area included in the study is capable of development, subject to the limitations shown. It is only one suggestion and the layout shown in that plan will not necessarily be the final layout.

The document was commissioned by Teignbridge to assist them in the preparation of their core strategy. This core strategy will be subject to further consultation and RS urged the Forum to become involved in that consultation process.

RS confirmed that Exeter City Council had co-operated with Teignbridge with regard to that part of the land which is Exeter City Council to make the plan more coherent as required by central government.

2. **Status of the plan, safeguards and controls?**

**The Forum were concerned as to the status of the master plan and any subsequent controls put in place as a result of consultation and whether these would control the developers or whether they could find ways around the planning process.**

RS advised that the master plan had no status in the planning process other than as a feasibility study. Exeter City Council's intentions are to produce a development plan for Alphington and this, once approved and passed by the Council, would be the standard that developers would be expected to follow. Developers could, however, deviate from this document/standard but would have to give good reason for doing so. The City Council are required to consider all planning applications on their merits and it is at the planning application stage that the final and controlling decisions are made.

i. **A supplemental question was raised in particular whether land not shown inside the designated area for the core strategy was effectively outside of the control of the core strategy and therefore safe from development.**

RS answered that areas outside of the strategic allocation are not protected from development but have to be considered with regard to the core strategy, other policies and considerations. Any areas outside of the core strategy and within the city boundaries which were potential development sites could be developed subject to going through the normal planning process.

ii. **A second supplementary point was made with regard to retrospective planning applications, citing the case of the new waste treatment facility on Marsh Barton where the original stringent requirements for control of pollution have been relaxed on a retrospective planning application.**

RS response was that retrospective applications have to go through the same planning process and if a case is successfully made for the lower standard, then it must be approved.

- iii. **The Forum are concerned about the density of the housing development and the potential conflict between developers and the planners on this point. The developers may claim the development is not viable at a lower density and may insist on a higher density in accordance with the Core Strategy to improve their profit.**

RS responded that the core strategy was produced under a different regime of government which required higher densities to be pursued wherever possible, and under different economic conditions whereby demand was strong and developers could sell anything they could built including high density housing. Both scenarios have now changed and will be reflected in the development brief. The Teignbridge part of the development to the south west of Exeter is unlikely to be built until the late 2020s or early 2030s. The Alphington part of the plan is likely to see planning applications made within two years. The development is therefore more likely to take place under the current regimes.

3. **Improved consultation.**

**This question was more of a request that the Council agree to a more structured and therefore improved consultation process to allow the public and members of the Forum to identify their concerns and bring them to the structured meetings.**

The Chairman and RS responded that they are currently putting together some dates for workshops and together they would seek to have a more structured and improved consultation process.

4. **Transport and Associated Pollution.**

**The Forum are concerned that any development will significantly increase the amount of traffic on the already congested and polluted roads. How were these traffic problems to be alleviated if the development were to take place?**

RS responded that transport is a matter for Devon County Council, not Exeter City Council. Exeter City Council (ECC) consult Devon County Council (DCC) on these matters and are almost bound to accept DCC's views. On this development DCC are confident that the increase in traffic can be alleviated by encouraging the occupiers of the new development to walk and cycle, and improve public transport with an extended bus service.

The Chairman noted that the Alphington Devon County Councillor was not present at the meeting and perhaps this matter should be taken up with her.

5. **Provision of Infrastructure.**

**What will be provided and when? The Forum is concerned that there is no plan to improve the infrastructure (roads, school provision, doctors surgeries etc prior to the Exeter development taking place, unlike the development at Cranbrook where many of these requirements have been put in before houses are occupied.**

RS's response was that the Teignbridge part of the development in the master plan requires significant infrastructure to support the large number of houses, and if that infrastructure was not forthcoming the number of houses would have to be reduced. The Exeter City part of the development, being a smaller number of dwelling can largely be supported by the current infrastructure and the main improvements needed relate to increase in the size of the existing schools. This was, however, dependant on whether the Teignbridge development went ahead with their new proposed schools. If the new primary school is built Alphington School will not need to be extended.

Provision of education is a matter for Devon County Council who will either extend the existing school or build a new school as and when necessary.

The Forum are concerned that if no decision on Teignbridge is to be made for many years the extension of the school could also be deferred for many years resulting in overcrowding, or the need to transport children further afield for education thereby increasing the traffic problem.

With regard to Doctors, RS pointed out that this a commercial decision made by doctors who may consider that there is excess demand in the area and set up a new or extend an existing practice.

## 6. **Affordable Homes.**

**The Forum would like to know what provision there will be for affordable homes and where they will be located.**

RS briefly set out the position of Exeter City Council, Teignbridge District Council and Central Government.

Exeter City Council's current position is that 35% of new developments are required to be affordable homes. This is, however, likely to be reduced to 25% for future developments to reflect the reduced viability in the current economic climate and central government requirements. Of that 25% 70% will be social rented and 30% will be intermediate or shared ownership houses. The affordable homes are to be spread throughout the development. Although there is bound to be some clustering for economic reasons (blocks of flats) no cluster is to exceed 10 units.

## 7. **Flooding.**

**Forum members are concerned that there appears to be no consideration to flooding problems in respect of the Exeter City Council development. The requirement appears to be that each developer will undertake their own flood alleviation matters and there is no joined up design or thinking.**

RS responded that all the developers are required to design for surface water disposal using sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) which is primarily soakaways. Most of the sub-soils in Exeter are suitable for soakaways and the suitability of the ground beneath the development areas is currently being considered. SUDS may also require the provision of flood attenuation such as ponds within the detailed design. He was not aware that any area in the Exeter City Council development was considered to be at risk of flooding.

4.0.3 As the meeting was overrunning the Chairman drew a close to the question and answer session and thanked Richard Short for his attendance and assistance.

## **5.0 CHAIRMAN**

5.0.1 The chairman informed the meeting of his intention to step down at the beginning of the next open meeting. He was finding that the pressure of his work in particular was preventing him from driving the Forum forward in the manner that might be reasonably expected and hoped that somebody with more time than he would come forward to take over the post. Volunteers or nominations were invited between now and the next meeting in order that the new Chairman could be elected at the next meeting.

## **6.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **6.1 Exeter City Council Funding**

6.1.1 Funding is available from Exeter City Council and the councillors present confirmed that it is still available and they would obtain the appropriate forms for the Treasurer.

## **6.2 Meeting Times and Dates**

6.2.1 A timetable for committee meetings, open meetings and workshops will be considered as soon as possible and published on the website.

6.2.2 Margaret Clark requested that the proposals for preparation of the Alphington Development Brief produced by Richard Short sometime ago should also be published on the website as part of the information for the workshops.

**6.3** The Chairman closed the meeting and thanked everyone for coming.

## **7.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

7.0.1 To be confirmed

### **Attendance:**

Pat Kay  
Sue Allen  
Brian Jeffery  
Anne Croft  
Peter Croft  
Juliet Meadowcroft  
Rod Ruffle  
Tom Dunne  
Rosemay Dunne  
Nigel Chinn  
Cllr Rob Crew  
Cllr Margaret Clark  
Gerald Crews  
Mary Crews  
Michael Littley  
Robin Naylor  
Daphne Naylor

Bill Porter  
Terry Rands  
Peter Phillips  
Anna Jones  
Nila Ross  
Paul Ross  
Phil Jones  
Deborah Hemming  
Elaine Shore  
Christopher Shore  
David Hayman  
Sheila White  
Bob White  
F A W Barker  
A Wilkie  
Pip Bramley  
Tony Rowe

John Edgeworth  
Jenney Stevens  
Malcolm Welch  
Trevor Jones  
Anne Bassett  
Bill Bassett  
Helen Southard  
Nick Southard  
Mr James  
Derek James Turner  
Ruth Bonnell  
Lynn Woodward  
Barry Woodward  
Toby Cox  
Dawn Cox  
Ed Hyde  
Anthony York