

Chesterton

Cirencester



Masterplan Update

July 2015

Introduction

A unique opportunity for a sustainable new community - Chesterton, Cirencester

This document provides an update on emerging proposals for new housing, employment and mixed uses at the Strategic Site immediately south of Chesterton, Cirencester. Bathurst Development Limited (BDL) is working closely with Cotswold District Council to demonstrate how we can create a new neighbourhood that will represent appropriate growth of Cirencester whilst significantly contributing toward the urgent need for new homes in the area.

The BDL team has been working with a number of technical bodies including service providers, environmental, planning, highways, landscape and heritage experts to deliver a vision for Chesterton that will complement the town and protect its rich legacy.

A place to live, work, learn and enjoy

The proposals for Chesterton include up to 2350 new homes, potentially including student accommodation and housing for the elderly, a new primary school, and land allocated for employment uses for the creation of significant numbers of jobs. A neighbourhood centre at the heart of the development will meet the day-to-day needs of people living and working there, incorporating refurbished / converted listed buildings at Chesterton Farm. It is envisaged that at least 35 hectares (86 acres) of land will become publicly accessibly open space and landscape.

To the benefit of Cirencester

The most sustainable locations for housing development in Cotswold District are those that can readily access existing services, facilities, community infrastructure and employment opportunities in existing towns: Cirencester offers more of these than any other location in the District. The Chesterton site is uniquely positioned to benefit from, support, and help to sustain what the town already has to offer. Residents will readily be able to use existing facilities at Cirencester; to work for existing employers in the town, use local shops and support local businesses and facilities. Meanwhile new facilities within the development will complement those that exist in neighbouring areas, to the advantage of new residents and the wider community.

Within easy reach

Cirencester will continue to be a magnet to new and existing residents of the district: by providing new homes as part of the town rather than remote from it, reliance on the car to get to its schools, shops, health facilities, public spaces and leisure opportunities is significantly reduced. The development will improve options for sustainable modes of transport into the town – walking, cycling and public transport - whilst delivering new and improved infrastructure to the direct benefit of local residents.

A range of services and facilities are to be provided within walking distance of the proposed residential areas so people do not have to travel far or by car to get to them. The new neighbourhood will therefore provide places for a wide range of people to live, work, play and exercise, go to school, grow food, shop for their daily needs and meet other people.

Quality and legacy

As part of the Bathurst vision for Chesterton we will be seeking to ensure uniformly high quality in design and environmental standards, establishing a legacy for future generations to enjoy and be proud of. We are exploring how to prepare and implement a rigorous Design Code that will ensure the embedding of this level of quality throughout the development.

“Our vision is for the sensitive expansion of Cirencester through a complementary, integrated and sustainable new neighbourhood that offers housing and jobs to suit the needs of a wide range of people – in a place that they want to live as part of a wonderful, vibrant town.”

Bathurst Development Limited



Planning Context

A New Local Plan for the Cotswolds

Cotswold District Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan. The emerging Local Plan has been the subject of public consultation, with the most recent period of consultation closing on 27th February 2015. The next opportunity for the public to comment on the Plan is likely to be Autumn 2015.

A strategic allocation at Chesterton

The emerging Local Plan identifies 121 hectares (300 acres) of land at Chesterton as a Strategic Allocation; a location at which up to 2,350 dwellings (including up to 50% affordable housing) in a mix of sizes, types and tenure will be provided. The Plan also proposes the allocation of over 9 hectares (22 acres) of land at the Strategic Site for employment uses.

Cotswold District Council has stipulated that the development will provide or contribute towards education, community services and social infrastructure required to meet its needs. The emerging Plan also expects a comprehensive package of transport measures to reduce the effect of the proposed development on the existing road network. New and improved drainage infrastructure must be provided to cater for the impact of the new housing, workplaces and other mixed uses.

A landscape setting

Cotswold District Council's emerging plan expects the development to provide public open spaces, both informal and formal, equipped and non-equipped play and recreation areas, and opportunities for residents to grow their own food. Wildlife will benefit from the creation of new habitats distributed within the site, enhancing biodiversity. Where practicable, important trees, groups of trees, and hedgerows will be retained - alongside significant new structural landscape planting.

Meeting national objectives for Sustainable Development

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), planning guidance set by the Government, establishes 'sustainable development' as its main objective. 'Sustainable' is defined as meaning that better lives for ourselves don't mean worse lives for future generations. 'Development' is defined as growth.

Cirencester already has many characteristics of a sustainable location for growth. This is demonstrated in a study prepared by Cotswold District Council called 'Role and Function of Settlements Study' (July 2012), which identifies that:

- ✂ Cirencester is the main focus for shops in the Cotswolds, attracting shoppers from across the area; and
- ✂ the range of community facilities on offer in Cirencester exceeds any of the other settlements in the District.

Short journeys

Creating a new community near to Cirencester's range of shops and other facilities means that people do not have to travel as far to get to them. Minimising the need to travel and maximising the use of sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport are key objectives of sustainable development.

Bathurst Development's vision is to integrate the existing and new communities at Chesterton with Cirencester by enhancing opportunities for these sustainable modes of transport. Some journeys will inevitably be undertaken by car and so the proposals will include the measures and improvements necessary to ensure that the impact of the development generated traffic on the operation of the local highway network will be acceptable. Nonetheless, Cirencester, and especially Chesterton, already scores highly as a location where journeys are undertaken by means other than car, as demonstrated by data from the 2011 Census which records that:

- ✂ around half of Chesterton ward's residents work journeys are contained within Cirencester itself, travelling less than 1.25 miles - a distance which is well suited to walking and cycling;
- ✂ around 20% of Chesterton ward's residents work journeys are on foot (indeed, of those Chesterton residents that travel to work in the Cirencester area around 40% of journeys are on foot); and
- ✂ levels of car ownership in Cirencester are lower than the average for Cotswold District as a whole.



A New Neighbourhood Centre

Artists impression showing Chesterton Farm reused at the heart of the new neighbourhood



Artist's impression of the proposed neighbourhood centre

Concept Masterplan

A proposed masterplan for Chesterton was first developed at the Community Planning Weekend in May 2014. Since that time it has evolved to reflect the extensive technical analysis and dialogue with technical bodies that has been undertaken. The new neighbourhood will be made particularly distinctive by its landscape setting and the creation of a new network of public routes and open spaces for new and existing residents and employees to enjoy. Its character will respond to its position on the southern edge of Cirencester, connecting to the countryside to the south through routes and views.

A new neighbourhood centre

The development will feature a mixed use neighbourhood centre at its heart, incorporating the retained Chesterton Farm buildings. This centre will reinforce links into Chesterton by providing facilities for the new and existing community such as convenience retail, community uses and healthcare. This area would itself adjoin the proposed primary school, further bringing activity and patronage into the centre of the scheme.

Employment

The development will see the creation of significant numbers of jobs – through its construction, to staffing of facilities within the development such as the school, healthcare uses and retail, management and maintenance of community facilities and public open space, and the provision of significant areas of land for new employment uses (primarily located towards Somerford Road / Spratsgate Lane).

Housing

A broad range of housing types will be delivered at Chesterton, from 1-/2-bedroom apartments through to larger 4-/5-bed homes. The Local Plan requires that up to 50% of the new homes provided at the site will be provided as affordable housing, which will include shared ownership and social rented accommodation. We are also exploring the potential for student housing on Tetbury Road and for housing for the elderly within the central part of the neighbourhood.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 New primary access from Tetbury Road | 8 Primary school | 15 Entrance avenue from Somerford Road / Spratsgate Lane |
| 2 New secondary access from Tetbury Road | 9 Sports pitches | 16 Allotments |
| 3 Potential 200 unit student accommodation scheme | 10 Multi-purpose community hall | 17 New roundabout |
| 4 Entrance boulevard | 11 GP Surgery, nursery | 18 Scheduled Ancient Monument |
| 5 Attenuation basins (SuDS) | 12 Converted farm buildings including farm shop | 19 Housing for the elderly |
| 6 Enhanced cycle / pedestrian routes to town centre | 13 Sports Hall and Health & Fitness | 20 Bus / Cycle / Pedestrian through route only |
| 7 Mixed-use neighbourhood centre including retail | 14 The Cranhams | 21 Employment |



Concept Masterplan

Scheme Benefits

Jobs

The project will generate temporary jobs during construction and permanent jobs once it has been completed.

a) Construction phase: a range of jobs will be created directly by this project during construction, including those engaged in engineering, construction and groundworks. The total number of full-time jobs created is forecast to be some 352 during the 10 year construction phase.

b) Indirect employment: for every single job generated directly on the site, an additional 2 jobs will be created in the supply-chain, ranging from brick manufacture to the supply of timber. The forecast is therefore for some 700 jobs to be created indirectly by the project.

c) Permanent jobs: the masterplan includes some 9ha of employment land. The number of jobs created will depend on exactly what type of companies come forward to occupy the land. Assuming a range of offices, small businesses and storage uses, the total level of employment is likely to be some 1,800 new jobs. In addition, new jobs will be created by some of the community facilities proposed, for example the school, local shops, the GP surgery and maintaining the open spaces. This might be an additional 100 jobs or more creating in the region of 1,900 jobs in total.

Health

We are in discussion with the providers of healthcare services locally. We understand that the existing GP surgery has limited capacity and so the masterplan makes provision for a new GP surgery to be provided on the site.

Drainage

Thames Water has confirmed that the existing treatment works at South Cerney has already been upgraded so that it can accommodate the flows of waste water from the proposed Chesterton development. The necessary infrastructure that remains to be implemented is the new sewer that will take flows from the site to the treatment works. We are now working with Thames Water to identify the best route for the new sewer, which will run within land owned by the Bathurst Estate and along public highways.

With a new sewer in place there is the potential for some of the flows of wastewater from existing houses in Chesterton to be transferred from the existing sewer network to the new sewer. If it were to happen this would reduce the flows in the existing sewer network and the associated risk of flooding that has been experienced in parts of Cirencester. This potential benefit of the scheme is currently being investigated by Thames Water.

Walking and Cycling links

The existing footpath / bridleway links across the site will be enhanced in order to provide a series of connections between the countryside to the south-west, the new Chesterton site, and Cirencester itself including the town centre. Measures will be implemented along key walking and cycling links to ensure they offer safe and convenient routes between the Chesterton site, the town centre and other key local destinations. This will include localised narrowing on Cranhams Lane to provide safe crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists travelling between the site and the town. This means that the residents of the existing Chesterton community will be able to readily access on-foot the facilities and services within Cirencester as well as the new facilities and services being provided, including the shops, sports facilities and open spaces.

Highway improvements

BDL is undertaking detailed traffic modelling to assess the impact of the proposed development on the local road network. At present the road network in Cirencester operates relatively well, albeit with certain known 'hotspots' e.g. on Stroud Road near to the school and college entrance and the junction of Swindon Road / Bristol Road.

The modelling takes into account new developments that already have planning permission and are likely to be developed in the coming years as well as anticipated levels of increase in traffic generally on the road network. This 'baseline' analysis shows that by 2031 the existing road network will be above its operating capacity.

In tandem with the proposed development therefore a series of measures will be implemented that will not only take account of the proposed new development, but the future position generally taking account of traffic growth and other new developments.

The new development will therefore deliver significant investment in the road network and improvement in the capacity of the highway network. Without these measures the capacity of the existing highway network will be exceeded by 2031 even with what has already been granted permission and with anticipated traffic growth.

Sports facilities

Sports pitches will be provided on the new Chesterton site to meet the needs of the new community as well as provide a resource for use by the wider community. More than 1 hectare of the site is identified in the masterplan for sports use. This area will largely be made up of new sports pitches for outdoor play. Plus there will also be a new indoor sports facility to provide for sports such as basketball, table tennis and badminton.

Schools

The pupils living in the new houses at Chesterton will be educated using capacity in existing schools as well as a new primary school being provided on the site:

Primary: the existing Chesterton Primary School has some spare capacity and so in the early phases of the scheme, the young children in the new homes will go to that school. As further phases of development are completed it will be necessary to provide for the children in a new primary school. The masterplan therefore shows a new 3-form entry primary school which will be funded by the development.

Secondary: all of the secondary-age pupils living at the site will be accommodated at existing schools. The nearest secondary school is Deer Park School and it is considered that most of the pupils from the site will go there. The cost of increasing the capacity of the school to meet the needs of the new pupils will be paid for by the development.

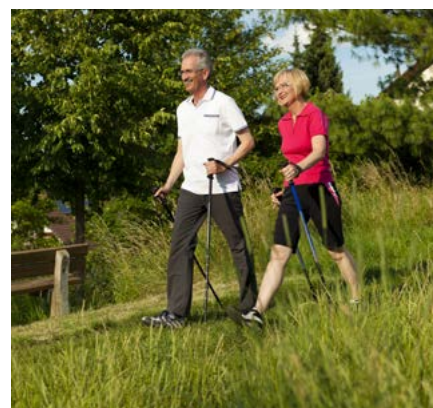
Open Space

As well as sports pitches that provide for formal play, extensive areas of the site will be left open as green spaces for public use. Over 20 hectares (49 acres) of the site will be provided as public open space. In addition to the public open space provided, there will in addition be areas of hedgerows, trees and other green areas that will be safeguarded in the masterplan. The Scheduled Ancient Monument at the centre of the site will also be left as green open space for public use.

This is the second largest area of land use on the site after housing. The multitude of green spaces will give the development a sense of openness with plenty of areas where people can play and enjoy the outdoors.



Artist's impression of the reuse of Chesterton Farm



Chesterton Farm



Artist's impression of the reuse of Chesterton Farm



Ongoing Community Engagement

Next Steps

Following the July Community Update exhibition, we will prepare a Masterplan Framework document setting the principles of development form and type at Chesterton. This document will be made available for public consultation in the September / October 2015.

Towards the end of 2015 we will submit an Outline Planning Application to Cotswold District Council which again will be made available to the public for consultation prior to submission. The Outline Planning Application will leave detailed masterplan and house design matters for subsequent Reserved Matters applications, however detailed highways and transport matters (on site and town-wide) will be submitted as part of this application.

Community Update Exhibition Monday 13th July and Tuesday 14th July 2015

Bingham House Gallery,
1 Dyer Street, Cirencester, GL7 2PP

Masterplan Framework Exhibition* September / October 2015

**Date and venue to be confirmed*

Pre-application Exhibition* November 2015

**Date and venue to be confirmed*

For further information visit www.chestertoncirencester.co.uk

