

**MODEL FARM**

**OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION**



**Indicative Masterplan**

**STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

**ADDENDUM**

**AUGUST 2017**

## **1. Introduction**

This addendum provides a summary of the approach to consultation and community involvement and the outcomes of these exercises in support of the 2017 submission for outline planning permission for Model Farm.

This is produced as an addendum to the Statement of Community Involvement that was submitted with the 2014 awarded consent, following a range of extensive community consultation and involvement dating back to 2005 to when the proposals were first conceived.

### **1.1 The Proposed Development**

Unchanged from the proposals in the 2014 awarded consent, the new 2017 planning application seeks approval for the development of employment uses including B1 (16,500sq.m GFA), B2 (8,900sq.m GFA) and B8 (4,000sq.m). This is to include full details of the access, demolition of existing buildings, internal road infrastructure and circulation routes, and landscaping within a landscape buffer zone providing surface water attenuation and planting.

The 15 hectare site is owned by Herefordshire Council and is currently used for agricultural use by tenant farmers. The site consists of Model Farm and Spring Farm which are on either side of a farm access track. The track then leads onto Highfield Farm to the north of the site.

The A40 runs to the south of the site. To the west of the site is the Hildersley Housing estate. Further agricultural land is located to the east. The north boundary of the site is formed by the disused railway line.

An existing employment site, Hildersey Farm Industrial Estate, is located on the opposite side of the A40, to the south of the site. The site is widely visible from the surrounding area, although it is not distinct in appearance. There are a number of existing hedgerows and mature and semi mature trees located across the site.

### **1.2 Purpose of this Statement of Community and Stakeholder Involvement**

This report sets out the approach to pre-application community involvement for the proposal within the 2017 planning application for Model Farm. The proposals for Model Farm have been developed during several consultations carried out since 2005. The report builds on the work that was undertaken as part of the application consented in 2014 for the same proposals.

The Herefordshire Council, 'Statement of Community Involvement', January 2017 states that at pre-application stage, applicants are strongly encouraged to involve the community. It sets out the applicant's duties for community consultation as follows:

- Identify groups and/or individuals who should be involved
- Agree a method for their involvement

- Agree a timetable for their involvement
- Set out how any feedback from the consultation will be assessed
- Identify where the feedback has resulted in a revision to the proposal
- Include in the planning application a statement on the consultation exercise

## **2. The Approach**

The 2010 Statement of Community Involvement report outlines the previous community involvement that has taken place since 2005 regarding the development of proposals for the scheme which is unchanged for the 2017 planning application submission. During the two and a half years an active consent has been in place on the site, while attempting to develop a business case for the development there has been a broad range of engagement about the scheme with a wide range of stakeholders including:

- Local businesses
- The Marches LEP
- The Member of Parliament
- Government
- The Chamber of Commerce and other business organisations
- Herefordshire council members

The scheme has also been included as a key project within the “Invest Herefordshire: Herefordshire’s Economic Vision” which has consulted broadly with a full range of stakeholders including a local stakeholder event within Ross on Wye during February 2016. During this consultation event the proposals for Model Farm were supported by the assembled stakeholders who felt that it was very important to the future growth of the town. The scheme has been presented as a key project throughout the launch events and associated activity of the Economic Vision.

Although the proposals for Model Farm are widely known by the community, Herefordshire Council Economic Development identified that as a new planning application was due to be submitted, it would be important to engage with the community. This would allow the council to communicate that the proposals were unchanged and to understand the current views of stakeholders and how these could be taken into account.

In July 2017, Herefordshire Council officers developed an approach to the identifying groups that should be involved, the method and time table for their involvement and how feedback would be assessed. A summary table below outlines this approach:

<b>Groups to be involved</b>	<b>Method for their involvement</b>	<b>Timetable for Involvement</b>
Wider community	<p>Raise awareness of proposal and consultation opportunity by:</p> <p>Advertisement within Ross Gazette Social media – including paid boost Posters at a number of town outlets</p> <p>Drop in engagement session and invite other engagement via phone, email and social media</p>	<p>Awareness raising activity 10-25 July 2017</p> <p>Engagement Session 25 July 2017, 2.15 to 6:15</p> <p>Reponses deadline 31 July 2017</p>
Nearby residents	<p>As “Wider Community” (above) but raise additional awareness by:</p> <p>Letter drop to 125 nearby premises</p>	As “Wider Community”
Town stakeholders, including the Town Council	Organise a briefing session to the Town Council to present proposals and to take questions	Briefing Session held on evening of 25 July 2017
Businesses	<p>As “Wider Community” (above) but raise additional awareness by:</p> <p>Inclusion within the Marches Growth Hub newsletter</p>	As “Wider Community”
Current tenants	<p>As “Wider Community” (above) but raise additional awareness by:</p> <p>Letter informing the tenants about the planning application</p>	As “Wider Community”

## **2.1 Drop-in Engagement and Briefing Sessions**

Given the complexities of such an application, for effective pre-application consultations it was determined that holding a briefing session for Ross on Wye Town Council and a drop in engagement event for other stakeholders was the most effective form of involvement. These methods allowed the principles of the proposals to be explained, the planning materials viewed, questions to be answered and views on the proposal collected.

It was identified that the drop-in engagement event needed to reach the target attendees. A communications approach was therefore devised to reach the identified groups to

circulate key messages about the proposal and to encourage attendance to the session. Communication channels used included:

- An advert within the Ross Gazette
  - The Gazette has the widest circulation within the Ross on Wye area
- Facebook posts on the Town Council feed and the Herefordshire Council feed
  - A paid boost (advert) was also added targeted at people in the Ross community
  - The post reached 8,035 local people with 228 engagements (comments, shares and clicks) with the post
- Posters were displayed within the library, Town Council and veterinary surgery
- A targeted flyer drop to 125 premises within the Hildersley area of Ross on Wye

The engagement event included large display boards, a full range of drawings for the scheme and a draft design and access statement. Officers were on hand to explain the proposals, answer questions and take comments. Comment sheets were available to leave written comments and a register, including the opportunity to leave short comments was also used. 30 attendees signed the register but a number of people did not wish to sign in and when more than one attendee from a household attended usually only one person signed in. It is therefore estimated that around 50 people were in attendance and it was busy for the full duration of the session. Given the focused leaflet drop, the majority of the attendees were residents of the neighbouring residential area and this therefore provided more weight to the concerns raised to the impact to the neighbouring area than the comments received.

The Ross on Wye Town Council Clerk kindly organised the briefing session for town councillors with around 10 members of the Town Council in attendance. The format of the briefing of the Town Council was a presentation followed by a question and answer session.

### 3 Outcomes of the Engagement & Briefing Sessions

During the engagement and briefing sessions full notes of the issues raised were taken. This, along with other limited feedback received (from social media etc.) has been compiled, analysed and the proposals examined to make sure that where relevant the proposals take into account the comments received. The results of this are contained within the table below:

Feedback Provided	Analysis of the feedback	Impact of the feedback to the proposal
The overwhelming comments left were positive towards the development. Attendees left	This feedback supports the proposal	No changes are required to reflect the feedback

comments stating “Ross requires this”, “the area needs it”, “looking forward” and “Ross needs new business development and there is a need for more business premises which businesses can purchase rather than rent”. The Town Council were also supportive of the proposals.		
<b>Allocation:</b> A number of residents thought the site was not suitable for employment development and referenced feedback that was lodged when the site was initially allocated in the UDP. Others felt that the development was “much better than having more houses”.	This mixed feedback is more related to the allocation of the land within the adopted Herefordshire Local Plan than the specifics within the proposal.	No changes have been made to the proposal from this feedback
<b>Demand:</b> A number of the residents felt that there was no or limited demand for commercial space as they had some evidence of vacancies within the town. When questioned if this was suitable for the needs of all businesses residents were unclear. Two businesses attended the session and stated that there was an urgent need for business premises. One of these businesses was very supportive of land/premises that were available for businesses to purchase	The feedback from the event is mixed with some residents stating that there was no demand with business stating that there was. This feedback relates more to the strategic need identified within the adopted Herefordshire Local Plan (core strategy) than the specifics of this application.  The applicant has strong evidence of demand from businesses and the current vacancies within the town appear to relate to lower quality leasehold property.	No changes have been made to the proposal from this feedback
<b>Flooding:</b> Some of the attendees were concerned that despite the surface drainage engineered into the scheme the flood risk would increase as they stated that at times the agricultural uses on the land had experienced surface flooding.	Residents’ concerns are not specific and are a generalised concern relating to any development occurring as there has been surface flooding of the agricultural land in the past. The engineered drainage scheme accounts for the drainage needs of the land.	The scheme already addresses these concerns
<b>Built Environment:</b> There were a few comments that the buildings should have a greater visual screening to the houses to	The buffer zone is generously sized and includes a retained hedgerow, new planting and other features to provide filtered	The scheme already addresses these concerns

<p>the west of the site – residents did not believe the current planning proposals were sufficient.</p> <p>There were also a few comments that the site should be fully screened from the road, as it was thought that it would improve the gateway to the town if no employment provision was visible.</p>	<p>screening to the housing at the west.</p> <p>Individual proposals for the plots will also provide filtered screening for their built environment and other proposals, when these come forward. Applications will consider alignments of buildings so that their narrowest elevations face east/west. The proposed planting will filter views of the buildings, but will not form an artificial screen.</p> <p>Residents' concerns in this regard relate more to the allocation concerns that are raised above and wanting any development that takes place to be fully hidden.</p>	
<p><b>Traffic:</b> Some felt that the A40 was a dangerous road and felt that a roundabout would be more effective than the proposed traffic calming measures. Concerns were raised that the development will increase the volume of traffic within this area of Ross on Wye and it would make vehicular congestion worse.</p>	<p>The traffic proposals are unchanged from the previous application and the measures were deemed acceptable for the proposed development when last determined. A roundabout may not fully address the issues residents have raised and it would add more cost into the scheme further impacting on viability/delivery.</p> <p>An updated transport assessment that meets the needs of the local highways authority and Highways England that addresses the actual traffic numbers from monitoring is submitted with the application.</p>	<p>No changes have been made to the proposal from this feedback although changes to traffic rates and speed have been taken into consideration by the proposals.</p>
<p><b>Noise/Emissions:</b> There were a few concerns that the uses proposed may create noise, fumes and smells that would impact on the neighbouring premises.</p>	<p>The site contains a buffer zone and screening to minimise the impact from the proposed B1, B2 and B8 uses on the site. The majority of uses proposed are B1 which is office, research and development and light industry suitable for location in a</p>	<p>No changes have been made to the proposal from this feedback</p>

	residential area. The proposed end users will either submit full or withheld matters applications and will need to address any such matter of concern within their application. All required assessments will be undertaken.	
<b>Buffer Zone:</b> There was one comment left that there was a concern that the buffer would be developed and they sought a guarantee against development of this area.	The proposals do not consider employment development of the area defined as buffer zone between employment uses and the existing scheme.	The scheme already addresses these concerns



# HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

## Model Farm Development

### Hybrid Planning Application



## STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

**May 2010**

## 1. Introduction

This document provides a summary of the approach to and any outcomes of the pre-application process undertaken in support of the hybrid planning application.

### 1.1 Context

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This Statement of Community Involvement accompanies the hybrid planning application for Infrastructure development on the proposed Model Farm employment site in Ross-on-Wye and forms part of the Hybrid Planning Application Strategy.

The application is accompanied by its own Planning Statement that records factual details regarding the site, policy considerations and the general arguments that are considered to tell in favour of the application.

The general approach to and content of the application has been discussed at length with the planning officers on a number of occasions prior to submission.

### 1.2 The Proposed Development

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The proposed Model Farm development will be a 15.37 hectare mixed-use employment site on the eastern edge of Ross-on-Wye on the A40. The site will consist of B1 (16,550m<sup>2</sup>), B2 (8,900m<sup>2</sup>) and B8 (4,000m<sup>2</sup>), with an additional zone for future development or a live/work scheme and hub (5,796m<sup>2</sup>).

The site is owned by Herefordshire Council and is currently used for agricultural use by tenant farmers. The site consists of Model Farm and Spring Farm which are on either side of a farm access track, which travels onto Highfield Farm to the north.

The A40 runs to the south of the site. To the west of the site is Hildersley Housing estate. Further agricultural land is located to the east. The north boundary of the site is formed by the line of the disused railway line.

An existing employment site, Hilderley Farm Industrial Estate, is located on the opposite side of the A40, to the south of the site. The site is widely visible from the surrounding area, although it is not distinct in appearance. There are a number of existing hedgerows and mature and semi mature trees located across the site.

### **1.3 Purpose of Report**

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The purpose of the Statement of Community and Stakeholder Involvement is to:

- Set the requirements for consultation in relation to the hybrid planning application for Model Farm
- Summarise the methods of consultation used
- Report any feedback from consultees, and
- Summarise the way in which this feedback influenced the hybrid planning application.

## 2 Consultation Requirements

### 2.1 Herefordshire Council Statement of Community Involvement

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Herefordshire Council provides guidance on the level of consultation required when submitting major planning applications within its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (Adopted March 2007). The SCI states that the following mediums could be used when consulting with stakeholders and other interested parties:

- Council website
- Email
- Formal advertisements eg statutory notices
- Media coverage – press releases, adverts, radio
- Consultation documents available for sale or CD or inspection at Council offices, by post and on the web
- Leaflet, newspapers and brochures
- Formal written letter
- Public exhibitions, public meetings and presentations
- Notices displayed on a site
- Through partnership organisations and focus groups, existing fora and panels
- Councillor networks
- One to one meetings and briefings
- Parish and Town Council networks
- Questionnaires and surveys
- Workshops
- Planning Surgeries

## 3 Consultation Strategy

### 3.1. The Approach

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The consultation strategy for the Model Farm Hybrid Planning Application is the culmination of a variety of consultations carried out during the site development process since 2005 and influenced by a range of consultation work.

A number of consultations have been carried out and these include:

- Various meetings and representations to Ross Area Partnership

- Advantage West Midlands
- Presentation to Ross Rural Parish Council
- Presentation to Ross Town Council
- Member for Parliament
- Public Exhibitions at Ross Library September 27/29 2007
- Stakeholder event during master-planning process
- Presentation to Ross Chamber of Commerce
- Discussions with Hereford and Worcester Chamber of Commerce
- Website information
- Public Consultation Event at Ross Library March 25 2010

### **3.2 Previous Consultative Activities for Outline Planning Application and SPD**

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This section of the report sets out the consultation that was undertaken prior to the submission of this application and centres on consultation at Outline Application, Supplementary Planning Document and Hybrid Infrastructure Planning Application stages.

There has been a range of consultation carried out with the local community concerning the development of the Model Farm site at all stages of the process including at the Outline Planning and Supplementary Planning Document Stages.

As part of the associated outline planning application (ref: DCSE2007/3140/O) two public consultation events were organised to present information relating to the redevelopment of Model Farm to local residents. Both exhibitions were held in Ross-on-Wye library, the first on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007 and the second on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2007.

It is estimated that between 20 and 25 people visited the exhibition over both days, which is considerably lower than would be expected for such a proposal. The event was advertised by way of a notice in the local newspaper and by posters displayed in the local area.

There were 3 individual sets of comments received from the exhibition:

1. A query was raised as to whether the 'buffer' zone would be developed due to it being adjacent to their home.
2. A concern was raised that the employment site was originally to be located at Overross. This is no longer a relevant point as Model Farm is in the Unitary

Development Plan. There was also a concern that the organic farm may be shut down. This will not be the case and the farmer is working closely with Herefordshire Council to establish new buildings to accommodate his operations adjacent to the site.

3. A concern was raised about flooding on the site but this has been taken account of through both the Flood Risk Assessment and the proposed design. In addition, a potential problem with traffic was cited but this has been dealt with in the Transport Assessment and accompanying Travel Plan.

As part of the Supplementary Planning Document process, a public meeting was held on July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2008 at the Larrapurz Centre in Ross on Wye outlining the intended proposals for the site and giving attendees the opportunity to comment verbally upon them.

As part of the master-planning process a multi-stakeholder consultation day was held on October 17<sup>th</sup> at Architype's offices in order to agree a shared vision for the site.

A consultation day was held with 21 attendees from a mix of business owners, residents of Ross on Wye, representatives from planning and economic development, local councillors and cabinet members. The purpose was to agree the vision for the site prior to the development of the Masterplan

Other consultation included:

### **Ross Area Partnership**

Ross Area Partnership was the community vehicle that co-ordinated the Advantage West Midlands funded Market Town Initiative regeneration programme in the Ross on Wye area 2005 – 2009. The partnership developed a Strategic Action Plan. Under the auspices of this overarching strategy, a number of projects were supported that addressed market failures identified in the plan.

Multi-sectoral representative membership of the partnership included:

- Ross Chamber of Commerce
- COMDEV community group
- Ross Town Council
- West Mercia Constabulary
- Enviroability

- Herefordshire Council
- WRVS
- John Kyrle High School

One key project area that the partnership has been keen to support has been the development of Model Farm and a proposed live/work scheme. The partnership invested over £41,000 in Model Farm studies/surveys and this represents a tremendous endorsement by the community who were after all, represented by the partnership.

### **Advantage West Midlands (AWM)**

AWM have demonstrated strong support for the Model Farm development through funding all the projects supported by Ross Area Partnership and through directly funding the SPD.

### **Ross Rural Parish Council**

A briefing meeting was held in 2007 where the development plan for Model Farm was outlined prior to the Outline Planning Application being consented.

### **Ross Town Council**

Ross Town Council was briefed during 2007 on the plans for the Model Farm development and gave approval. In addition the town was part of Ross Area Partnership.

### **Member for Parliament**

The Member of Parliament was briefed on the development on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2007 and was supportive of the plans.

### **Ross Chamber of Commerce**

There has been close and regular liaison with Ross Chamber of Commerce on the scheme and they have supported the development from the outset.

### **Ross on Wye Community Forum**

The Model Farm plans were presented to the forum on September 19<sup>th</sup> 2007.

### **Ross Area Home-based Business Network**

The network is supportive of the proposed development having been briefed on August 20<sup>th</sup> 2008.

## **Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce**

Model Farm development plans were presented at 2 breakfast events for local businesses 12/07/07 and 11/10/07.

### **Businesses**

A number of businesses have been consulted and are supportive of the Model Farm development:

- PGL
- James Gourmet Coffee
- Ross Labels
- Haigh Engineering
- Muddy Boots
- Association of Ross Traders

### **Ross Journal**

An article outlining the Model Farm development appeared in the Ross-on- Wye Journal October 24 2007.

## **3.3 Hybrid Planning Application Consultation**

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### **The Application**

The Council's consultants Arup have produced a hybrid planning application for the proposed infrastructure works. Some of the elements have been submitted in 'full detail' and others in 'outline'.

Access, Landscape and the Layout of the majority of the site (excluding the future development site) are in detail, but the scale of buildings and appearance of buildings are in outline.

Road infrastructure covers access to and within the site for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians, including the proposed main vehicular access into the site off the A40, along with details of the positioning and treatment of internal circulation routes [but not down to individual serviced plots].

Proposals are shown to enhance or protect the site's amenity, such as surface water drainage and attenuation, earth grading and planting within the Landscape Buffer Zone. The application also covers layout and the way in which structures, buildings, routes and open spaces are provided and interrelate.



## **Consultation Event**

As part of the Hybrid planning application, a public consultation event was organised to present information relating to the proposed infrastructure works of Model Farm to local residents.

The event was held in Ross-on-Wye library, on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2010, between 3pm and 7pm. It was designed allow people to drop in, to make comments and have any queries answered. The event was advertised by way of a notice in the Ross Gazette and a letter drop to 90 properties in the immediate vicinity of the site.

## **Comments**

There was a steady stream of groups of visitors from the time the doors opened at 3 pm till they closed at 7 pm. All of the 30 plus visitors viewed the drawings and a broad range of questions were raised and answered.

*General Issues* included several key points. Whilst there was a general acceptance of the employment site proposals, concerns were expressed regarding funding and implementation of the project. Concern was also expressed that the quality of the development currently proposed be maintained, and that the scheme was not downgraded into a standard format industrial estate and warehouse development, where additional noise and traffic might cause an unacceptable level of disturbance.

*Specific Issues* included queries as to whether good quality broadband can be provided at the site, bearing in mind the targeting of the estate at high quality and technological end of the employment market. Some visitors were concerned about the speed of traffic on the A40 to the west of the Hildersley roundabout both incoming and outgoing, that already exceeded the 30 mph speed limit. This led to some visitors suggesting extending the 30 mph speed limit beyond the proposed site entrance.

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