

Public Consultation Overview

This document provides a summary of the outcome from the public consultation into the West Mildenhall Masterplan which was undertaken between the 4th January 2021 and the 15th February 2021.

It is intended to provide an update whilst further work is undertaken into the final stages of the Masterplan preparation.

Consultation Media

This consultation ran for a period of 6 weeks between 4th January and 15th February 2021 and was widely advertised by the following outlets:

- Leaflet hand delivered during December 2020 to significant number of Mildenhall and West Row PC addresses (around 7,000 business and residential addresses).
- Emails and meetings with Mildenhall Town Council, West Row, Worlington, Beck Row, and Barton Mills Parish Council's to advertise event.
- Suffolk County Council (SCC) Facebook Page, including targeted ads over 10km area
- News story in local newspapers
- Emails to statutory and local consultees

Consultation Statistics

SCC social media campaign reveals the following statistics:

- 19,250 people reached by SCC advertisements;
- 289 likes, comments and shares on FaceBook; and
- 4,347 post clicks.

The dedicated consultation website indicates that:

- The website was viewed 7,300 times;
- 3,600 visited it for the first time; and
- 1,800 users downloaded the consultation material.

A total of 149 responses were received as part of the public consultation process, which is a response rate of 1.2%. This is consistent with response rates anticipated and is considered within usual expectations.

Summary of Public Feedback

Issue	Nature of Comments	Outcome
1. Site Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the aims relating to its proposed sustainability and energy efficiency measures. • Mixed reaction to the principle of this development. Misunderstanding of position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Vision being considered jointly with West Suffolk Council (WSC) through a series of Design Workshops. This will be communicated through subsequent public consultation stages. • The principle of development has been established through the Local Plan.
2. Land Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall support of current land uses and no alternatives suggested. • Some concerns about the local centre taking footfall away from existing Mildenhall town centre • Support for employment land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land uses are consistent with those indicated at the Local Plan stage. • Local Centre is to be reduced in size to manage any potential for impact on the health of the high street. • Employment land retained.
3. Density, Character, Design of residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Density considered to be too high. • Support for limit height at 2.5 storeys for residential dwellings. • Mixed response to character areas, respondents considered those presented were not traditional or specific to Mildenhall but did not offer suggestions. • western edge of the development views of open countryside important. • A mix of all house types would be supported but no suggestion of apartments. • Gateways positively received with suggestions of landmark buildings, landscaping or public art 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characterisation workshops to be held with WSC through a series of Design Workshops. This will be communicated through subsequent public consultation stages. • WSC Design Workshops have identified the need for more local distinctive architectural styles and approaches to be included within the Masterplan • WSC Design Workshops have identified the need for a review of density around edges of site to address perception of high density, and provide more local references of density examples. • Reduced number of character areas proposed.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateways and landmarks to be detailed at subsequent stages of the planning process.
4. Transport, Movement and Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of respondents were concerned that the existing road network would be unable to cope, providing examples, and were not convinced with the potential for traffic mitigation measures outlined. • Potential local highway improvements were identified. • Desire for more walking/cycle links to wider area but concern that roads within Mildenhall cannot accommodate cycles, such as Queensway and St Marys Church. • Connect to West Row. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further baseline assessment work has been frontloaded to address this local issue of concern. More information will be made publicly available through the next stages of public consultation.
5. Green Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) and good feedback about facilities to be provided, such as a lake, sports facilities, exercise equipment, picnic areas, grassed amphitheatre. • Green Infrastructure (GI) and SANG to be accessible to all levels of mobility • Opportunity to enhance the banks of River Lark • Query who will maintain the GI? • Concern about loss of biodiversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy for use of Green Infrastructure will be developed as part of the masterplan but not detailed design until planning application stage. All ideas are consistent with expectations. • SCC or a management company will maintain the open spaces. • Biodiversity net gain assured.
6. Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A proportion of comments commended the approach in seeking an environmentally sustainable form of development, with suggestions on how this could be realised. • Another proportion of comments claimed that the proposed development should not be constructed as to prevent any increase in carbon dioxide emissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCC priority is to address the climate emergency on its land through a range of measures and initiatives, including Future Homes standard early (a new higher standard if homes building soon to be in Building Regulations), and prioritising walking and cycling to discourage use of the car.

Summary of Consultee Feedback

Stakeholder	Nature of Comments	Outcome
Suffolk County Council Public Right of Way (PROW) Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation the subject site contains public rights of way (PRoW). Improved connectivity off-site required, namely to Worlington which lies to the south. Reminded the developer of planning legislation that may be relevant to their preservation and creation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing footpaths to be retained in line with planning policy requirements. Further consideration will be given to the connections to the surrounding area to ensure a fully integrated form of development and will be developed as part of the walking and cycling strategy.
Natural England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggested additional surveys be performed for protected species at later stages, as well as screening for potential air pollution impacts. Praised the inclusion of the SANG and open space. Generic advice offered on the retention of existing landscape features. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further survey work to be commenced in tandem with the Masterplan process to better understand the status of protected species and inform this masterplan. Environmental Impact Assessment Screening and Scoping to be undertaken in tandem with Masterplan preparation will explore potential impacts in terms of air and light pollution and appropriate mitigation will be supported identified through a subsequent planning application.
Suffolk Local Access Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sought to make a series of recommendations regarding the proposed footpath network e.g. all-sealed weather surface required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive details regarding the proposed footpath network, such as potential surfaces, to be considered through the walking and cycling strategy that will inform this Masterplan and be consulted on at the next stages of the consultation process.
Suffolk County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set out required financial contributions towards educational establishments and the highway network. Established requirements for a future Transport Assessment, such as using historical traffic survey data. Active consideration to be given to the movement of emergency vehicles. Inclusion of supported housing should be considered. Recommended trial trench evaluation be undertaken to determine the site's archaeological potential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The exact nature and timing of financial contributions will be agreed at the planning application stage. The requirements for the Transport Assessment has been scoped with the highway authority and will be progressed alongside and informing this Masterplan. Comments concerning the emergency vehicles and supported housing to be considered by the project team at the planning application stage. Masterplan team scoping trial trenching requirements with SCC.

<p>Defence Infrastructure Organisation (operating arm of the Ministry of Defence)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MOD requests to be consulted on any plans for structures exceeding 15.2m above ground level. • Careful consideration should be given to the designs of blue/green infrastructure which could attract arboreal bird species which could be hazardous to aviation safety. • Buildings within the northernmost component of the application site to be non-vulnerable in design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop arranged with MOD to scope Bird Management Plan. • It is intended that the designs of the structures in the northernmost corner of the application site will remain non-vulnerable (non residential) in the designs, but this will be finalised at the planning application stage.
<p>National Grid</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific comment at this stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action required.
<p>Mildenhall High Town Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment raised that significant transport infrastructure improvement is required. • It was their view that a new relief road would be triggered by a development of this size. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further transport assessment is in progress in parallel with the preparation of this Masterplan, so more informed decisions can be taken at this early stage of the planning process. • Further, technical assessments will be performed at the planning application stage to ensure safe access can be achieved and it will be demonstrated that it will not cause any adverse impact upon the highway network, including on traffic flows. If required, further traffic mitigation measures will be employed in order to attain this. • The provision of a relief road is not a requirement identified during the Local Plan review and requirements under Policy SA4 of the Local Plan. However, this will be considered further as part of the review of transport conditions and capacity.
<p>St. Mary's Church Parochial Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused solely on the proposed revocation of the 'No Cycling' policy between Church Walk and High Street with the provision of new bollards to restrict user speed. • Concerns were expressed it could present an increased danger risk to pedestrians and potential disruption to its activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This matter will be considered further as part of work undertaken to provide a walking and cycling strategy.
<p>Historic England</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development, in its current form, may cause harm to the significance of the setting of St. Mary's Church. • The provision of a 'view corridor' of the heritage asset was positively received, but stated that it should be supported through a Landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further assessment work, including a Heritage Review and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be undertaken to better understand its potential impact upon St. Mary's Church, which will act to inform the further stages of

	and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).	Masterplan preparation with appropriate mitigatory measures as required.
West Row Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development is unacceptable from a highway perspective as prevalence of illegal parking will likely increase and will contribute to traffic congestion. This could adversely impact road users, including pedestrians. • Potentially adverse impact upon noise and air quality levels within West Row. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further transport assessment work will be undertaken at the Masterplan stage to better inform the proposal. • At the planning application stage technical assessments will be performed to ensure a safe site access can be demonstrated whilst ensuring no adverse impacts will arise upon the highway network. • Further modelling in relation to noise and air quality levels to be carried out.

Next Steps

Follow up work stages and meetings are taking place throughout 2021 and a further public consultation is anticipated to take place in the Autumn 2021.