

Culm Garden Village Stakeholder Forum

Notes of meeting held on 22 June 2021 via Zoom

1. **Welcome and introductions**
2. **Country Park Discussion 1 Vision and Key Principles (see slides)**

The Culm Garden Village project team gave a presentation to recap on previous work and summarise outcomes of the recent residents' survey.

Discussion:

- a. There is considerable alignment between the previous work and the recent survey in terms of the main themes and priorities.
- b. Sustainable transport remains an issue and this is something people feel strongly about, as highlighted in the recent *Connecting the Culm* workshops. Realistically, unless there is a good bus service that caters for those who are less mobile (e.g. accepts all mobility scooters), with free passes for the elderly and blue badge holders, people will use their cars.
- c. Electric car charging points and electric bike charging/hire could be considered.
- d. Survey responses were mixed on whether there should be a pay and display car park, but there might be more support if people knew the money would be channelled back into managing the park. There could be low cost permits for frequent visitors with higher charges for the occasional trip, or parking could be expensive to discourage car journeys, if there was a good alternative mode of travel.
- e. If there is a lake, there needs to be vehicle access as the water could be used by the fire brigade in an emergency. This would fit in with the climate change and emergency planning agendas.
- f. There should be wildflower meadows, copses and woodland for people wishing to sit and listen to nature.
- g. A decision need to be made as to whether the park will be a local or national resource. Car parks, play areas, cafes, could result in the park becoming a service area for the M5. People already use local attractions such as Killerton as a stop off point on their way to holiday destinations. Views were mixed on this point, but if the park did provide facilities to attract people in, this would bring money and jobs to the area.
- h. The historic landscape should not be forgotten and the park could restore some of these historic features such as water meadows and orchards.
- i. A country park should be a wilder space. Formal attractions are not compatible – but these facilities could be provided elsewhere in the garden village. There is a need to decide on a theme and then provide facilities that complement that theme, e.g. natural landscape and water.
- j. There is a strong aspiration for water-based activities within the park, similar to Stover Park, and there would be massive disappointment if a lake is not provided. This has always been an aspiration but there is a need to ensure that any water body provided is not categorised as a reservoir due to its size, resulting in very strict regulations and onerous management requirements. It is believed that there is still scope to do something fairly substantial and further work is required to explore options.

3. Country Park Discussion 2 Management & Funding approaches (see slides)

The Culm Garden Village project team gave a presentation on potential approaches to funding and management of the country park, with examples from elsewhere.

Discussion:

- a. The presentation did not specifically refer to land value capture which is a garden community principle. Land value capture can be developer contributions, transfer of land or ownership of assets provided by the landowner or developer.
- b. There is a need to establish criteria for success, define priorities and get buy in from local communities as to the model of stewardship proposed - the model needs to fit the site. Governance is important: there are examples of stewardship models run by local residents.
- c. Getting volunteers running things is not always easy or straight forward. This needs careful thought. It could be that the facilities needed to be run start simply, such as car parking and a café, and expand as knowledge and experience grows. There could be initial input from developers to help while the park become self-sustaining. There is an opportunity to learn from other places whether delivery of all facilities works best, or delivery in bite-sized chunks may be better.
- d. Care needs to be given to opening up management to large organisations as they tend to provide low paid jobs and take profits out of the area.
- e. Thought should be given to new burial space for the community, such as a natural burial site.
- f. Glamping could generate revenue (and more than a camping site).
- g. Money could be taken from a hay cut of the wildflower meadows.
- h. It is important to establish what the running costs are likely to be, even this is a broad range to begin with, to understand what level of income is going to be needed.
- i. The question of whether the management organisation should own community assets should be investigated further as it was thought that the question may have been misunderstood.
- j. Further work should include the pros, cons, risks, etc for the different options to help with deciding between them.

4. CGV Health & Wellbeing workstream update Priorities & Key Principles (see slides)

The project team recapped on work done so far on health and wellbeing and outlined the scope of work to be undertaken by a working group as part of the masterplanning process.

5. Next steps

- a. The full programme of work on the garden village is continuing, as the project team is close to going out to tender for consultants to progress the masterplanning work over the next 12 months.
- b. Further details of upcoming Stakeholder Forum meeting/s will be circulated when the notes and slides of this meeting are circulated.