

Chesham Masterplan Questions & Answers

Who is the team behind the Chesham Masterplan?

Chesham Masterplan is delivered by Chesham Renaissance Community Interest Company (CIC). The Community Interest Company (CIC) was born out of the Chesham Society's vision for the town, which realised that there was an opportunity to be found in the Local Plan's proposed placement of new homes in Chesham. The Chesham Society was too small to deliver the proposals and the CIC was adopted. Chesham Renaissance (CIC) is made up of local people, passionate about the community. The experienced team partnered with industry leading experts combines old and young members of the Chesham community with the right skillset to deliver the proposals. The team comprises of construction, legal, delivery, operational and marketing experts with a proven track record of delivery.

How does the Community Interest Company work?

There are over 15,000 Community Interest Companies in the UK. These companies are modelled to ensure that any assets derived from the company are protected and can only be used for the benefit of the community which the company serves. This is known as the asset lock principle. A Community Interest Company has Members, similar to shareholders in other company structures. These Members, which may be Member Organisations or individuals have a big part to play in advising the Board and assisting in planning the delivery of the proposals. Chesham Renaissance (CIC) currently has a number of key Member Organisations. These include Chesham Town Council, Chiltern District Council, Paradigm Housing Group and the Environment agency. The Member Organisations do not deliver the proposals but will be key in ensuring that the plan works for the whole of Chesham and the surrounding area.

How are the local councils involved?

As previously mentioned, Chesham Town Council, Chiltern District Council, are all members of Chesham Renaissance Community Interest Company and although supportive, they are not directly tasked to deliver or finance the plans.

Does the plan have the support of other local organisations?

The plan has had huge local support and as part of the consultation process it has or will be shared with a diverse cross section of the Chesham population from:

- Youth- through schools and youth groups
- Older people – through local organisations and charities
- Faith groups – a variety of faith groups have been consulted and are supportive of the plans for the town.
- Environmental groups- have been contacted and informed about the plans.

How will it impact local schools?

A Chesham Masterplan Schools Advisory Board has been set up to ensure that there is a platform for input from all the Chesham schools. Each school will provide a main contact to sit on the board, most of which are local heads or Governors. The Advisory Board will meet once a term to discuss the impact of the proposals on their own schools' development plans.

How will the Chesham Masterplan be funded?

There is no way that the public purse can afford the investment required for this enterprise. The investment will come from the private sector. By delivering the project in this joined up way, there is assurance that there will be the horizontal and vertical infrastructural investment as well as the commercial and residential development.

When will the plans be finalised and work commence?

This is a ten or 15-year plan, due to commence work at the end of 2018 or the beginning of 2019.

How can we ensure that the character of the town is maintained?

Allies and Morrison, the award winning architect/urban planning practice in London drew up the first set of proposals. A colour and texture palette for materials has been developed to be used in any new structures to ensure that the new marries up with the beautiful old character of the town. This to a large extent relies on the procurement of suitable organisations with an understanding of the nature of the town and the objectives of Chesham Renaissance and the ability to deliver to these standards. For example, there will be a planning brief for new buildings which will ensure that they complement the existing and also encourage and allow an innovative approach where appropriate.

How will it impact the River Chess?

Environment groups and agencies continue to be consulted on this important factor. This will be reviewed to ensure there is minimal environmental impact to our rivers and streams. Chesham Renaissance (CIC) has formed a working relationship with the Environment Agency and is examining its flood alleviation proposals and the impact on the Masterplan.

Can we have more cycle lanes?

The proposals include a new network of cycle lanes providing a safe way to travel in and around the town and considers the steepness of the valley sides.

How will the town become friendlier on foot?

A new network of walk ways joining the park, old town and new town aims to reconnect these areas and provide a safer walking environment for all ages.

How have younger people be involved in the plans?

The team behind the Chesham Masterplan has a diverse range of ages and a wide age range of people have been reached as part of the consultation. Sixth form specific consultations have taken place as well as an art competition for children ensuring that the younger generation have input their ideas.

How does the Chesham Masterplan fit with the Local Plan?

The Chesham Masterplan will address some of the housing needs outlined in the Local Plan but is very separate document. Further details on the Local Plan will be available from Chiltern District Council later this year. The Local Plan is being prepared by the Council; the Masterplan is being prepared by Chesham Renaissance.

How can traffic flow through the town be improved?

Anyone using the town by bus or car will know the challenges faced, particularly at rush hour. Chesham Renaissance's transport planning consultants in conjunction with Bucks County Council are working on alternative proposals for traffic flow management and road layout. A preliminary report has been produced and further work will be commissioned shortly to ensure that the best possible traffic plans are drawn up for the town.

What are the plans to increase the number of parking spaces in the town?

It is clear that there are insufficient spaces at present and that the impact of commuters using the underground is increasing. New parking options for the town for both the station and users of the centre of town are being prepared.

Will there be a transport hub?

The creation of a transport hub is being investigated to accommodate or at least bring together all modes of transport. Locating such a facility near the station is an attractive proposition but the difficulty for some of negotiating the walk between for example the High Street and the station must be considered.