

Creating a Sustainable Swindon: Planning for OUR Communities' Future

Orange Group

Workshop 2: Planning for Real

Our group began by forming a community centre, acknowledging that it is the people that create a community and identity and the centre where their activities are focussed. Following the creation of a community centre, the group began to develop the settlement before agreeing to take a step back to plan what sort of community they were looking to create and establishing some guiding principles and assumptions for its development.

The group agreed that their settlement would be an entirely new settlement of between 12,000 to 18,000 inhabitants. It could represent a 'Cluster' and would probably be administered by a town or parish Council. The settlement was to be large enough to support its own secondary school and it would have its own identity – it should be large enough to be able to say you are *from* this settlement. The group made an assumption that the settlement would be adjacent to another settlement and there would be some sharing of strategic community facilities. Similarities between the group's hypothetical settlement and the proposed Eastern Development Area were noted. Once these parameters were agreed, the group began to develop the settlement outwards from its centre, and the following key features were implemented.

Affordable housing was considered by the group to be very important and a number of such developments were placed throughout the settlement.

Open spaces were scattered throughout the settlement and a green belt or ring placed around the outside, comprising woodland, play areas, wildlife areas and agriculture. Beyond this belt, the group decided to place an arterial road with a series of park and ride facilities

Roads within the settlement were not designed, rather the spaces between buildings would form routes and these routes would be determined by the urban form, rather than the other way around. No cars are allowed in this settlement; only buses and cycles are permitted.

Beyond the perimeter road to the north of the settlement, the group placed five wind turbines and an energy from waste plant, to contribute to the sustainability of the settlement.

The group found this to be a fun, if slightly open-ended task, and the outcomes appeared to represent the consensus of the group.

