

Communications Strategy for Darwen East Development Corridor

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Background

The scheme delivers a new link road on the eastern side of Darwen which will unlock land to enable the future development of new housing and improve access to local employment opportunities planned through the Council's emerging Local Development Framework. The scheme also provides a local traffic alternative for residents in South East Darwen to get to M65 Junctions 4 and 5.

Objectives

- To provide new infrastructure to enable the development of a designated housing site between Marsh House Lane and Ivinson Road.
- To improve the local highway network and improve access to and from the eastern side of Darwen by March 2019.
- To increase travel options between south east Darwen and the M65 Junctions 4 and 5.
- To reduce congestion across Darwen whilst helping to bring forward sustainable growth in the Town.
- To improve junctions and structures on the DEDC corridor between the A666 / Watery Lane / Grimshaw Street and Ivinson Road / Moor Lane at Chapels.

Target Audience

The general public, residents and businesses in the Darwen area.

Key Messages

1. Why this site has been identified for housing development:

- All landowners have confirmed they are willing for the site to be brought forward for development
- Site identified as a housing land allocation in newly adopted (December 2015) Local Plan Part 2

2. Previous consultation with local people:

- Residents were consulted extensively on the principle of the site being developed for housing. This was carried out during Spring 2013 as part of the preparations for the Council's Local Plan. Feedback has been published and is available to view on the Council's website. The Housing Land allocation is therefore approved.

3. Timescales for delivery:

- The Council has secured £2.5m of Local Growth Fund 2 funding from the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership to deliver the infrastructure between April 2017 and March 2019.
- A full planning application is programmed to be submitted in April 2017, with a determination anticipated in August 2017.

4. The corridor approach:

- The Council is planning to improve adjacent junctions between the A666 / Watery Lane and Ivinson Road / Moor Lane at Chapels with improved junctions, mini and compact roundabouts to improve road safety and facilities for pedestrians.

5. The design of the new road between Marsh House Lane and Ivinson Road:

- A single carriageway 30 mph residential road with footways and cycling facilities
- Designed for direct access to houses and driveways from the new road
- Landscaping and trees (to mitigate trees lost at Marsh House Lane / Priory Drive)
- Existing rights of way accommodated within the scheme

Strategy and Approach

The proposed scheme has been the subject to a 2 day drop in session in Darwen in November 2016 and a further formal consultation which closed on 9th January 2017. The scheme will be subject to a full planning application which is programmed to be submitted in April 2017.

During the planning and implementation stages, a variety of channels will be used to deliver the communications strategy and get information on programme and milestones to local residents, businesses and visitors.

Leaflet drops to adjacent properties, an information portal on the Council's website, ongoing information to Local Councillors and MPs (face to face if required), and social media will all be used to ensure the success of the PR side of the project.

The strategy document will be appended with an Action plan which will plan out the detailed delivery, including actions, teams involved and timings.

Targets

- Successful completion of the new link road and adjacent junction upgrades
- Ongoing updates to internal and external stakeholders and publishing of the quarterly newsletter with a FAQs section

Timescales and Budget

April 2017 – March 2019 for scheme delivery. £3m budget.

Evaluation

The success of the communication will be measured through:

- Social media interaction
- The number of comments in the local media (negative and positive)

Contact Information

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions or would like to discuss any element of this strategy.

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Action Plan for Darwen East Development Corridor

Objective	Channel	Audience	Activity	Lead	Date	Status
To publish the responses to the consultation exercise.	Via the Council's website	Residents / General public	To feed back the responses from the 2 drop in sessions and the consultation exercise.		March 2017	In progress
Follow-up Newsletter preparation	Via leaflet drop, the Council's website and local media.	Residents / General public	Following the conclusion of the consultation and in advance of the submission for planning, the Council will prepare a newsletter for circulation to local residents to explain the main issues raised during the consultation, the scope for these to be addressed, and set out the next stages and delivery of the project.		March 2017	To start
Quarterly Newsletters	Via the Council's website (project information portal)	Residents / General public	Production of a quarterly newsletter which provides updates on project delivery, disruption and timescales for completion etc.		2017/18	To start
Inform public of planning application submission	Via the Council's website (project information portal) and planning portal. Letter drop to adjacent properties.	Residents	Statutory requirement within the planning application process			
Inform public of imminent works	Local media and websites	Residents / General	Media release			

		public				
Notification letter to adjacent properties of works commencing	Letter drop	Residents	Letter drop			
Ongoing information to MPs and Local Councillors re: the works	Early sight of quarterly newsletter via email	Local elected members and MPs.	Early sight of quarterly newsletter via email and a FAQs sheet developed.			
Updating of project information portal to ensure information is up to date	Via the Council's website (project information portal)	All interested parties	Ownership of information portal to enable up to date project progress and details to be easily available.			

Communications activity report for Growth Deal project : Darwen East Development Corridor

Key contact: mike.cliffe@blackburn.gov.uk

Completed activities over last three months

Objective	Channel	Audience	Activity	Lead	Date	Status
Inform the general public about the public consultation	2 Drop in sessions - Tuesday 22 nd November 2016 DACA 5pm-730pm. - Wednesday 23 rd November 2016 Craven Heifer public house 230pm-530pm.	Residents / General public	2 drop in sessions were held in Darwen to discuss the East Darwen Masterplan and the development of new housing and a new road for the area. The events allowed local residents to engage with the Council, Landowners, the land sale Promoter and Consultants in discussing ideas, identifying issues and addressing concerns associated with the proposed development. The events were advertised via a leaflet drop, the Council's website and local media.	Council DM	22 nd / 23 rd November 2016	Complete
To receive comments following the 2 drop in sessions	Via the Town Hall address and via email to forwardplanning@blackburn.gov.uk	Residents / General public	To ensure that the general public and residents had their say on the proposed Masterplan and development following the 2 drop in sessions. The consultation period ran from 14 th November 2016 until 9 th January 2017.	Council DM	9 th January 2017	Complete

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Planned activities for next three months

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