

CGR 13

Parishes Affected

Grove, East Challow

Matter to be considered

Amending the boundary of Grove parish to include Grove Technology Park, currently in East Challow parish

Council's draft proposal

To include Grove Technology Park within Grove parish

Working Group's final proposal

To move that part of Grove Technology Park that lies within East Challow parish into Grove parish

Summary of responses to the formal consultation

Cllr St John Dickson sent a joint response on behalf of East Challow parish council and himself as follows:

1. This proposal suggests that the boundary, which currently exactly meets the criteria, be replaced with a chain fence around a Business Park which is likely to expand and change size over time and has no defined character. As far as I can see you are now proposing to remove a defined boundary and replace it with a fluid boundary between Parishes, are you suggesting that if the Technology Park should expand as the economy improves and we need greater numbers of premises that the boundary simply moves with it over time? This seems irrational and goes totally against the described requirements of this consultancy.
2. The access only being via the Downsview Road may be true at today's date but certainly this has not always been the case nor indeed may not be in the future. Historically the business park has always been in East Challow and indeed the access used to go through WG Business Centre on Faringdon Road (A417). This access is still very much in existence and could easily be re-opened if required, thereby making the argument against retaining the Park in East Challow redundant.
3. The claim that the Grove Airfield development will eventually butt up to the road and therefore the Park being so close to the houses should be assimilated into the Parish is ridiculous. The reasoning is even challenged by the same Officers in the report. To the West of the Park you are proposing

that Grove retains part of Stockham Park development (which is far more likely than Grove Airfield to be completed in the next decade) even though it will butt up directly to the other section of the Stockham development in Wantage yet it is felt that a narrow, semi dried-up canal does make a suitable division despite running straight through a cohesive development. This appears to be one rule for one Parish and a different one for another.

4. Finally to say that people driving into the Park will be surprised to find that the Park is officially in East Challow is, with respect, utter nonsense. When was the last time that anyone worried about which Parish they were driving into when they visit a specific area? I would challenge anyone to know or care less when they cross the borders from numerous Parishes into neighbouring ones around the Vale with far more spurious boundaries. In fact I believe that most people would see the logic of a wide road acting as a defined boundary rather than a moving chain fence and would consider it likely that it could be in another Parish. This rationale based on unsubstantiated personal opinion cannot possibly be used a reason to change the boundary.

County Councillor Zoe Patrick wrote in support of the proposal stating that the technology park, “does form very much part of the village identity and fits within the curtilage proposed.”

Summary of responses received prior to the formal consultation

Grove parish council put this proposal forward

Justification for the final proposal

Once the Grove Airfield development is complete, Grove Technology Park will form the western edge of a continuous built up area covering the whole of Grove village. The technology park is accessed along Downsview Road, the start of which is wholly in Grove parish. A small part of the technology park to the west of Downsview Road already lies in Grove parish. Someone unaware of parish boundaries would almost certainly assume that the technology park already lies in Grove parish.

The technology park sits on the eastern boundary of East Challow parish. As the crow flies it is three-quarters of a mile from the centre of the village. By road it is nearly two and a half miles and can only be accessed via Wantage and Grove parishes. Whilst Downsview Road represents a good man-made boundary the perimeter fence of the technology park is equally effective.

The working group considers that the identities and interests of Grove are best served by placing the whole of the technology park within the parish. The western edge of the park is a good man-made boundary that will clearly define the edge of the built up area of Grove once the Grove Airfield development takes place.