

Westcott Venture Park – Friday 9th September

Nigel MacKenzie – Project Manager for Westcott Venture Park – working for owners of Rockspring and Mike Hood, Head of Test Facilities at Reaction Engines Ltd.

Kevin Nash, Venetia Davies and Westcott PC. Waddesdon Estate is also being consulted.

Background

The meeting presented a scheme to near neighbours (Westcott and Ashendon Parish Councils) for an extension to the Venture Park prior to submitting a detailed planning application to AVDC (estimated w/c 12th September 2016 or 19th September 2016) on a new engine testing facility – a new rocket engine for atmospheric flight and space flight by company Reaction Engines Limited. The technology is the SABRE engine.

The development will be located in a newly designated Enterprise Zone. It will mark the first technology company to be located at Westcott and the company is sure it will act as a catalyst for others in allied sectors and bring highly skilled jobs to Buckinghamshire. It is also expected to generate a lot of local and national press.

The Enterprise Zone

- The development will be in the far corners of Westcott Venture Park surrounded by mature trees.
- The site will be 'dug out', so lower than ground level.
- All buildings will be below the tree line.
- The site will look similar to other sites at Westcott and will be of a similar size (though smaller than the FedEx building). A visual impact survey has been submitted in draft.
- The building will not be light 24/7.
- Testing will not commence until 2019.
- Measure of sound meets health and safety requirements. Testing will be twice weekly (Tuesday and Thursday lunchtimes) and last 3 ½ minutes.
- There are no environmental issues.

Concerns

- Parish Councils expressed traffic movement concerns during construction and when the site is operational as an engine testing facility.
- The basic ground work will commence next year. This is estimated to take 18 months.
- As part of a good neighbour policy, the planning statement will include constraints that say that HGV's cannot turn right through Ashendon and that during construction, fuel tankers and construction vehicles will use the A41. Vehicles will not come through in "chunks" but in dribs and drabs. There will be some crane lorries during week days only.
- It was suggested by Westcott Venture Park that an update meeting could take place every 2/3 months.
- Parish Council were asked to express any concerns straight way.
- Westcott Venture Park to inform of progress so that information can be included in Village Newsletters and on websites and residents informed of testing times.