



FLEET NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN Q&A SESSION

Tuesday 22nd May 2018

at 7pm

at

The Harlington, Fleet

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS/ANSWERS

Q1: What does the Neighbourhood Plan encompass?

A. The NP does not include any further development opportunities in the area. It does include regeneration of the Civic Centre as part of an integrated residential and leisure plan. It protects our green spaces with a particular commitment to our major parks and our conservation areas, including NFCA and Basingstoke Canal. It also wants development to be in character with the area in which they are built

Q2: What is the status of the NP after acceptance/rejection?

A. If approved, it has legal weight. If rejected, it goes in the blue bin!

Q3: It is a well-constructed document. What is HDC's attitude to the regeneration of the Civic Area? Any recommendation for regeneration will have to be part of a chain so what is the weight of the NP?

A. If approved, the NP will give a clear indication that the people of Fleet are behind it. It puts a stake in the ground that residents want it. It will need to be driven by HDC as the main body. Individual Councillors have their own views but it will need to be the view of the whole Council that takes precedence. It sets the parameters to attract potential developers and gives them guidance.

Q4: I thoroughly support the NP. If we don't support this, HDC can impose what they like but Policy 1 appears to give carte blanche for developers to do whatever they want in this area.

A. We are saying that we want flexibility not prescription

Q5: After presenting NP to HDC what happens?

A. After referendum, if majority approve, HDC will adopt. They won't be able to modify

Q6: Protection of Open Spaces. Setting bar too low. The Views and Gurkha Square are sacrosanct. Can you give us the assurance that these will be taken out of the development in Policy 1?

A. We are running a consultation and will be required to take account of every comment.

Additional comment: Designated Green Space is protected by the document. In Policy 13 it mentions special circumstances. The part of the Views within Policy 1a should be protected in the same way

Q7 – a related question: RE Open spaces "inappropriate developments will not be supported other than in very special circumstances or if development is essential to meet necessary utility infrastructure needs and no alternative feasible site is available". Define "special circumstances" & "necessary utility infrastructure needs"

A. Regarding Policy 13 – “special circumstances” relates to the Upper Part of the Views which is within the defined redevelopment area.

“Necessary utility infrastructure needs” relates to such items as a major electricity mains cable or a gas main being routed through a green space. It only relates to “necessary” works.

Q8: Safeguarding bungalow stock – why?

A. The aim is that Infill development would be supported where there are large gardens but the aim is to retain bungalow stock to allow for elderly people to downsize

Q9: How many people does it take before you respond to public opinion – 5, 500, 1000?

A. We need to show that we respond to every comment. It is not a simple matter of arithmetic. We are not trying to impose something on the people of Fleet. We have put forward a plan and will receive the comments. We don't want to go to referendum with something that will fail to win support.

Q10: You want to encourage development but we could end up with boarded up areas.

A. Town Planning has significantly improved, if developers are found it is because they believe the development to be commercially viable.

Q11: Thank you for all the work in putting the document together. The point raised about the conservation area. If I had a house bordering on the Canal, I would want it to be secure and I would not want to wait for years or a hedge to grow up.

A. The Policy seeks to retain the green, leafy character of the area – some houses have put up fencing along their border and we would like to see native hedging against the fence to retain the character of the area. We fully understand that people wish to secure their gardens but, if you live in a conservation area and have the benefits of living there, that is a price you have to pay.

Q12: Policy 15 and 19 want to ensure any future developments have adequate parking but how do you reconcile that with the needs of residents?

A. Complete front gardens have been taken over for parking and have changed the character of an area. We want to retain a percentage of soft landscaping.

Resident's comment: Parking on pavements is an offence under the Road Traffic Act.

Q13: Can you give an example of where regeneration has taken place?

A. Farnham but that has been a long (25 year?) process to achieve

Q14: How have you managed the consultation as I don't think it is reaching everyone – particularly younger people?

A. We have delivered 10,800 letter box drops – on website, social media, twitter, exhibitions in Harlington and Hart Shopping Centre. If you can think of other ways, please let us know.

Q15: Who is the "Inspector"?

A. He or she is one of Her Majesty's Government's Inspectors from the Planning Inspectorate in Bristol and his/her report will be available for public inspection.

Q16: Rates have gone up and we could get a concrete and glass monstrosity. Allowing our assets to degrade seems a confused strategy; Harlington is falling apart and needs investment.

A. We are doing maintenance but need long term investment to maintain facility for future generations.

Q17: RE new hotel, is the parking adequate?

A. Advised to read the planning application as this will give the facts!

Q18: How do you know the regeneration won't become another white elephant?

A. We have gone through the process with the Hart's Vision for Fleet when the Sainsbury's superstore was put forward. People did not want it and the company was aware that shopping habits were moving away from superstores to smaller units. We and developers have learned from this. We want to see a plan that has public support.