

Council

20 July 2020

Public Questions (7)

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| 1. | Question from Sally Walker to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Jordan |
| | What is the process for changes to be made to the local plan post adoption , particularly in the event of new material considerations arising with regard to any site allocated for development? |
| | Response from Cabinet Member |
| | Once a local plan is adopted by the Council it can only be amended through the plan-making procedure; including preparation, publication, and examination by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State. The planning system requires that decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise. Therefore, any new material considerations relating to an allocated site would be considered as part of any decision on a planning application on that site. |
| 2. | Question from Sally Walker to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Jordan |
| | Can the council reassure us that the delegated powers to the planning department (to address issues of consistency etc) do not extend to changing the language on housing allocations, and that council confirm the inspector's language of 'some 25' is the current allocation for HD4. [which is now variously down as '25 (table page 11)', 'some 25 (inspectors report)', 'approximately 25' and 'minimum 25 (table page 13)'.] |
| | Response from Cabinet Member |
| | Yes, changes to the Local Plan that change the intent of the Local Plan are not delegated to the planning department. The proposed wording of Policy HD4 is included at Appendix 4 of item 10 on the Cheltenham Borough Council Full Council meeting on the 20th July 2020. The wording of Policy HD4 is 'a minimum of 25 dwellings...'. This wording was included in the Cheltenham Plan Main Modifications documentation, approved by the Council on the 14th October 2019 and consulted on towards the end of 2019. Various comments were made on the Main Modifications, including policy HD4/Main Modification 16 during the public consultation. The Main Modifications and all the various comments received were presented (in full) to the Plan Inspector. Having considered the modifications and comments, the Inspector has subsequently determined that the Cheltenham Plan, with the Main Modifications, is 'sound' and can proceed to be considered for adoption. I am unable to comment on the Inspectors use of certain words in their response to the Cheltenham Plan Main Modification proposals. Any changes to the wording contained in the Main Modification consultation and now in the proposed Cheltenham Plan (adoption version) are limited to changes that, when taken together, do not materially affect the policies that would be set out in the document if it was adopted with main modifications but no other modifications. |
| 3. | Question from Trudie Wheat to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve |

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| | Jordan |
| | <p>Public feedback clearly indicates that a green buffer zone between the new cyber / golden valley development and existing housing is of great importance to local residents.</p> <p>Please can you explain why requests for a green buffer zone between the new industrial area and existing housing on Fiddlers Green Lane are being rejected? This is in contrast to incorporation of a green buffer between new and existing housing.</p> |
| | Response from Cabinet Member |
| | <p>Landscape improvements will be expected to be delivered by development along the length of the threshold with the existing urban area west Cheltenham, including along Fiddlers Green Lane where the proposal cluster of employment uses is earmarked. Policy A7 of the JCS includes a requirement for new development to be integrated with the existing built up area of the town so a balance does need to be struck between creating good connections and providing buffers between areas.</p> <p>The main access to the site will be via Telstar Way so establishing good quality connections and urban integration in this part of the site will be particularly important. There will however be opportunities to establish green edges all the way around the site and the SPD supported the principle of retaining landscape assets such as existing hedges.</p> |
| 4. | Question from Jim Lodge to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Jordan |
| | <p>BUFFER ZONES</p> <p>Would you please explain, in detail, how the SPD arrived at a proposal for buffer zones between existing residential areas and the new residential development, but not between existing residential areas and the proposed Cyber Park. Page 6 states that there is support for green links to adjoining communities and that retaining green spaces close to existing neighbourhood is a priority. Page 8 also refers to emphasis on green spaces in a1.3.10, second paragraph. Page 11 reflects 75% strongly agree with the landscape objective. I would also like to publicly state that it is wholly unacceptable to issue the SPD at such a late time that it has made it impossible to be able to fully read, digest and prepare questions 5 days prior to the Council meeting. For a planning process this is an example of very poor planning.</p> |
| | Response from Cabinet Member |
| | <p>Please see response to Question 3.</p> <p>The council papers for this meeting were published on Friday 10th July more than the required time ahead of the council meeting. The timescale for submitting public questions tries to balance the opportunity to ask questions relevant to the agenda while still allowing answers to be provided in time for the meeting.</p> <p>Details of the actual consultation on the SPD are outlined in the consultation statement and public engagement has taken place both informally and formally. The stage we have now reached is the formal approval process which we are undertaking in the usual way.</p> |
| 5. | Question from Jim Lodge to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Jordan |

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| | <p>FIDDLERS GREEN LANE</p> <p>There appears to be no distinct policy regarding Fiddlers Green Lane. Page 20 Policy A7 number 5 states the use of Fiddlers Green Lane as a vehicular access for strategic movements to and from site. This is contradicted by Policy A7 number 8, stating there should be safe, easy and convenient pedestrian and cycle links. The 2 are not compatible.</p> <p>My question is why does the document not clearly outline a policy for Fiddlers Green Lane and when a firm policy is identified, what is the process for this to be discussed with the public before a final commitment is made.</p> <p>Page 138 2.1 states 2 access points of which one is Telstar Way/ Fiddlers Green Lane. This is in fact 2 access points, not one.</p> <p>Page 143 refers to a potential re- routing of Fiddlers Green Lane. This supports the 2 and not one access points.</p> <p>It would appear that there is no definite plan for Fiddlers Green Lane within this document.</p> |
| | <p>Response from Cabinet Member</p> |
| | <p>Policy A7 of the JCS is not subject to consultation as this was adopted by the JCS councils in December 2017 and forms part of the statutory development plan for Cheltenham.</p> <p>The principal vehicular access to the site will be across Fiddlers Green Lane at the points of its intersection with Telstar Way. Local traffic management arrangements may need to be revised as more detailed proposals emerge. Any such measures will be a matter for future planning applications. It is too early to be sure what impact the new development will have on Fiddlers Green Lane because detailed proposals for the site have not yet been formed. As things stand however, the intention is that the primary function of Fiddlers Green Lane will remain a local access road for existing local residents. This will all be tested through the development management process when planning applications come forward which will be all subject to public consultation at that time.</p> |
| 6. | <p>Question from Andy Hayes to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Jordan</p> |
| | <p>Bearing in mind the acknowledged sensitivity of the plans for Fiddlers Green Lane both in terms of traffic management and proximity of office and residential buildings, will the council agree to setting up a working group to include key stakeholders including the Hesters Way Forum to address these issues and inform design plans as part of the planning application process?</p> |
| | <p>Response from Cabinet Member</p> |
| | <p>This is certainly something we will consider. I have tasked officers to review and engage directly with the Hesters Way Forum on how this could be appropriately managed.</p> |
| 7. | <p>Question from Andy Hayes to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Jordan</p> |
| | <p>There are six green spaces indicated in in the northern section of the development but only two in the south. Whilst it is recognised that the bulk of the new housing is in the north, there are significant allocations in the south and a large area of residential properties not served by green space adjacent to the site. Will the council commit to a balance of green provision for new and existing communities by including a broad green space adjacent to Fiddlers Green Lane as detailed in the emerging Hesters Way Neighbourhood Plan?</p> |
| | <p>Response from Cabinet Member</p> |

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| <p>See response to Question 3. The Hesters Way Neighbourhood Plan was reviewed in the preparation of the SPD. The SPD sets out a masterplan that seeks to make efficient use of land, responds actively in terms of connections to the existing built up area and neighbourhoods in the context of creating a world class business location within a residential landscape which builds on garden community principles.</p> |
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