



WEBINAR

Questions and Answers

18 JANUARY 2021 - The Two Development Sites



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QUESTIONS RAISED IN ADVANCE AND ANSWERED DURING THE WEBINAR

Consolidated question from more than one member:

What provision is there for starter homes for young people and smaller homes for people downsizing? (Not everyone wants to live in a care home as they get older and there are certainly a lot of those!)

The Draft Local Plan places an emphasis on homes for young people and smaller homes for downsizing. It is recognized generally in the Housing section and specifically in the Settlement section on Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath. It says that affordable housing will be required on development sites and smaller homes for young people wishing to stay in the area should be sought. Policy P4A (Meeting Housing Needs) sets a target of 40% Affordable Housing of which:

- for social housing 65% should be 1/2-bed, 35% 3-bed
- for shared ownership 55% should be 1/2-bed, 45% 3-bed

Policy 4C, meanwhile, for market homes indicates 30% 1/2-bed and 50% 3-bed (20% larger) but that compares with equivalent figures in the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) of 32% 1/2-bed and 33% 3-bed (34% larger). The figures are different, but in preparing the NP, we were mindful that if older people are to downsize, they do not want to be 'in a shoebox'. However, in both, the policies put emphasis on more smaller homes.

Consolidated question from more than one member:

Hampton Road is already a busy road with a very busy junction with Warwick Road and Lodge Road. With the prospect of two more new estate roads and the resultant traffic, will there not be a considerable risk of traffic jams and of accidents to school children and other pedestrians?

This is an issue raised many times during this process. The Council has now published a Solihull wide traffic impact assessment and a 'Knowle Transport Study', which will be examined in the February Webinar. As far as the Hampton Road junction is concerned, the Council's advisors are saying that even without the additional traffic from the two proposed sites, normal growth would require some work on improving that junction because it would be over capacity.

There appears to be a view in the report that, with that in mind, new housing will not, then, make a huge difference. Some options were put forward in the Transport Study and the favoured option is a double mini roundabout, but all options will be the subject of detailed consideration through the planning application process.

It is surprising that there is no consideration of improvement to the Arden Vale Road / Warwick Road junction, given that quite a few people will use that to miss the junction at the High Street.

The options and conclusions from the Study will be considered in more detail in February.

QUESTIONS RAISED AND ANSWERED DURING THE WEBINAR

Consolidated question from more than one member:

Regarding the new school, primary in particular, some concern is circulating that the existing Knowle Primary School might be closed and demolished as a result of the proposal. Do you know what the position is?

No, that suggestion is not something I have heard of. My understanding is that an additional primary school will be required, but I do not know the answer to that. It may be answered in the March Webinar.

From Simon Thomas –

Isn't there a covenant preventing development on the Football Club site.

That is a question that we have raised from the Forum in our representation. We are not sure whether the Football Club owns the land on which it sits and I believe it is also correct that there is a covenant on the ground. However, whether that prevents development is not clear. We need to find answers to that, because it goes to the heart of whether what is proposed is actually deliverable as a community benefit.

Question raised by more than one member:

Is there anything positive to say about the Plan?

It depends on your perspective. In terms of the Plan as a whole, the Council has a duty to provide housing to meet needs, so some has to be built. As far as Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath are concerned it depends on people's perspective on the balance between gaining new community benefits and the loss of Green Belt land to housing and there are very differing views on that. There are those who want a new school and facilities and those who think it is too high a price to pay. Going forward, if we are found to need that scale of housing, the emphasis would need to be on getting the best community benefit for our area as a whole so that everyone gains some benefit from the developments.

From Simon Rainer – Are there any public / community developments other than the green spaces planned for the Arden triangle? What about public use of Arden's facilities?

Only what we have seen in the Plan where it says facilities will be available and should improve community access. It is something that we would like to explore very much further. The NP is in favour of improved facilities for education, sport, recreation etc, subject to certain criteria, one of which is that should be able to Community Access Statements should support Planning Applications, as stated Policy ECF6 in the NP.

In other words, we would be looking to the Council and scheme promoters to enter into Agreements stating what community access arrangements will be and ensuring access for all sections of the community. In that way, new Football Club facilities would not be just for football, but might accommodate other social groups for wider use,

From Anne Smith – Are all the landowners of the allocated areas in agreement to proceed? Or does a developer control all the parcels of land?

As far as the Arden Triangle is concerned, the proposals have been around for about 5 years. As I understand it, the landowners have struggled to identify how the site might be taken forward comprehensively and only in the last year has the Council taken a lead and tried to pull a plan together.

The southern part of the site is in the ownership of a developer who is working now with the Council, I believe, the Council/Arden Academy and the two other landowners, of Landsdowne and Stripes Hill House, have recently been working together to try to ensure how the benefits might be delivered. It will be interesting to see if any more information is available in the March Webinar session about the new school.

With regard to the Hampton Road sites, there are landowners of what was the Thacker's Nursery site, who are promoting the scheme through a firm called Savills, in addition to owners of the Football Club site. As mentioned, there are questions regarding the latter about whether the land can be sold and used.

QUESTIONS RAISED BUT NOT ANSWERED DURING THE WEBINAR

Question from Charles Pontifex

Where is the vehicular access to the site currently occupied by the school playing field to the right of the bridlepath when approaching from Station Road?

The Masterplan drawing indicates a sole access from Station Road where the entrance to the School is at present. It suggests that there will be no vehicular connection from the estate roads to the Greswolde House car park access road and that the Bridleway will be crossed behind the Mind Garden for access to proposed housing on the present playing field beyond.

Question from John Cooper

The KDBH NP was adopted by Solihull Council. Are they not now in breach?

No. The Draft Local Plan is not in force yet. Until it is adopted, the NP policies are more up to date and should prevail if there is any conflict between policies. There are a number of policies in the Draft Local Plan that differ from the NP policies. The Neighbourhood Forum has submitted objections seeking to ensure that various policies of our NP are respected and recognised in the Local Plan Review and at the Public Examination. At that stage it will be up to the Inspector to decide which matters should be the subject of debate. In any event the Inspector should consider our written representations. Depending on the outcome, it may be necessary to review the NP once the Local Plan is adopted.

QUESTIONS RAISED BUT DEFERRED TO THE FEBRUARY WEBINAR

Is a bypass being considered in this plan? There was a talk of a needed bypass before this plan - surely they we must force them to consider this in the plans otherwise traffic is going to be a real problem

Will there or has there been a review of the emissions, current and potential, with this plan? (The council has a target to reduce emissions especially within greenbelt areas- I would expect to see a full risk assessment of emissions and if these will be exceeded with the new plan.)

QUESTION RAISED BUT DEFERRED TO THE MARCH WEBINAR

Where will parents park on the primary school run?