

Community Action Team Meeting (CAT) 8 November 2017: Ferneham Hall, Fareham

Who was there?

Present: Cllr Woodward, Cllr Birkett, Cllr Evans, Cllr Trott, Cllr Brady,
Cllr Keeble and Cllr Ellis

Residents: approximately 65

What was talked about?

Introductory presentation by Cllr Woodward focusing on the Borough's growing need for housing, the sites that were assessed for housing and the importance of infrastructure. This was followed by Richard Jolley, Director of Planning and Regulation who discussed the selection of the draft preferred sites for housing proposed in the Draft Local Plan.

Questions from the Floor

Q How do you define 'affordable housing'?

A There are a number of flavours for affordable housing. Shared ownership is one – where people can buy on a mortgage a percentage of the house, say 25% and the other 75% will be rented, and as time goes by they can buy a larger percentage. Another one is traditional council housing – rough figures, rent would be about 60 per cent of market rent. There are plans for council housing on the books at the moment. Another one is affordable rent housing association rent, which would typically be around 80% of market rent. Another one is a scheme, which Fareham is part of the initiative for, is discounted housing, where we can provide housing with a 20% discount. This would be specifically for younger first-time buyers. Another one is self-build and can be more affordable for some. These are some examples of affordable housing.

Q There is talk of more retail outlets at the Market Quay development. Why can't you have more housing there? We have so many empty units within the existing shopping unit as it is. Why on the Market Quay development is there more retail units. Why isn't there talk of housing instead?

A We did consult several months back on a vision for the Town Centre, which included heavy emphasis on housing and also an emphasis on some more retail units as well. What we are looking at is a blend, though I think you'll find that housing is predominating, but there is scope for more retail units. What the message is, is that we are trying to get a real mix of housing and retail within the town centre. For example, the multi storey car park could be a new multi storey car park, and some retail and some housing, so mixed use right across the site.

Q In a number of slides you referred to issue over air pollution. How are you going to manage air pollution in order to make the housing attractive to anybody, especially if you have children?

A We have two air quality management zones within the central part of Fareham and we have to put into place a plan on how to manage that. In simply terms, stationary traffic is what causes pollution, moving traffic there is a lot less pollution. So right across the Borough, and including the M27, there is nearly £350m worth of road improvements going on at the moment, such as the Stubbington bypass, the A27 improvements and increasing the capacity of the motorway by a third, and moving towards something known as a smart motorway.

A Richard Jolley: The additional point I'd make, is that what we usually find with air quality monitoring is that it is actually quite a narrow corridor which is usually either side of the highway, where the air quality is very poor, and you don't did to go that far away to get acceptable air quality.

Q I live on Tukes Avenue, and my son goes to the school there, and I wonder how you are going to take more space (i.e. school places) around that area?

A We will be collecting money from developers to ensure that children are educated. Hampshire County Council will make sure there is school placements for children. There are two ways to do that, extend existing schools, i.e. 2 form of entry to a 3-form of entry. For larger developments, new schools may be built. Welborne will have 3 primary schools and eventually a secondary school. Roads – huge investment in infrastructure for traffic congestion. Nearly £350 million being spent on road improvements locally.

Q I did feel when reading through Fareham's policies that low carbon design wasn't there. I do realise its contentious at the moment and we can't require developers to do it, but will Fareham encourage it?

A We are encouraging environmentally conscious and friendly homes. At the moment we are running a Passivhaus trial, and we have built six Passivhaus houses near the old Coldeast Hospital site. These are being used as a test, and we are expecting Welbourne to deliver at least 10% of homes to passive house standard.

A Richard Jolley: I would welcome your views. It is a very careful balance, and there hasn't been the support from government in some of their planning guidance which we may have liked to of seen.

Q What is your definition of a strategic gap and why would we need it one day and not the next?

A What we have in Fareham is two strategic gaps. We have one between south Fareham and Stubbington, which is called the Stubbington gap (parts of it also border Gosport) and we have another known as the Meon Gap. We were required as part of the adoption of the local plan back in 2015 to review the extent of those strategic gaps and we are again looking at this issue as part of the Draft Local Plan.

Q Is there any one from Gosport officially representing here this evening, as a lot of this imposes on Gosport residents?

A The consultation process started two weeks ago and has sometime to run, and I am hearing from Gosport councillors and residents.

Q We see this new road going on Newgate Lane, and traffic has been a problem for years. We see something being done about it, and then a housing development appears. Was the road put there to give the developers the go ahead?

A No it wasn't. In fact, the decision on the road was made by me in a county council role.

Q It will take some time before the plan is in place and adopted. I have a concern about the Cranleigh road example. Which risks opening the floodgates up to haphazard speculative development being allowed on appeal. Is there anything that you could do to give us support that something could be done to avoid that haphazard speculative development going ahead? **A** It's a real concern. Since we have adopted the existing Local Plan we have lost only one significant appeal in two years and that is the Cranleigh Road one. A few weeks after the Cranleigh Road one, we then won an appeal in Hill Head on countryside development. I don't think all is lost because of one appeal.

Q The Newlands application is up for review again and that is going to be exposed to an appeal.

A The Newlands farm planning application hasn't even been to the planning committee yet. It going to have to go to the planning committee and then to appeal which would take time. As time goes by, our Draft Local Plan starts to gain traction and when we get to an adopted version of the Local Plan, and it will have significant weight, and that will be the environment that a planning appeal will be heard.

Q How are you going to cope with sewage?

A When developing a Local Plan public utilities need to be consulted, and environmental agencies to ensure that the infrastructure is in place. They will all have their say, and any issues must be satisfied.

Q My Concern is the A32. It's always been a bottle-neck, what are you going to do about it, if you start building on Newgate Lane?

A How to solve the A32 has been an ongoing problem. I can't stand here and say there is a magic solution, but clearly we need options around it, such as extending the Eclipse bus service.

Q So it is just going to get worse then?

A It depends how many people get out of their cars and use public transport, and how many people use the alternative routes that are being built at the moment.

Q There needs to be a balance between standard of living and quality of life, and I don't believe this has been addressed appropriately. Why haven't we done that?

A **Richard Jolley** - The key thing for the Council when progressing the Local Plan, is that we have to be mindful of Government's planning guidance about how to calculate the housing needs for the Borough, and meet those housing needs. The reality is we need to find land for the housing.

Q (b – same person)- We are the electorate, and we ask a representative to represent our best interests. We haven't gone back to what we, the electorate would require, do we have any say in it?

A 80% of older residents in Fareham own their own homes. Then we have younger residents, that are struggling to get on the housing ladder. Some people who are happy in their homes, would rather not see these any homes be built, but we need to build homes and have control over the process by having a Local Plan.

Q It seems we are more inclined to safeguard a Geese population that may be present for four months a year, than we are to safeguard our most valuable long-term land resource to feed our population.

A **Richard Jolley** – We are mindful of planning guidance, which says one of the considerations is the value of land for agriculture. I reassure you that, that is one of the considerations the Council has got to take in progressing its Local Plan through to the later stages.

Q Why didn't you let the residents in Tukes Avenue know that their houses could be demolished?

A **Richard Jolley** – The proposals there do in part reflect the proposals put forward by the site promoters. We will have further dialogue with both the site promoters and the relevant residents about this issue.

Q (Same person) – The A32 has poor air quality, has the safe air quality been exceeded?

A In that narrow corridor there is an issue.

Q RE Gosport/ Stubbington Gap. Is it possible there will be no gap?

A The Stubbington strategic gap is a huge gap, and if there is development there, then clearly that will have an impact on the gaps between settlements. The judgements that will have to be made is how much impact the proposals have on the gap.

Q Did you vote for stopping the bus service last week in the Councillors meeting?

A No, I did not vote.

Q I live in Tukes Avenue, and 14 days ago a sign went on a post. I was unaware, and horrified that my house has been identified for demolition. Who would want to buy my property now? Who has identified my house for demolition?

A The promoters of the site have identified your property.

Q You can't keep poking things south of the M27. You are going to put 500 houses in Downend Road, you can't poke houses and cars in. QA – my father had to wait in the ambulance outside, the infrastructure cannot cope. It needs to be acceptable planning, well thought of infrastructure.

A The Borough has to accommodate its housing need.

Q We used to have a tram system, can we put this back in place? Until national government invests in Infrastructure it won't work. You are looking at it from the wrong side.

A We have to do it somehow. Fortunately these arguments don't come across too often. We can't say we're full to the planning inspector. We need to put forward sites.

Q Welborne – will there be a proposal for a new railway system north of Fareham?

A There is feasibility study for a small Welborne train station.

Q The gentleman touched on the quality of life, we see deer, rabbits and foxes. It is really disappointing that it takes away from our village that we have. I do hope it gets rejected and stopped.

A A number of areas have seen developments take place here over time. Whiteley took over – and the strawberry fields are now gone.

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