

Standing Conference on New Community North of Fareham

Summaries from Workshops 1-3 The following summaries are taken from the Perspectives notes recording the emerging views of the Standing Conference on aspects of the new community north of Fareham, as developed in workshops on these topics. The notes reflect the broad thrust of discussion and not the views of any one organisation. See the full notes for more depth and context.

**Note 1: Greenspace infrastructure and the wider landscape setting
(Workshop on 20 November 2012)**

Summary

*The location of the new community close to the South Downs National Park and other major conservation sites makes it important both to get the landscape setting right but also to create a new green gateway. The project should bring into being one or more **greenspace “star attractions”** which will not only satisfy the day to day needs of residents but be good enough to attract visitors from Fareham and the wider area. In particular:*

- (i) **“Star attraction” options** include a new path/cycleway network running from Fareham Common to Wickham West Walk and from Knowle west to Botley Woods and east to Creech. **Investment in better woodland management in these areas** would improve their appeal subject to their SSSI status. A **“gateway” countryside centre** provided as part of the development gain could draw in visitors and potential walkers/cyclists (see paras 8-13);*
- (ii) Given the wider landscape settings, the priority in handling of green space across the areas of built development should be a series of **smaller spaces within housing areas to be developed as community gardens, managed and designed by local residents, and in the central area (adjoining the district centre) a multiple use space including a tranquil area**, well screened by new planting given the (motorway)noise issues affecting the site. Given the rising height of the site – and views south east to the Spinnaker Tower – it could include a viewing platform or tower (see paras 14-21);*
- (iii) **The southern gateway**, where the new community will be most visible to Fareham and the motorway, offers an opportunity for green noise barriers and to use **at least part of the area for SUDS to take surface water drainage and run off in creating a wetlands environmental feature**. It could be the **“starting off point”** for east west pedestrian/cycle-way/bridal-way links crossing across the motorway and to connect east and west from the Wallington Valley / Portsdown Hill to the Meon Valley and Botley Woods (see paras 22-31).*

**Note 2: Achieving a quality place and masterplanning the new community
(Workshop on 3 December 2012)**

Summary *The approach to design and layout, is probably the most challenging aspect of ensuring that the new community is attractive to residents, desirable to investors and has the potential to go on generating new activities and economic value. The Standing Conference considered that overall **the new community should follow the character and attraction of a traditional Hampshire Market Town delivered in 21st century terms.** In design it would need to be a hybrid having a tight, “historic” centre, built to higher density, while outer areas were less dense and developed to Garden City principles, so softening the borders with the existing landscape.*

- (i) To deliver **a characterful and successful district centre** within this overall concept there needs to be **an ambitious mix of uses** to include retail, small offices, work hubs and starter business units, restaurant and hospitality, compatible housing (eg apartments above shops and live/work space), health facilities and one of the schools (possibly the secondary school) with other **employment uses located closeby** to improve footfall, providing design is sensitive. The centre should be **on the BRT network** and function as a place to meet, a focal point with a **“busy” square of human scale** and linked to other enclosed spaces nearby eg communal or formal gardens. The centre would be best located close to but just off the A32 to benefit from passing trade, critical in the early years. Given the long build out period, **high quality interim uses** (eg a high quality leisure facility) should be sought for vacant sites which should be provided to allow for future expansion.*
- (ii) Work should continue to develop **a range of possible housing types** – from large detached in the outer areas to historic terraces at the centre (including smaller units - a good market for incoming “downsizers” as at Poundbury) and to develop **a design code** to achieve high standards and character. There should be **an easily understood street and path network** radiating from the district centre particularly for cycling and walking, while creating points of variety and surprise, exploiting **vistas** (eg the gas pipeline). The “distant view” was an important design issue externally – the new community would be a small town on a hill for North Fareham and also from the motorway.*
- (iii) The design should provide for **current car parking standards** (as well as cycling and walking) while being **flexible** for an unknown transport future. There needed to be a standardized approach to **“troublesome” issues** such as bins, cable TV and similar details – those who move in will have to accept the agreed approach/standard from the start.*

Note 3: Education and community (Workshop on 12 February 2013)

Summary *Provision and quality of education in and for the new community is a key element in its marketable value, attraction to families and to all who use and benefit from its facilities and activities. The first school is often the focal point for a new community as it develops and may be the only community facility in the early years. A Standing Conference workshop to look at these topics heard from Hampshire County Council, school providers – new and existing – from Fareham schools and school leisure centre operators and its emerging conclusions are:*

(i) **What type of school(s), where and who should provide?** *The first school needed is likely to be primary and needs to be community based, local and relatively close to the community it serves. There may be a good case for looking at a temporary primary facility initially. The point at which to start secondary provision would depend on factors such as capacity, wider local need and offer in the existing secondary schools. But education provision was now more competitive and less “predict and provide” and there was benefit to the new development in having secondary places on site earlier such as additional facilities and a central community hub. Whatever designation the new provision has, it should be in collaboration with other existing provision and take into account likely travel by pupils. It was too early to identify the providers but it was important to have a clear vision for the school, its values and for the facilities (eg a list of customer uses) it should provide. We should aim high so as to create the best framework against which to test potential providers.*

(ii) **What community and leisure facilities could be provided alongside or as part of school provision, and what scope is there for community management?** *There were good examples of school based leisure facilities which could recoup their running costs without grant (although more scope at secondary scale) and benefits of dual use eg community access in daytime, space for activity and evening classes, worship, commercial activity such as a cafe, and providing good opportunities for older and younger people to mix. Some new community facilities should be unique in Fareham so that they offer benefit not just for new residents / business, but to visitors and increase footfall.*

(iii) **Going forward** *Consideration was still an early stage, but there would be value in preparing a vision statement for the first school(s) in the new community to reflect both their special role and the wider values of Fareham civic society. A further possibility was for secondary schools to develop their own working group to look at secondary school collaboration. Thirdly, an assessment of the leisure and community facilities (in association with FBC leisure services) it would be (a) desirable and (b) practical to provide on a no grant approach as at Hamble CSC.*