

Note of Public Meeting - 9th July 2018

WBC Plans for the Fairground Car Park

The Mayor opened the Public Meeting stating that the purpose of the meeting was to gauge opinion on Waverley Borough Councils plans for The Fairground Car Park. He gave some background to the proposal.

He stated that the meeting was being hosted by Haslemere Town Council and would be chaired by the Town Clerk Lisa O'Sullivan.

Around 50 members of the public attended.

1. Principle of re-surfacing and charging

Key points raised by the public:

It is unlikely that the resurfacing of the car park will benefit the town, it is imperative that free parking for shoppers and shopkeepers is maintained.

Resurfacing will probably result in less spaces for parking and have ramifications across the town.

Is there a need for complete resurfacing with tarmac? Could WBC not just fill the holes with some material?

A strategy is needed for Car Parking across the whole Town, WBC should focus on that.

Concerns that once charging is place Haslemere will lose the car park and control over future developments.

Can we use technology so Haslemere residents can park there only – Consider Park and Ride.

An in formal vote was taken and the majority voted to keep the site in its current state – no resurfacing, no charging.

2. De-registration of Common Land and Land Swap

The Town Clerk reported that she had received legal advice the consent that was given in 1994 remains in place and therefore de-registration is not required. For the purpose of balance, she noted that WBC's stated reasons for wanting de-registration were 1) because otherwise there would be no land swap required and residents would miss out and 2) to prevent delays to future development.

Key points raised by the public:

It is not in Haslemere's best interests to de-register the land, once it is de-registered then we have no control over the land.

HTC and WBC have not acted well in this process, legal advice has not been given to WBC who have submitted an application at a cost of £4k. HTC should have done more to hold WBC to account.

The proposed swap site is unsuitable for use for many reasons; gradient of land, lack of parking, inaccessible.

There are current car parking issues at Sun Brow, these will be worse if dog walkers start using the swap site. What about emergency services access?

The monetary value of the two sites unequal therefore making it an unfair swap.

Japanese knotweed has been found at the proposed land swap site.

If de-registration not required then is land-swap necessary.

There was question raised over the size of the proposed area for de-registration. It is shown on the application form as 4926.4m² but the same site which is in LPP2 (DS20) is estimated at 0.5ha (which equates to 5000m²). It is obvious from looking at the maps in the two documents that the LPP2 proposed development are covers some common land that WBC have not requested to de-register in their application.

Are Haslemere Town Council listening to what the residents of Haslemere want? So far 990 residents have signed a petition against the de-registering of the site.

An in formal vote was taken and the majority voted against de-registration of the land and the proposed Land Swap.

3. Future use for Fairground car park

The Town Clerk asked members of the public to let her have any ideas about the future use of the site. She noted that the Town Council had set up a working party to take it forward, including Vision and Chamber of Trade.

Key points raised by the public:

Discussions have previously taken place regarding the future of the site (houses, retail, offices and public open spaces) and now what is needed is a Conceptual Architect to prepare plans for a public consultation.

The Chamber of Trade has not got the expertise within the proposed Working Party.

Could an underground car park be an option?

Haslemere do not own the land, WBC own the Freehold.

Is the Town Council planning to come up with different ideas to those residents have already agreed to via the Vision?

4. Other Considerations

The Town Clerk urged interested parties to write to the Planning Inspectorate.

Key points raised by the public:

What are the key items we should be commenting on when writing to the Planning Inspectorate?

- Comments of neighbourhood
- Displacement
- Loss of habitat
- Unsuitable land swap
- Natural England has not seen site

It was noted that the Planning Inspectorate had guidance on criteria for objections, the Town Clerk will put a link onto the website

Twin hatted Councillors must take note of Haslemere residents' concerns, is there a conflict of interest?

The Mayor closed the meeting and thanked everyone for coming.