

Kingsbridge Town Council

SHDC Kingsbridge Quayside Consultation

Notes from the Public Meeting held at 7.00 p.m. on Monday 3 July 2017 in St Edmunds Church

1. Welcome and introduction by Councillor Chris Povey, Chairman, Kingsbridge Town Council

- The public meeting had been facilitated by the Town Council (KTC).
- The proposals had been made by South Hams District Council (SHDC).
- Thanks for attendance were made to SHDC officers Chris Brook & Dan Field, District Cllrs Rufus Gilbert & Keith Wingate, Town Councillors and in particular local residents for attending in such large numbers.
- The plans were conceptual only to gain opinions from the Kingsbridge community.
- A full council meeting the following day Tuesday 4 July would consider KTC's own feedback which would be informed by the present meeting.
- Exhibitions with SHDC officers in attendance would take place in the Library 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. Tuesday 4, Wednesday 5 & Friday 7 July and at Tesco 5.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. Thursday 6 July.
- Deadline for all feedback was Sunday 9 July.
- Emergency exits and housekeeping explained.

2. Presentation of the concept to develop Kingsbridge Quayside by South Hams District Council

- A show of hands identified that the entire audience were aware of the proposals and had been informed by the plans therefore it was not intended to make a full presentation.
- It was acknowledged that not everybody had access to the internet therefore paper copies of the feedback questionnaire would be made available.
- Key comments received to date regarded: car parking, affordable homes, Fore Street shops and the Town Square.
- 50 dwellings were proposed for Quay Car Park (QCP) which would displace current parking however, utilisation across the town identified that there were no capacity issues. While QCP was well utilised it was not always full. The worst case scenario was a loss of 57 car parking spaces therefore there would be a parking impact. However, digital signs could be installed to alert drivers to available parking elsewhere. Moreover, it was intended to transfer business parking permits from QCP to the Cattle Market.
- Developers gained 20 to 24% profit for share holders however, in Area 3 as the land owner SHDC could provide 20 homes to a registered provider as affordable housing. For local people not on the housing register a community housing scheme in Area 4 could be provided at 75% market value. The land

was free and SHDC had been awarded a £2m government grant which could pay for a range of items. Total housing was earmarked for 100 dwellings with 40% affordable.

- It was a residential scheme and not a new high street. Small employment space at the Slipway could be provided for marine business and a café/restaurant. It was not a commercial venture.
- The Town Square was a large space and the current highways set-up was effectively a barrier between it and Fore Street. Bus station, taxi rank and Information Centre were all located within Area 1 and it was likely that with a blank sheet of paper the design would be different.
- In summary, the public consultation provided the opportunity for the Kingsbridge community to have their say i.e. support for the proposals or to challenge them.

3. Audience comments/Question & Answer session

(Q = question, A = answer, S = statement)

Q. Where will the bus station be moved?

A. Within metres of current location. 225mm kerb height required. Buses to stop and pick up in a reduced area of tarmac therefore a challenging concept.

Q. No building on QCP, Slipway the right size, £100k consultation spend?

A. Slipways normally 1 in 9 or 10 not 1 in 14. Access is crucial to Area 2. £100k had paid for a number of studies, sanctioned by SHDC Executive and very small percentage of a multi-million pound project.

Q. Church/Bridge Street traffic will drive through a pedestrian area which was dangerous, Slipway users need to park cars to load/unload.

A. No proposal for pedestrianisation. 600 vehicles per hour either way. The concept is to improve the pedestrian 'desire line' to Fore Street. Roundabout may be moved.

Q. Parking in residential streets will be worse with less parking e.g. Highfield Drive, is there a hidden agenda to attract money to repair the Quay?

A. Traffic Regulation Orders could be introduced to restrict parking elsewhere or increased enforcement but probably no other action. Harbour wall was an independent project, failure one year ago, individual repair to current damage circa £40k, whole wall repair circa £1m.

Q. Looking forward to the future, lots of positives in the plans.

Q. Questionnaire loaded i.e. Q.4 should state or none of the above Q.5 leading question. Delete current feedback received and re-issue questionnaire. Need a taxi rank in its current position to support townsfolk.

A. All questionnaires will be read. Lots of free text boxes to place comments. There will be no deletion of questionnaires received to date. Buses and taxis to be configured differently in a similar location.

Q. 11 storey building on QCP?

A. No 11 storey building. 50 dwellings proposed. Either one storey/large footprint or very tall/small footprint. Public feedback required.

Q. Parking in many residential streets is bad and fire engine is often obstructed. Access for Fair Week and Food & Music Festival. May endanger life; don't fix if it's not broken.

A. Parking is a common issue throughout the South Hams and probably not part of current discussion. Net loss of parking is 57 spaces. Local events noted as a priority.

Q. Devon residency protection to apply to housing?

A. Community housing will be for Kingsbridge residents.

Q. Fair Week one week of the year. Proposal to amend current set-up was a huge issue a few years ago which upset majority of the community. QCP is not full of caravans but some on-site accommodation required for security. Fun Fair is an integral part of Fair Week do not lose it.

A. There is capacity for future community events. Scale and options are the considerations. Waiting list of 60 people for pontoon berths and paddle boarding growing therefore competing interests. Fair Week to rise to the challenge.

Q. Are there covenants on car parks?

A. SHDC own QCP, covenants on Cattle Market & Fore Street car parks for car parking therefore housing cannot go there.

Q. Why is it necessary to build when other allocated sites have outline permission, Belle Hill development is being considered, K4 Derby Road has just been approved?

A. Government policy is for local authorities to have a 5 year housing supply. If this is not met then it is difficult to resist development.

Q. Connectivity with Quayside Leisure Centre is pivotal particularly connection with the water. Fusion Lifestyle has new 25 year contract and ambitions to refurbish, do not place a barrier in front of it. Prime site so valuable and cynical view it will provide very expensive apartments.

A. Fusion know about the proposals. Waterfront homes are valuable but it's a balance because affordable homes cost cash too so funding has to be realised to deliver the project.

Q. We need a community centre on the Quay with parking underneath.

A. Car parking is important. It is a consultation so suggest alternative schemes.

Q. In France, would not have tarmac it would be an underground car park with amenity space on top. Less than 10 vacant parking spaces in QCP last Saturday so there is a current parking issue. Pay-on-exit parking to be introduced.

A. Accept pay-on-exit. Underground parking difficult because of flood alleviation. Need 1.8 metre wall around the Quay. Very challenging, very expensive.

Q. Put the car parking elsewhere.

A. Potential to reconfigure Cattle Market car park but not looking for alternative parking at a remote location.

Q. Where will the Skatepark go? Think about teenagers?

A. Tell us where it should go in the feedback.

Q. Have you consulted schools.

A. Informed KCC.

Q. Other towns very busy. Invest in shops, get people in. Get visitors here.

A. The proposals are pro-community. New local residents will use local shops.

Q. How will the proposals help the rest of the town and particularly Fore Street?

A. Lots of examples that new developments can change communities for the better. Development can be positive.

Q. It will not benefit the community.

A. Affordable and community housing will benefit.

Q. Pleased to hear the concept. Use QCP differently/better. Should be retail, office space, seasonal shops, community centre. This will keep people in town and push them up Fore Street. QCP is big enough to accommodate it all.

A. Employment is a secondary objective of the proposals. Development is not aimed to compete with Fore Street. There is limited scope for café and business.

Q. Build houses elsewhere.

A. Areas 3 & 4 are located on SHDC land therefore land is free.

Q. Where do you live? Shop owner in Fore Street; shops both sides are shut. What's the process?

A. Progress to planning application if consultation response and SHDC Executive support progression. Executive decision in September 2017. One year to outline planning application. Plus one year reserved matters. Community housing within 2 years. Current allocated development site for Kingsbridge with sustainability assessment approved.

Q. Within sight of water 2nd homes only. Do not need glossy apartments empty for 30 weeks of the year. What is the net capital receipt for SHDC? What will happen to it?

A. Cash is spent where SHDC Members decide. Not looking to sell to a developer. SHDC to keep control. Report to Executive in September 2017 will have options i.e. lots of affordable or less affordable.

S. Orientation means large storey building will block out sunlight from the gem of Kingsbridge i.e. long shadow.

Q. What's the way forward? Why the rush?

A. Assets report to SHDC Executive in September 2017. Members will either move forward after consideration of options or scrap the project. Kingsbridge district councillors requested a longer timeframe for the public consultation but were unsuccessful.

S. SHDC under financial pressure, merger with West Devon BC, DPD 485 houses for Kingsbridge, JLP 395 houses, Fore Street to be protected, historic town centre, outline planning permission for allocated sites K1 & K5 not delivered, increase the activity on the water, building on QCP could take away the town's biggest asset, SHDC should realise it owns a car park and it may forever be a car park.

S. Park & Ride required for Kingsbridge, extra car park on waste land opposite Tesco.

Q. Lots of charity shops in Fore Street, town centre requires regeneration.

A. KTC hugely committed to Fore Street, entry into Great British High Street Award competition, reduction in costs for Fore Street car park agreed by SHDC.

Q. What are the proposed housing numbers?

A. About 100 with 40 affordable/community housing.

Q. Query whether Cattle Market car park has a covenant which could be revisited?

A. Car parking only and unlikely to change.

S. Should have had public meeting in the first place, support affordable housing, during last Sunday's car boot sale 4 boats accessed the Slipway therefore would be chaos with housing in the way.

Q. Cannot believe car parking capacity/suggested current availability, daughter has a permit but cannot get a space as too busy.

A. 585 spaces overall, sometimes QCP full and occasionally all car parks full to capacity.

Q. What about townscape? What about human considerations? Support affordable housing, current east Quayside okay, west Quayside & Peacocks uninspiring.

A. Key buildings in Area 1, needs to be the right scale, provide a different aesthetic.

Q. Beautiful trees along Quayside do not disturb, introduce a 2nd home restriction for market value homes, greater parking capacity will be required as town and hinterland population grows.

A. Trees are challenging, ecological surveys conducted, QCP offers sustainable development as everyone will be able to walk to services, 2nd homes restriction can be circumnavigated by clever persons.

Q. What's the net value of the concept? Will it make cash?

A. Don't know, dependent on scale/massing plus numbers of open market versus affordable.

Q. Go ahead with the affordable and community housing and leave the rest.

A. SHDC is not looking at a narrow view but seeking greater benefits.

Q. What's to stop SHDC granting planning permission and then selling off?

A. SHDC elected Members provide the safeguard.

Q. Can we press the pause button rather than being driven by a survey deadline? SHDC to step back.

A. There is an opportunity to respond now. Executive to decide in September 2017 whether to stop, pause or proceed.

Q. SHDC has £2 million government funding for affordable homes so build them now. Quayside within the AONB, public amenity, 3 parliamentary complaints ongoing for SHDC.

A. £2 million to spend across South Hams; 5 or 6 sites being considered. Unable to answer AONB planning issues.

Q. SHDC could borrow cash to complete.

A. Yes, SHDC could borrow.

Q. Accessible properties for disabled required, retain disabled parking spaces.

A. No plans to move current disabled parking spaces.

S. Lack of detail in the plans, big spend to date, no maths done, may have more people on side if true benefits known, some properties in Fore Street appalling, property owners need a boost, this is where the cash should go rather than on vanity projects.

S. Transfer assets back to the town.

Q. What is the value of the land? Prime waterfront properties will be expensive so can we view the minutes?

A. SHDC website all minutes available. Executive June 2016. Land value is £10k per parking space. Don't know land value with development.

S. Community not fully represented, need to talk to everyone, younger people, all concerns required, a full response.

S. What is the galloping rush?

S. Carbon footprint in South Hams is highest in Europe, air quality monitoring stopped in Fore Street, will not continue, development will mean CO2 increase which does not fit.

4. Concluding remarks

- Get to the exhibitions.
- Go online to complete the questionnaire by Sunday 9 July.
- KTC full council meeting tomorrow evening Tuesday 4 July.
- Thank you to everyone for attending.