

Forward Planning Group

1)-**The Local Plan-Housing**-a report on the planners preferred options regarding greenfield sites that might be suitable for development (inc. Green-belt sites) was scheduled for release for consultation in the Autumn, but now wont be released before early 2019.-no change

-**5 villages** are being considered for modest expansion (Beare Green, Boxhill, Capel, Leigh and Westhumble). Consultations are underway.-no change

-**the most recent projections** from the Office for National Statistics predict that future housing demand may be less than previously calculated. However MVDC planners anticipate that this will not result in any significant reduction in their housing targets, an update on which is awaited from HMG. (These were previously assessed over the next 5 years at 437-502 units p.a., with a shortfall of between 45-50% of these numbers. But these numbers may have been significantly reduced once permitted constraints such as Green-belt, AONB and flood-risk areas were taken into account.)-no change

-**Commercial**-whilst there have been many prior approvals for conversion of offices to residential, only a small proportion have been built (approx. 15% or approx. 5% of total office stock) It is considered that there is sufficient land to meet likely future office demand. Also that there is sufficient land for industrial development (although some office land could be made available for industrial use)-no change

-**Other-green infrastructure and heritage strategies** being formulated-no change

2)-**Transform Leatherhead**- the most recent public meeting took place on Wednesday 17th October. The first address was from the CEO of our Local Enterprise Partnership (Coast2Capital) who are joint sponsors of the Transform Leatherhead initiative. He put forward numerous arguments as to why Leatherhead needs to be transformed, mostly related to the need for economic growth, with no apparent recognition of the fact that this growth is likely to damage the attractions of the Town as a place to live. Some of the arguments were highly questionable e.g. he argued that people commute to be able to afford high local house prices whereas it is equally, if not more , likely that people who already work in London move to Leatherhead because it's a nice place to live, yet is within commuting distance of London. Our fear is that all this proposed development may add 0.001% to national GDP but it will destroy the very reason so many choose to make Leatherhead their home.

Cllr Edge then summarised progress with the various parts of the project-

- **The Swan Centre**- work on the car park has made good progress but will stop for November/December so as not to detract from Xmas trading. Work will restart in the New Year and last until August 2019.

-**As there appears to be little demand from national retailers**, the long-term proposals for the Centre may now include users such as a cinema, restaurants, independent retailers, a market, a hotel and flats.

- **Claire/James House**-of the options shown at the public consultation, the one that has blocks of 5, 7, 7, 6, 5, 4 storeys has been selected as the preferred option. The existing buildings are of 3 and 4 storeys. Assuming the Planning Officers and English Heritage agree, this is the option that will be the subject of an early planning application.

- **Bull Hill**-development proposals to be reconsidered only when the results of the Transport Study are available. no change

- **Transport Study**-in hand and preliminary results likely to be available by the end of the year. no change.

-**Sustainable Transport**-the Randalls Road scheme is being considered again to see if it can be made to be viable.

3-Kingston House Gardens-Clarion has lodged a planning application as per their last consultation proposals. A strongly worded objection to the plans was lodged. Clarion then asked for a meeting. At the meeting revised plans were shown which met many of the criticisms relating to Block A, but none relating to Blocks B and C. Clarion said that these revised plans would be submitted to the planners in substitute for the existing version. LRA confirmed that once this happens they will submit a new representation acknowledging the changes, but repeating the outstanding criticisms. No change.

Other non-FPG matters

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)-each council is required to implement the legislation regarding the preservation of trees. This stipulates that trees which provide a high degree of amenity and which may be in danger should be protected. Trees may be single specimens, groups or whole areas. All trees in a conservation area are protected.

The definition of “amenity” is deliberately vague, but in general trees must be a) visible by the public b) in healthy condition c) have specific attributes such as size or form, rarity or historic value and make a contribution to landscape .

Mole Valley has a very large number of trees and as a result the Council has to be selective in how many it protects with TPOs.-no change.

