



5th December 2022

Feedback on Consultation re Elizabeth Quarter (Maidenhead Golf Course)

Maidenhead Civic Society was established in 1960 in liaison with the Local Authority to represent the views of like minded residents of the un-parished wards of Maidenhead. As might be expected much of the focus has been on planning issues. We accept the Borough Local Plan in principle and the need for the designated housing targets to be delivered, although we regret the disproportionate emphasis on development in Maidenhead. We also accept the suitability and sustainability of the Golf Course site because of its proximity to Maidenhead Station and Town Centre.

Our comments are as follows:

Site and Local Plan Allocation: This section refers to "up to 2000 homes".

Historically, a figure of 2600 homes has been quoted and indeed this remains the number quoted in a later section. A 600 plus variation requires some clarification.

Supplementary Planning Document: This section is scant on detail. There is no mention of housing type / mix. Maidenhead is suffering from an oversupply of flats and a lack of new family homes. It is anticipated that the northern section of the site will be more dense with "affordable" flats up to eight storeys high. We believe that the only flats in the Elizabeth Quarter should be in the affordable sector. There is no need or demand for open market flats.

Masterplan Evolution 1 and 2: The split between higher density in the north and lower density in the south, with park and wooded open spaces is combined with the new school facilities and a neighbourhood / medical hub to the south of the site. It is not clear how much of the demand for education, medical care and retail will come from within the Elizabeth Quarter. If there is considerable use from outside the development then there will be traffic access / egress and parking issues.

Project Vision: This is the first specific mention of 600 affordable homes although there is no information regarding the nature of affordability - subsidised rent or shared ownership or the intended identity of potential occupants - key workers etc. There is reference to the three access points - two on Harvest Hill Road and one on Shoppenhangers. (See Transport Management below.)

Community Facilities: Other than the two schools there is little detail in this section. What are the facilities intended for the medical centre / GP surgery? What other social facilities will be included, and what will be the range of local retail - especially in view of the proximity to town?

Public Spaces and Landscaping 1 and 2: This is a very important element of the scheme if green and wooded areas are to be retained and the visual density of the housing development is to be mitigated. The Plaza area to the north is obviously the most densely developed, but the Green Spine running south will open into Woodland and Parkland to reach the Glade. With the large number of dwellings being proposed it is important that an "impression" of green space is delivered and public access facilitated..

Transport Management: This section refers to the total of 2600 homes. It is ineffective in explaining how the traffic movements and parking demands associated with a potential 8000 residents plus up to 3000 pupils and staff will be handled. The standard of Harvest Hill Road will require a significant upgrade - with a further significant housing development to the south of the road.

Neither Harvest Hill Road or Shoppenhangers Road facilitate a right turn onto the A308 Braywick Road. It is essential that these junctions are reconfigured to allow egress southwards onto Braywick Road.

Sustainable Travel: Cycle and pedestrian routes throughout the site will be critical, especially northwards towards the station and town centre. Although it is to be hoped that car use will be reduced over the next two decades, in the short term vehicle usage will continue at current levels. The long suggested introduction of a transport hub at Maidenhead Station would increase the level of bus use, especially for residents of Elizabeth Quarter. Obviously, plentiful EV charging points are required throughout the development.

Ecology and Sustainability: Please avoid "greenwashing".

Thank you for inviting feedback on the proposed development as it stands. We await with interest the more detailed proposals on the mix and type of housing and other elements of the scheme which will be forthcoming.

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Chair Planning Group