

Notes from South Wokingham Community Forum: May 10, 2016

The Bradbury Centre, Rose Street, Wokingham

1. Update on South Wokingham Strategic development Location: Delivery Manager Emy Circuit

Montague Park:

The development has outline consent for 650 homes, a new primary school, neighbourhood centre and SANG and is being built in 7 phases. About 200 homes have been occupied and a further 500 have detailed (reserved matters) planning consent.

The final phase will be the neighbourhood centre which will have local shops and a small community centre (which is in addition to a contribution being made to the larger community facility that will be built in the developments to the south of the railway).

The neighbourhood centre was due to have an 18 unit dementia care centre but following discussion with providers it is not thought this will be viable and this will be replaced by other affordable housing.

Discussions have taken place with community groups to plan the running of the community facility and an option is being explored with a faith group.

During a question and answer session the following issues were raised:

Affordable Housing:

WBC policy is for 35% of homes within the strategic development locations to be affordable. On Montague Park, a package of equivalent value to 35% affordable housing has been agreed:

23% on site

4% off-set against the cost of upsizing the primary school from two to three forms of entry

8% commuted sum (money paid by the developer to WBC to provide affordable housing elsewhere)

Although the recent Elms Field application was approved with no affordable housing due to viability issues, this does not set a precedent as applications are decided on a case by case basis and are independently scrutinised

The point was made that when WBC considers strategic planning in the future, the need will be for more rather than less robust policies on affordable housing.

Parking spaces at the primary school

There will be parking at the school for staff and for the out-of-hours sports use and parking for parents will be at the adjacent neighbourhood centre. The school will produce travel plans designed to strongly discourage parents from parking near the school.

Progress on the South Wokingham Distributor Road and road bridge over the railway

Progress is being made both with the masterplan and discussions with Network Rail. A project manager has been appointed to deliver the road and will come to a community forum later in the year.

The route is undergoing technical study and WBC is working towards the alignment that was the preferred option in the public consultation and a planning application is expected in 2017.

2. Presentation on Floreat Montague Park School: Charlotte Pearce Cornish

- The school has appointed a headteacher – Mrs Claire Graham, a chair of governors – Edward Venables and is recruiting other staff – see website at <http://www.floreatmontaguepark.org.uk/> for details.
- The school has offered places to 29 children and is waiting to hear acceptances. There will be more engagement work with parents through the summer
- The school will develop individual travel plans for its students and will be encouraging walking, cycling and scooting to school not driving.
- The school does not yet know where its pupils will come from but would expect the catchment to shrink as more people move onto Montague Park

3. Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) – Lois Lere, Interim Director of Operations

Lois Lere provided an overview of the CCG's work, the National Vision for General Practice and the local situation (see separate presentation)

Key points made during the presentation and following question and answer session were:

- There is a national and local shortage of GPs that need to be tackled
- There is an increase in demand for primary care due to longer life expectancy, increased population and increasing birth rates
- There is not likely to be a real increase in funding for primary care in the short/medium term and therefore the CCG will have to find way to improve services without additional funding
- The policy is for larger GP practices and for co-location with other specialist practitioners (such as practice nurses and physiotherapists) in order to make best use of resources and to provide locations where patients can get the right care
- Wokingham CCG is encouraging GP surgeries to offer extended opening hours. 67% already do so and CCG would welcome public feedback to encourage others to follow,
- The CCG is encouraging use of other channels for residents to access services, such as online appointments, Skype consultations and other use of technology. However these will be available in addition rather than instead of telephone and face-to-face enquiries and will free up capacity for those wanting to use other channels.
- A key way to improve use of resources will be to support people to stay in their homes and treat them more locally rather than in hospital. This is both better for patients and saves money for health services.
- There is also a need to stop people going to A&E when they don't need to which will also improve service and efficiency
- Point was made that the discharge and after-hospital care is fragmented and does not meet patients' needs. This is an area the CCG is focussing on.