



Minutes of NFGN Stakeholder Forum
 Wednesday, 2nd October 2024, 18.00 | Felixstowe Town Hall

1	<p>Welcome & Apologies</p> <p>Present: Mike Deacon, Chair Seamus Bennett, Vice Chair Peter Constable, Felixstowe Society Ian Buxton, Barry Topple, Fair Play For Felixstowe Rosie Smithson, Community Partnership Leigh Jenkins, Suffolk Constabulary Judith Hedges, Country Park Group Guy Pearce, Felixstowe Allotment Association ESC Team: Paul Wood, James Goldberg, Ben Woolnough, Sheline Gledhill Apologies: Nigel Palmer, Bob Whitehouse, Neil Cockshaw, Neville Farthing</p>
2	<p>Debrief from public event held August 13, 2024 at Brackenbury Sports Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on open space <p>JG: Reported on the success of the public event with more than 900 members of the public attending. The subsequent survey has received more than 500 responses. The survey is now closed, and the findings are being analysed. They will be presented to Cabinet in the coming weeks and will then be made known to the public.</p> <p>RS raised concerns about the density of housing and the need for a new school. She also asked about the idea for a community farm.</p> <p>Judith Hedges presented a response to the plans from the Country Parks Group (report attached)</p> <p>The report highlighted that while the CP Group would prefer there to be no building on the NFGN area or much less than is proposed, the group was pleased that the plans do contain many of the elements that have been established as minimum constituents of a Country Park.</p> <p>Areas addressed in the paper include comment on topography, area and catchment, the proposed primary school on Eastward Ho, the community farm and orchard, connectivity with Trelawny Place green space, housing numbers and density, human impact mitigation, Gulpher Road, walking and cycling connectivity, and planning processes and transparency.</p> <p>JH Also highlighted Woods Meadow Country Park at Oulton Broad, Lowestoft as a good example of what can be achieved.</p>

	<p>JG welcomed the report highlighting the areas of density would be refined in the coming months as the engagement feedback becomes available.</p> <p>BT Raised concerns about the type of housing at the rear of Links Avenue with no buffer.</p> <p>IB: FP4F feel housing density should be less.</p> <p>SB Reassured JH that school numbers were being looked at closely. SCC are also working on this.</p> <p>PC: The allotment society is concerned about security. Will the new allotments be secure?</p> <p>MS: Plans should include a new superstore. We have repeatedly asked for a representative from education to come to a meeting. Will that happen?</p> <p>LJ: Police will be engaged in issues of security issue and understanding what is right for the new community.</p>
3	<p>Q&A with Ben Woolnough, Head of Planning, Building Control and Coastal Management at ESC</p> <p>BW told the meeting that while it may feel like all the housing in the district is coming to Felixstowe, there are many developments going on across East Suffolk and that Felixstowe should not feel overwhelmed by its allocation of housing in the Local Plan. He reassured everyone that the public consultation and engagement taking place in relation to NFGN is exemplary, and he applauded the level and depth of the process. The planning authority is a consultee in its own right and will carry out its own consultation which will also inform the Masterplan. Many other agencies will be involved including planners, designers, ecologists, highways, drainage etc. He hoped this would reassure those present.</p> <p>JH: Do any of the other developments have a one road in and one road out situation like Felixstowe?</p> <p>BW: All sites have their various constraints and challenges. Candlet Road has been used as a northern bypass. It will become more of a spine road and will be calmer and designed to flow correctly.</p> <p>SB: The transport element is very important. We cannot change the geography of the town, so we must ensure the right plan is in place. This will include the cycling and walking aspect and linking people with trains and the town centre.</p> <p>MD: Felixstowe is still taking 38% of housing allocation for the district. We have a need for more jobs, especially as the Port is going for automation.</p> <p>BW addressed some of the issues raised in the paper provided by the County Park group.</p> <p>On open space, the starting point is SANG, which is statutory obligation to provide quality spaces for nature and recreation. It will be fundamental in encouraging people to use this space rather than driving into the Natural Landscape. Those spaces will be protected and won't be built on.</p> <p>Who maintains the open spaces is a matter for discussion as we head towards applying for planning permission. This could be a community-based management company or a community liaison group similar to that at Brightwell Lakes.</p> <p>The community farm idea was introduced to help achieve the ambition of providing community growing spaces, alongside the allotments. Again, this is just an idea and not set in stone.</p>

	<p>In terms of buffering, these are details that will be added later.</p> <p>On the matter of traffic, a full environmental impact study will be undertaken to address the cumulative effect of this site, Laureate Fields, Trelawny Place and the surrounding road network. The resulting statement will inform any junction improvements, mitigation and access issues.</p> <p>With regards to a new and revised Local Plan, national policy is that housing targets would rise, and it is unlikely that any reduction will be identified in East Suffolk or Felixstowe.</p> <p>BW also reassured the meeting that as the planning authority, ESC is working with SCC education and agreed it would be good to get a representative to address the group at a future meeting.</p>
4	<p>Looking ahead at revised programme</p> <p>JG: Masterplan process has been extended for 6 months. The design freeze will now be in April 2025 mainly due to delays in talks with the other landowners.</p> <p>Between now and then the team will continue to refine the masterplan.</p>
5	<p>On-going engagement</p> <p>The next public event in Autumn and will be a Q&A session with Cabinet members, councillors and the technical team at Felixstowe School. Details tbc</p> <p>Cabinet are being regularly being updated on the masterplan and will discuss in coming weeks.</p> <p>The Design Review Panel is a best practice process which involves inviting a panel of experts to come and review major planning applications. We had a first session over the summer, and we are aiming to have a second session once the draft masterplan has been further refined with landowner input.</p> <p>The current ambition is for a planning application to be submitted in summer 2025. It is important to highlight that this is indicative at this point. A lot of the agreements we need to get in place are reliant on third parties and we are not fully in control of how long these will take.</p>
6	AOB None
7	Date of next meeting TBC