**LYNNSPORT 3: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**What development is proposed at Lynnsport 3?**

This public consultation concerns a proposed new residential development of 54 houses with associated roads, footways, areas of public open space and other supporting infrastructure.

**Lynnsport 3** is one of five sites in the Lynnsport/Marsh Lane area that has been identified for housing development over the next five years to help meet housing need in the area. In total 399 homes are planned across the five sites and these will be a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom properties with around 15% being social housing (a total of 8 at the Lynnsport 3 site); the remainder will be available for sale.

The site would be accessed via the recently consented new road connecting the lynnsport site and Edward Benfer Way; consent for this road was granted in April 2015; the site would also link to Sustans route 1 cycle path, which runs alongside the road.

This public consultation seeks to give local residents a further opportunity to consider the proposed development at lynnsport 3 and submit comments regarding the proposal.

**Why develop land at Lynnsport?**

In 2003, a feasibility and masterplanning study of the Lynnsport Leisure complex and the surrounding area was carried out by Atkins. The aim of this study was to enhance the role of the centre as a regional sporting venue providing a range of sports facilities all on one site, whilst making the best use of underused and vacant land in the vicinity, to create an attractive and high quality environment.

This study led towards the council agreeing in October 2012 to the development of proposals for a major housing scheme in the area. A scheme which would not only see the construction of much-needed housing, but would also provide funding to help enhance the facilities at Lynnsport - new pitches, additional car parking and new tennis courts. A new road will be built giving better access to the sports centre as well as improving access to the housing area and facilitating the new development. A planning application for new sports pitches has been submitted and consent has been granted for the road.

**Why do we need to build so much housing?**

Councils across the country are required to provide the housing needed in their areas. The Council has a duty to ensure there is enough housing to meet the needs of the borough, including the needs of young people seeking their own homes and starting families, and of people moving to the area to work or retire. In recent times fewer older houses have become available as people are living longer and staying in their own homes for longer.

As the local planning authority the Council is obliged to plan to meet its full 'objectively assessed housing need' and to provide housing that is affordable to the working age population. This is partly achieved by the development of public sector housing and by ensuring that the percentage of affordable housing in new developments is set at a level which is considered to be wise by the council for the area.

To meet the full objectively assessed housing need the Council will seek to release land for development through the preparation of the borough’s Site Allocations Plan. The suggested allocation of Marsh Lane and Lynnsport for housing development is illustrated through the creation of the nature reserve on the Lynnsport site.

We have been liaising with Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Natural England and the Environment Agency to ensure that we take all necessary steps to protect and enhance the wildlife at the Lynnsport site. The proposal to create two new hockey pitches and four tennis courts at the Lynnsport site is subject of a separate planning proposal.

Surely all this additional traffic will have an impact on air quality.

By choosing this well-located site, near to the town centre, employment opportunities and leisure facilities, with good cycle and pedestrian links, the homes in this area will only have a moderate impact on air quality compared to many other alternative locations. All of the proposals at the March Lane and lynnsport sites will be accompanied by Air Quality Assessments which consider the potential impacts of the development on local air quality. These reports will be considered by the Environmental Protection Team at King’s Lynn Borough Council as part of the application determination process.

**How are the roads going to cope with all the additional traffic?**

The junction of the new road with Edward Benfer Way will be controlled by traffic lights. The new road will increase overall road capacity and connectivity to and through the new and existing housing estates and will create better access for new and existing users.

Is it true that part of the proposed site was an old landfill pit? Is it a suitable place to build there?

Yes, the proposed site is in the vicinity of lynnsport, but that area does not form part of the land proposed for housing development.

Lynnsport 2 has been removed from the plans. What reassurance can we have that this will be protected from future development, given the recent election?

The main area of usable open space, including the existing grass sports pitches, has now been removed from the proposed scheme. The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration has asked officers to come forward with a plan for protecting the site known as Lynnsport 2 from future development. A report on how to achieve this will be prepared for council consideration later this year. The proposed scheme will also lead to the creation of a 2.6 hectare nature reserve within the site.

[Note that the council’s proposed Site Allocations Plan currently still refers to 600 dwellings and includes Lynnsport 2, rather than the reduced numbers now agreed for the project by the council. This is because it is procedurally difficult to change that formal proposed Site Allocations Plan document during the current stage of the plan process (it would involve going back several stages in the plan making process), and there is an opportunity to do this at the next stage of the plan, the ‘examination’.]

**Why develop land at Lynnsport?**

Ultimately the scheme is self-financing. The council will be funding up-front works of approx. £5.2m to provide the road and comply with Government policy to substantially increase the supply of new houses.

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The concept of developing the Lynnsport/Marsh Lane sites and creating a new access road was agreed at full council on 26 February 2015. Some preparatory work has been undertaken at Lynnsport in anticipation of the planned new access road. Planning permission for these preparatory works is not required. The works needed to take place ahead of the bird nesting season to ensure nesting birds would not be adversely affected and to avoid lengthy delays to the project.

Planning permission for the new access road was granted in April 2015.

When is construction on the road expected to start?

Subject to various planning conditions being satisfactorily discharged, it is anticipated that work will commence on the new road in September 2015.

Residents wished to set up a Neighbourhood Forum – will this give them the ability to influence this development?

A group of local people have recently enquired about the possibility of preparing a Neighbourhood plan for the area. Neighbourhood plans are prepared by the local community. These plans can shape how development happens, but cannot halt development or plan for less development than included in the Borough’s Local Plan.

It typically takes around 18 months to 2 years to prepare a Neighbourhood plan, so this is unlikely to directly influence the current development proposals and hence the Major Housing Consultative Group and specific local consultations on the development are a more effective forum in the short term. The local group is currently considering whether to seek to prepare a Neighbourhood plan to influence the area in the longer term. The Borough Council will advise and assist them should they wish to proceed.

Will access to the allotments be maintained?

Plans for development at the Lynnsport 3 site will include both access to and parking for the existing allotments.

Will public access to the Bawsey Drain be maintained?

Yes, public access to the drain will be retained as part of the proposed development. In addition, the development will need to respect the 9m easement which runs alongside the Bawsey drain, in order to preserve access for future maintenance of the drain.

Will existing and future residents be disturbed by noise and light emitted from the proposed new sports pitches?

The proposal to create two new hockey pitches and four tennis courts at the Lynnsport site is subject of a separate planning application which is currently being considered by the planning team at the Borough Council. One of the principle considerations when determining the application will be the impact on the amenity of nearby residential dwellings. The application includes a detailed light assessment and, great care has been taken in the design and specification of the new facilities to ensure the impacts from the development are minimised.

To view and comment on these proposals please visit: www.larondewright.co.uk