

POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT ON THE FURLONG CAR PARK, RINGWOOD

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Cabinet set up the Ringwood Town Centre Steering Group to consider the future of council owned land in the south-west corner of the Furlong Car Park and to make recommendations on its use. In April 2007 the Steering Group asked for a public consultation to be carried out on four options, including proposals produced by Design Engine, an architectural consultancy.
- 1.2 The consultations exercise was carried out in September and October 2007. The results of the consultation exercise and the way ahead were considered by the Steering Group at a meeting on 15th November 2007.
- # 1.3 Appendix 1 contains the consultation leaflet circulated in the town.
- # 1.4 Appendix 2 contains the officers report to the Ringwood Town Centre Steering Group meeting held on 15th November 2007.
- # 1.5 Appendix 3 contains the draft minutes of the Steering Group meeting and their recommendations to the Cabinet.

2. THE STEERING GROUP'S RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That, in principle, the further development of a mixed scheme should be progressed; and
- (b) That a supplementary estimate or expenditure plan bid for £100,000 be approved, to engage the specialist consultancy advice necessary to progress the scheme, leading to the engagement of a development partner, and such expenditure be incurred on a phased basis, to be approved by the Cabinet, but to include staged termination points.

3. IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The financial, environmental and crime and disorder implications are set out in detail in the report in Appendix 2.

4. PORTFOLIO HOLDERS COMMENTS

- 4.1 Councillor Treleaven notes the recommendations of the Steering Group. Whilst recognising the support given to the mixed use by the Ringwood Town Council and the Chamber of Trade he also notes the increasing public division with regards to this option.

- 4.2 In view of this controversy together with the growing evidence of a national economic slowdown and of the increasing popularity of internet shopping, he recommends that the mixed use option should not be pursued further at this time. This recommendation also recognises the current uncertainty of Government funding for many areas in which the Council is committed to provide services and of the consequent difficulties in setting next year's Council budget.
- 4.3 He suggests, as an alternative, recognising the strong public support for providing better public information services and new public conveniences, that the Steering Group addresses this issue in accordance with the adopted Local Plan policy for the south-west corner of the Furlong car park.

5. CONSIDERATION

- 5.1 This is clearly a very contentious matter and the results of the public consultation were not clear cut. The Cabinet needs to decide whether a mixed use scheme should be pursued further. If it is to be then consultants will need to be engaged to assist with the development of this project. This can be on a phased basis subject to a series of reviews as recommended by the Steering Group. The financial aspects can be clarified further if a decision to go ahead in principle is agreed.
- 5.2 Other matters are awaiting a decision on the future of this scheme. The public toilets urgently need replacement and finance has been allocated for this purpose. In addition the Visitor Information Centre is in a poor state of repair and investment decisions will need to be made soon. 80% of the respondents to the public consultation supported the provision of better public information services and new public conveniences in the town centre.
- 5.3 Since the meeting of the Steering Group a number of further letters have been received either objecting to the scheme or the recommendation of the Steering Group.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 That the Cabinet decides on what, if any, development options are pursued on the south-west corner of the Furlong car park.

For Further Information Please Contact:

Christ Elliott
Head of Planning
Tel (023 8028 5310
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Background Papers:

(1) Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners
report on Shopping Development in the
New Forest District

(2) Returned consultation responses
and letters received in reply to the
consultation leaflet.



CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

The Furlong Car Park Ringwood Town Centre

Background

Ringwood like many market towns has to face challenges if it is to continue to thrive as a commercial centre.

Shopping consultants looking at the future economic viability of Ringwood have advised the District Council that it should plan for up to an extra 4,400 square metres (45,000 square feet) of retail floorspace in the town centre between now and 2018.

The Furlong Car Park owned by the District Council is one of two main sites where such development could take place⁽¹⁾. It is already allocated for mixed use development in the existing planning documents. A firm of local architects have produced a draft study of how development could take place in this area. Their work does not constitute a finalised proposal but some ideas which will help you understand what could be achieved. As part of their study they were also asked to investigate how and whether the following facilities might be incorporated:

- A 300 seat theatre/meeting room venue
- The replacement of the existing public toilets and Visitor Information Centre with new updated facilities

- Replacement and additional car parking provision
- Public offices for the Town and District Council

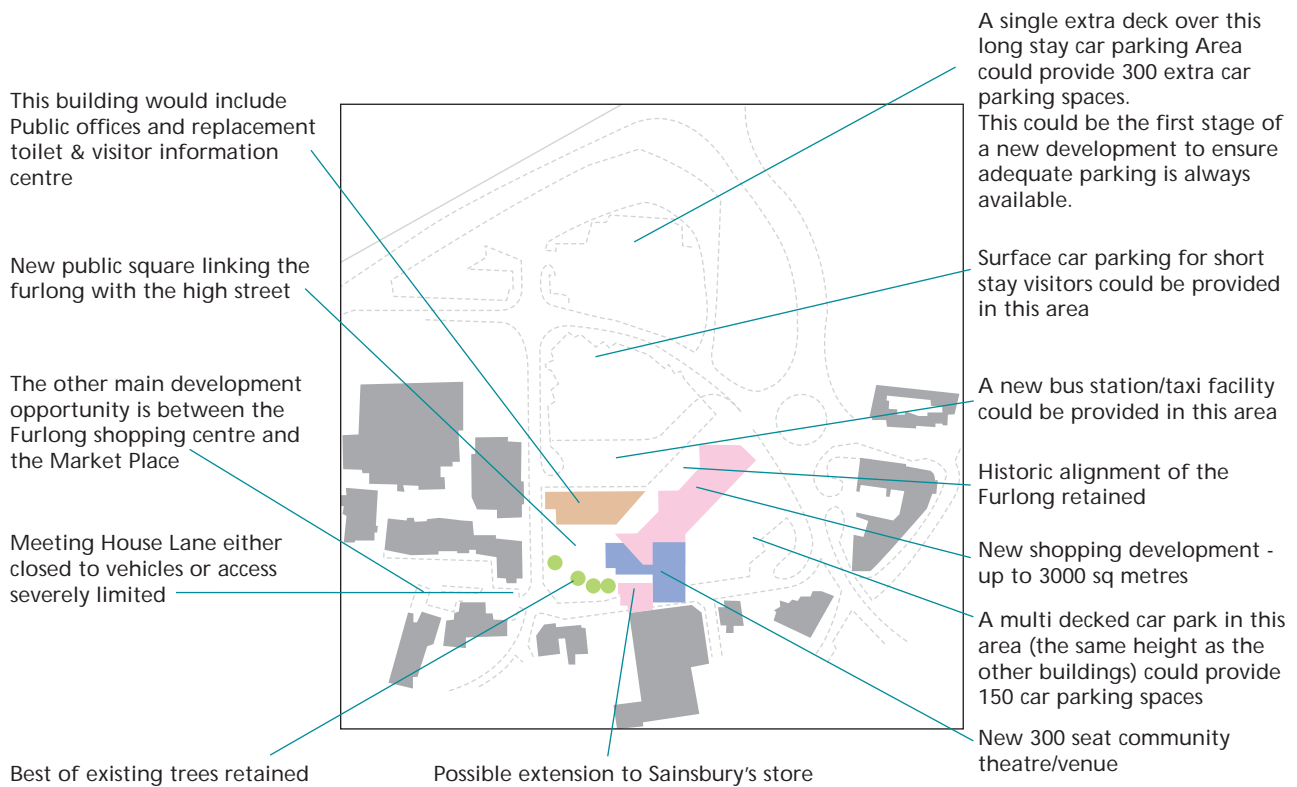
To help with this consultation the various elements of the draft scheme have been provisionally costed. This is because New Forest District Council will have to carefully consider the financial implications of the different options. Public funding is very limited and expensive new facilities are unlikely to be provided if this would lead to a significant burden on Council tax payers. Please take this into account in responding to this consultation.

The consultation has been arranged on the basis of four options. All of the plans are illustrative only at this stage and variations of the different options might be possible. Please consider each of these carefully and then give us your views.

Footnote:

- (1) The other site, between the Furlong Centre and the old cinema is not in District Council ownership.

Option 1 – A mixed use option



This scheme includes:

- 3,000 square metres of new shopping development
- a theatre style community building with 300 retractable seats
- a new public square (an open space)
- public office provision of about 900 square metres
- replacement of all the developed car parking spaces plus 300 new ones
- a new bus, taxi interchange
- replacement toilets and visitor information centre

Financial Summary

The District Council believe that this option is roughly cost neutral. In other words the value of the new shopping development would fund the community facility, the extra car parking, the bus/taxi interchange and the new public square.

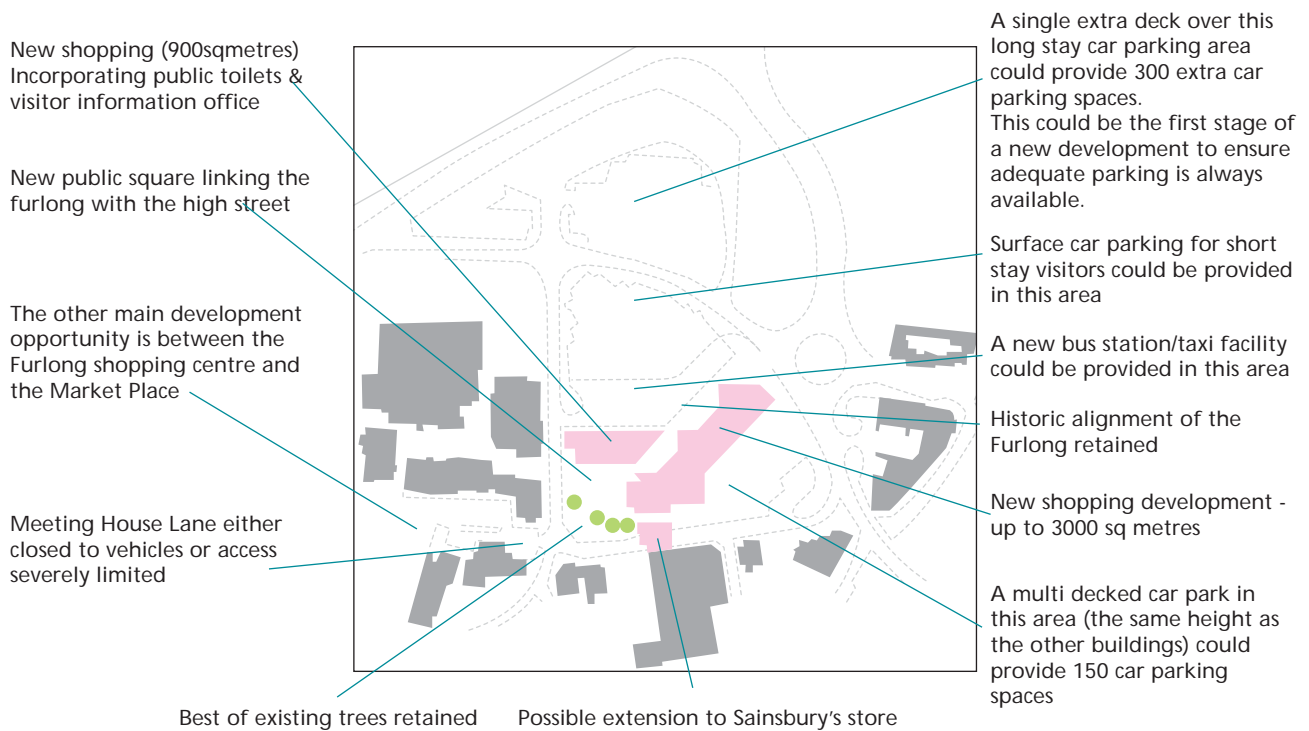
Advantages

- new shopping development to help maintain the viability of Ringwood Town Centre
- extra car parking to maintain the attraction of the town
- a state of the art new theatre style community building
- a new public square linking the car park and the High Street

Disadvantages

- a major change to the existing townscape in this area
- changes to the traffic pattern particularly with regard to Meeting House Lane
- disruption during the construction of a major scheme

Option 2 - A shopping option



This scheme includes:-

- 4,000 square metres of new shopping development
- a new public square
- replacement of all the developed car parking spaces plus 300 new ones
- a new bus/taxi interchange
- replacement toilets and visitor information centre

Financial Summary

This option is expected to produce a substantial capital receipt for the District Council. This will be provided by the new shopping facilities and unlike option one does not finance a new community facility.

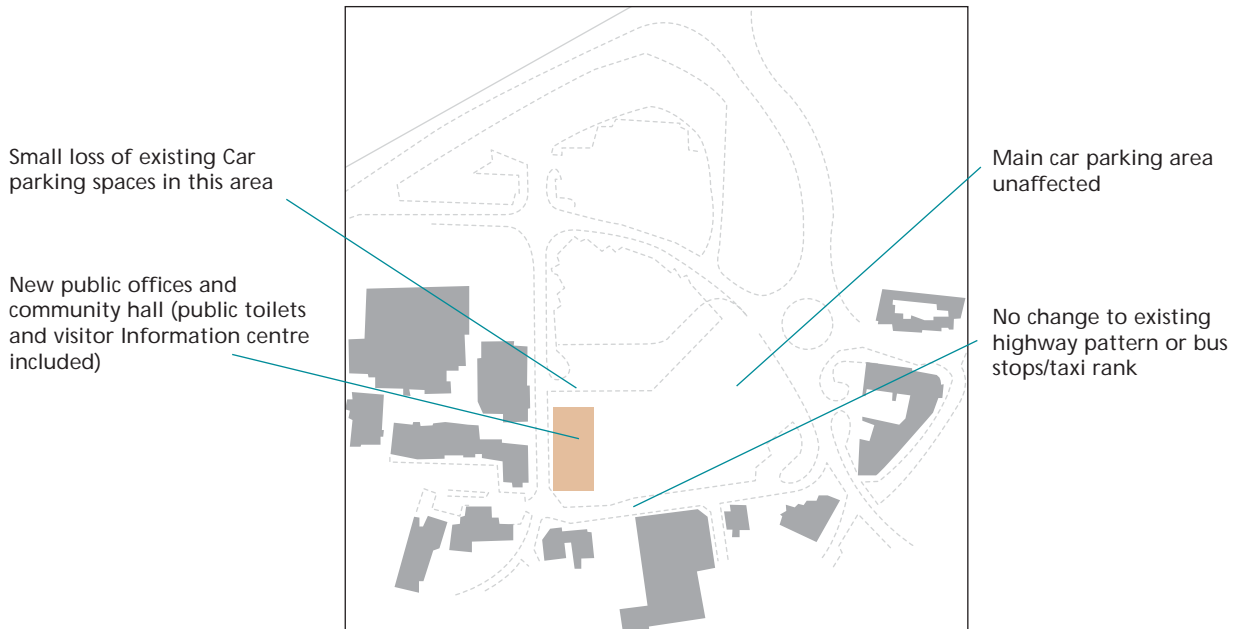
Advantages

- new shopping development to help maintain the viability of Ringwood Town Centre
- extra car parking to maintain the attraction of the town
- a new public square linking the car park and the High Street

Disadvantages

- no community facilities included in this scheme – it will be at the discretion of the 60 member District Council to decide whether any of the receipts should be reallocated to projects in Ringwood
- a major change to the existing townscape in this area
- changes to the traffic pattern particularly with regard to Meeting House Lane
- disruption during the construction of a major scheme

Option 3 - A public office/ community facility



This scheme includes:

- 900 square metres of new public offices for use by the Town and District Council
- 900 square metres of a community hall (capable of accommodating 300 people)
- replacement public toilets and visitor information centre
- a small loss of existing car parking spaces (with no additional provision)

Financial Summary

The District Council believe that this option will require a significant public subsidy even when the sale of the existing public offices sites has been taken into account. Building costs alone are upwards of £1000 per metre².

Advantages

- the provision of new public offices and an associated community provision in the Town Centre
- relatively modest change to the townscape in this area

Disadvantages

- this is a meeting room but could not provide theatre style seating unless an even more expensive third storey were to be added
- not feasible without a significant public subsidy
- no new car parking provision and the new facility will put extra pressure on existing ones
- does not provide the recommended increase in shopping provision to maintain the town's vitality

Option 4 - Replacement of the existing toilet block and Visitor Information Centre



This scheme provides for:

- the replacement of the existing toilet block in the short term
- the longer term replacement of the visitor information centre
- no other changes in the Furlong car park area

Financial Summary

The funding for the replacement toilets has already been put into place. A similar arrangement will be made for the visitor information centre in due course.

Advantages

- effectively the maintenance of the status quo in the town centre area, simply replacing existing facilities
- budgets already in place

Disadvantages

- a missed opportunity to do something more substantial to provide economic, social and environmental benefits in the Town Centre?

**To complete questionnaire on-line click here
(responses are required by 14 October 2007).**

**POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT ON THE FURLONG CAR PARK,
RINGWOOD**

**(A) RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION EXERCISE
(B) THE WAY AHEAD**

1. Introduction

1.1 On 26th April 2007 the Ringwood Town Centre Steering Group recommended that:-

- a consultation based on the Design Engine work should be carried out in Ringwood;
- the District Council should lead the consultation, although it should be co-ordinated with the Ringwood Town Plan consultation if possible;
- the consultation should start in June and should put forward 4 potential options:-
 - mixed use
 - retail use only
 - offices, leisure and community facilities
 - replace/renovate existing buildings only
- the consultation exercise should be based upon leaflets being widely available in Ringwood, and a manned exhibition in the town centre;
- the outcome should be reported to the Cabinet in the Autumn.

1.2 Following further consideration leaflets were distributed to about 6,000 houses in the Ringwood area in September and an unmanned exhibition was set up in the Meeting House Centre. Information was also included on the Council's website with an e-mail response form and letters were written to organisations and groups in the Ringwood area. Because of the difficulties with the household distribution of consultation leaflets the closing date for responses was extended from the middle to the end of October.

2. Results of Consultation Exercise

2.1 At the date of preparing this report 1420 response forms had been analysed. 144 of these were received by e-mail with the others being returned in the post. In addition, 26 groups or individuals had sent in the written comments by either letter or e-mail.

2.2 The response forms results are set out below:-

1. Do you think it important that the economic viability of Ringwood Town centre is maintained and enhanced by planning for new shopping development?

Very Important	Moderately Important	Neutral	Of Little Importance	Not Very Important
368	212	146	159	386

2. Do you think a new theatre/community venue in the town centre would benefit the town?

Yes	No	Don't Know
712	551	107

3. Do you think it is a good idea to provide for an overall increase in car parking provision in the town centre?

Yes	No	Don't Know
604	708	64

4. If you have ticked yes to questions 2) or 3) above do you understand that new retail provision would be necessary for this scheme to be funded by New Forest?

Yes	No
698	145

5. Do you think it is a good idea to provide better public information services and new public conveniences in the town centre?

Yes	No	Don't Know
1107	215	50

6. If you had to make a choice from the options below which would you choose? (Please tick just one box).

Option 1 <i>A mixed use development on the Furlong car park including all of the facilities described on the plan.</i>	534
Option 2 <i>A new shopping development only, supported by the extra car parking but not the public facilities.</i>	90
Option 3 <i>The public facilities only, without the shopping development to help fund them.</i>	157
Option 4 <i>No new development in the Furlong area at all.</i>	588
Total number of consultations returned	1420

- # 2.3 The same information has been set out in pie charts which are set out in Appendix 1. Colour copies of these charts will be sent to Steering Group members before the meeting.
- 2.4 The 26 letters of response come from a number of bodies, organisations and individuals. The organisations comments are summarised below:-
- 2.4.1 Ringwood Town Council support Option 1 following a special meeting to discuss the consultation held on 5th September 2007. They also issued a newsletter explaining their views on the proposal.
- 2.4.2 The Ringwood Society have submitted a balanced analysis of the proposals and highlighted many issues which need to be considered. They consider that Option 1 should be retained but may well be premature at the present time. They refer to the relationships with proposals for the old cinema site and the need to work more comprehensively on other issues in the town.
- 2.4.3 The Crow Hill Residents Association support Option 1 but are unhappy about a number of issues including multi-decked car parking, the link between the Furlong and the High Street and the loss of trees. They support the need for a community centre.
- 2.4.4 The Ringwood Carnival are very worried that Options 1 and 2 would severely affect their procession route.
- 2.4.5 Agents on behalf of Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd support Options 1 and 2.
- 2.5 Many of the letters of representation raise objections to any proposed development on the Furlong Car Park, except for the replacement of existing public facilities. There are many common grounds of objection which include:-
- Ringwood should not try to compete with other shopping centres. Leave it as it is and encourage local specialist shops.
 - A major development, including multi-storey car parking, will damage or destroy the market town historic character of Ringwood.
 - Concerns about the future of shops in Southampton Road, High Street and Market Square.
 - Don't create a new market square which will compete with the historic one.
 - Concerns about traffic and highway congestion back onto the A31.

- The priority should be the redevelopment/enhancing of the old cinema site if more shopping is needed.
- No need to relocate the existing public offices.

2.6 It is acknowledged that there were difficulties with the distribution of the leaflet to the households in the Ringwood area. However, there was also the website survey, the unmanned exhibition and the letters of consultations to groups and societies. The whole process received quite a lot of media publicity. Overall, given the level of response received, it is believed that the results represent an accurate picture of the views of the population as a whole.

3. Assessment

3.1 Policy RW-2 of the adopted District Local Plan has for many years enabled a mixed used development to take place on the south-western corner of the Furlong car park. The policy suggests that such a mixed use development should include retail, leisure and community uses.

3.2 As part of its work on the Local Development Framework, in 2005 New Forest District Council commissioned Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (NLP) to undertake work on a town centres strategy for New Forest District (including that part within the National Park) and further detailed work on Lymington, New Milton, Ringwood and Totton town centres. The Consultant's study has assessed the future retail floorspace requirements in the District up to 2018. The tables below summarise the study's findings relating to 'comparison' (non-food) retail floorspace in the Ringwood/Fordingbridge area.

Table 1: COMPARISON FLOORSPACE – BASED ON EXISTING SHOPPING PATTERNS		
Area	Floorspace Sq M Gross	
	2005-2012	2005-2018
Ringwood/Fordingbridge	2,000	4,000

3.3 The consultants have assumed that most of this additional comparison floorspace will be provided in Ringwood rather than Fordingbridge. Table 1 sets out the additional retail floorspace needed to maintain and enhance Ringwood town centre, but without significantly altering existing shopping patterns.

Table 2: COMPARISON FLOORSPACE – BASED ON IMPROVING MARKET SHARE (To be regarded as maximum estimates)		
	Floorspace Sq M Gross	
	2005-2012	2005-2018
Ringwood/Fordingbridge	2,700	4,400

- 3.4 Table 2 sets out the additional floorspace that could be provided to try to increase the town's share of expenditure.
- 3.5 Based on existing market shares there is no projected requirement for additional convenience goods floorspace in the Ringwood/Fordingbridge area. However, a reduction in 'expenditure leakage' to Bournemouth could support small scale improvements within Ringwood town centre.
- 3.6 In early 2007 a study commissioned from Design Engine produced some ideas on how the shopping consultants' recommendations could be incorporated into the area covered by planning policy RW-2. The consultation exercise was based in part (options 1 and 2) on this work.
- 3.7 The results of the consultation exercise show that in broad terms the people of Ringwood are split fairly evenly between the view that more development should not take place on the Furlong car park and those who would support a mixed use development based loosely on Option 1.
- 3.8 The provision of a new theatre/community venue attracted a clear but not overwhelming majority of support in the town. Interestingly the proposal for extra car parking attracted a slightly higher level of opposition than support in the survey. There was a clear understanding amongst participants that either of these two enhancements would need to be funded by new retail provision and strong support for better public information services and public conveniences in the town centre.
- 3.9 Overall it is to be concluded that the results of the survey are not clear cut that there are two reasonably balanced views about a major development on the south-western corner of the Furlong car park. Your officer's view, however, is strongly influenced by the professional advice that Ringwood does need to develop additional shopping floor space over the next 10 years if it is to maintain its current position as a thriving market town. If it does not then new shopping expenditure will be attracted elsewhere and this would be detrimental to the longer term prospects of the town. It is not the case of trying to compete with Southampton and Bournemouth but to maintain its existing vitality and viability by retaining its current market share when shopping expenditure is growing.
- 3.10 When these commercial arguments are combined with the community benefits, which could be funded on the back of a retail development and an attractive entrance feature to the town could be created, the conclusion that a scheme based upon option 1 should be pursued, is reinforced.

4. The Way Ahead – if a mixed use development scheme is to be pursued

- 4.1 There are many detailed issues which would need to be addressed if a recommendation to progress with a mixed use scheme were to be agreed. These will include many of the issues raised in the consultation responses such as:-
- the relationship and timing of any development on council land with another shopping and residential proposal being developed on an adjacent site
 - how the development would be linked into the older High Street, Market Square and Southampton Road shops
 - highway access into the car parking areas from the adjoining road network
 - a construction programme which minimises impacts on existing traders
 - the details of the community facility, what it would include and how it could be managed
 - the detailed design and layout of any proposed scheme to fit in with the historic, conservation area, character of Ringwood
- 4.2 It will also be necessary to fully understand the legal and financial issues which would accompany a development of this scale. New Forest District Council does not have a history of facilitating schemes of this nature and hence would need to engage expert advisers, particularly specialists with experience in retail property development, if a scheme is to be progressed.
- 4.3 One of the first tasks they might be asked to undertake is a review of the financial assumptions made to date in what is now a changing economic climate. They could then advise on the options for securing a development partner and the financial and environmental implications of different approaches. A substantial level of expert consultancy assistance will be necessary to get a scheme to the stage where a development partner can be selected and contractually committed to a scheme.
- 4.4 The timing of the progressing of this work will be determined by a number of factors including the progress of the other proposed scheme nearby and the state of the retail property market. It could take a number of years to see any scheme delivered on the ground. Notwithstanding this if the decision in principle is that the scheme should be progressed it is your officers view that further work should not be delayed by more than a few months. If it is then the current momentum would be lost and there may be calls for a new survey to be undertaken.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 All of the work to date has been contained within existing budgets. If a mixed use development is to be pursued this will not longer be possible and a supplementary estimate or bid will be necessary to procure the property consultancy advice set out in Section 4.
- 5.2 To progress a mixed use option to the state where a development partner has been contracted and then takes the lead is likely to cost up to £100,000. This outlay could be recouped at a later stage when the scheme is developed but is likely to be lost if the scheme is aborted at some point in the future.
- 5.3 A considerable amount of officer time will also need to be committed to progressing a scheme. It is assumed that this can be achieved within existing budgets.

6. Environmental Implications

- 6.1 There are two fundamentally different approaches which can be taken to this assessment although one might still reach the same conclusion. On one hand there is clearly a widespread concern from the largest number of the survey's respondents that any large new development could detract from the historic character of Ringwood and what makes it special and unique.
- 6.2 On the other hand one could take the view that a scheme based upon Option 1 has the potential to offer significant environmental gains through the creation of a new public space and making the environment of the town centre function better in social/community terms. A very large number of respondents would appear to support this approach from their response to the survey which was to favour Option 1.
- 6.3 The prospect of change will often give rise to apprehension and a preference to retain the status quo. An example of this was the proposal for the existing Furlong Shopping Centre which generated a great deal of opposition at the planning stage, but now, in most people's view, is a successful and attractive part of the town centre development on the Furlong Car Park would have to be of a very high quality as befits its historic market town, conservation area location. This would have to be ensured both through powers the Council could exert as landowner and assessment through the regulatory planning process. Nothing short of a very high quality would be acceptable.

7. Crime and Disorder Implications

- 7.1 None arise directly from a decision in principle to go ahead.
However, the detailed design of any scheme must take these up into account and the community facilities could be a positive benefit if they provide for a wider range of activities particularly for young people.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 That the results of the public consultation exercise be noted;
- 8.2 That it be a recommendation for Cabinet that, in principle, the further development of a mixed scheme based broadly on the content of Option 1 should be preferred; and
- 8.3 (if 8.2 is agreed) that the Cabinet be requested to approve a supplementary estimate or expenditure plan bid for £100,000 to engage the specialist consultancy advice necessary to progress the scheme to the stage of the appointment of a development partner.

For further information please contact:-

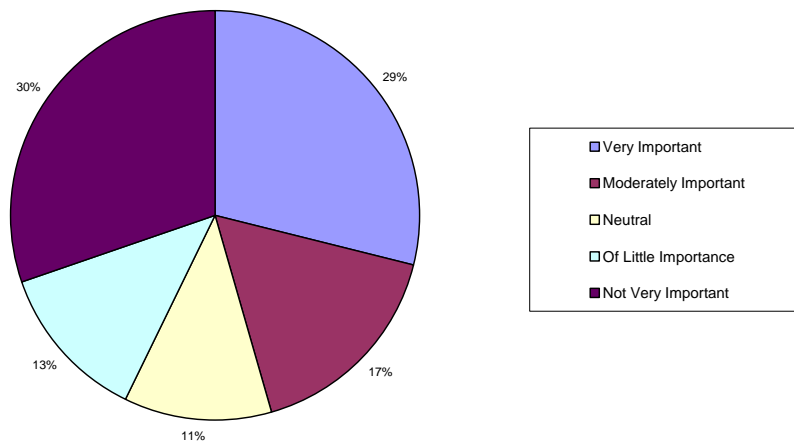
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Background Papers

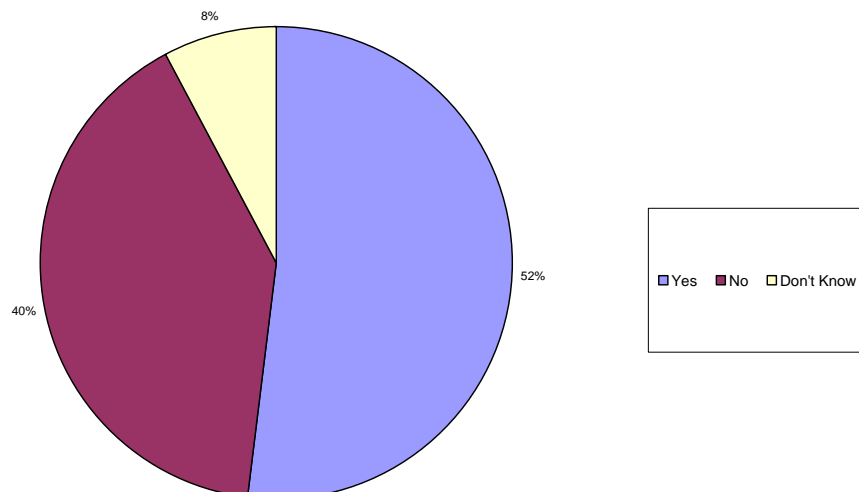
- (1) Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners report on Shopping Development in the New Forest District.
- (2) Returned consultation response and letters received in reply to the Consultation leaflet.

Appendix 1

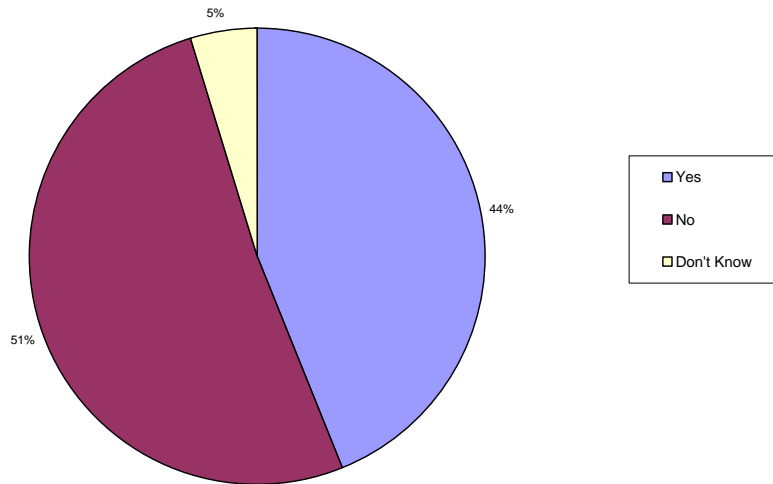
1. ***Do you think it important that the economic viability of Ringwood Town Centre is maintained and enhanced by planning for new shopping development?***



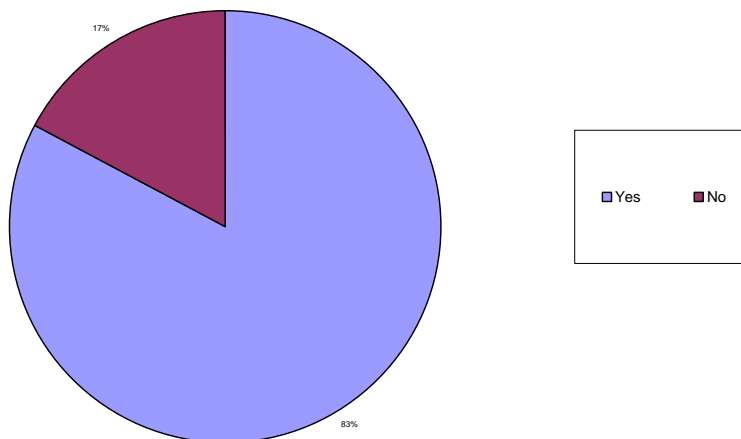
2. ***Do you think a new theatre/community venue in the town centre would benefit the town?***



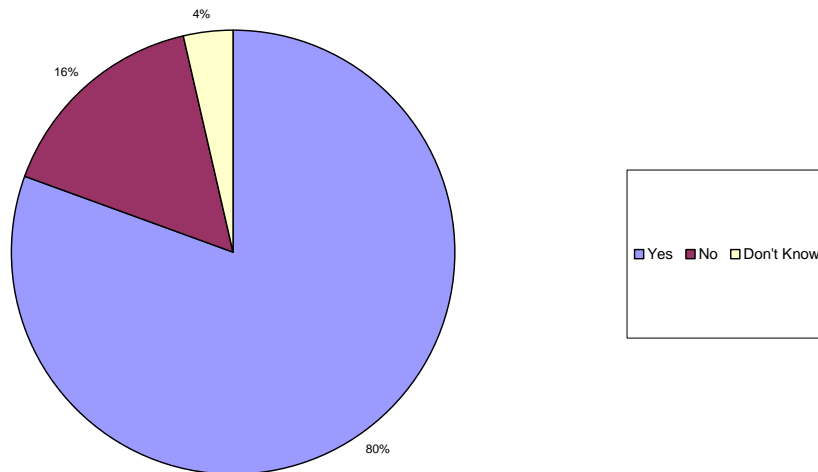
3. Do you think it is a good idea to provide for an overall increase in car parking provision in the town centre?



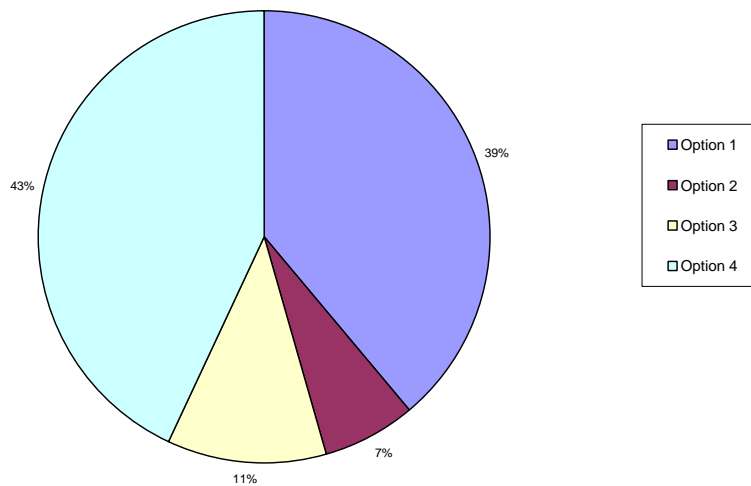
4. If you have ticked yes to questions 2) or 3) above do you understand that new retail provision would be necessary for this scheme to be funded by New Forest District Council?



5. Do you think it is a good idea to provide better public information services and new public conveniences in the town centre?



6. If you had to make a choice from the options below which would you choose?



15 NOVEMBER 2007

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

RINGWOOD TOWN CENTRE STEERING GROUP

Minutes of a meeting of Ringwood Town Centre Steering Group held at the Public Offices, Ringwood, on 15 November 2007.

Councillors:

p D E Cracknell
e Ms L C Ford
p J Penwarden

Councillors:

p W S Rippon-Swaine
p M H Thierry
p C R Treleaven

In Attendance:

Councillor:

B Terry (Ringwood Town Council)

Officers Attending:

J Mascal, Miss J Debnam, C Elliott, Mrs L Evans, A Groom, Mrs P Higgins, T Simpson (Ringwood Town Council) and N Williamson.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.

RESOLVED:

That Cllr Treleaven be elected Chairman of the Steering Group for the ensuing year.

2. MINUTES (REPORT A).

That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2007, having been circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no issues raised from the minutes that were not separately covered as an agenda item.

4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest made by any member in connection with an agenda item.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

No issues had been raised during the public participation period.

6. POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT ON THE FURLONG CAR PARK, RINGWOOD (REPORT B).

In view of the widespread public interest in this item the Chairman exercised his discretion to allow a greater number of public speakers to address the meeting.

Mr Gibson, Mrs Pike, Mrs Kennard (Ringwood Chamber of Commerce), Mrs Wiseman and Mr Chard addressed the meeting.

Members had before them a detailed analysis of the responses that had been received to the public consultation exercise undertaken by the District Council. Members noted the difficulties that had been experienced with the distribution of consultation leaflets to households, as a consequence of which the closing date for the receipt of responses had been extended to the end of October.

In response to points made during public participation, the Steering Group was advised that there were no covenants affecting the usage to which the Furlong Car Park could be put. In addition, members were reminded that the Furlong Shopping Centre and old Cinema were in private ownership and this Council had no influence over whether or not the owners decided to progress proposals for development associated with that complex.

Members concluded that representations received after 31 October 2007 should not be included in the final analysis of responses received. The cut-off date of 31 October 2007 should be definitive.

The Steering Group noted that the responses to this consultation exercise were surprising when viewed against other indicators of public opinion, such as the 'Love It, Hate It' survey undertaken by the Town Council. There were differing views as to the weight and significance that should be attached to the various responses and methodologies employed. There was a lengthy debate on how this should affect the recommendations to be made to the Cabinet.

The majority of the Steering Group concluded that, on balance, there was a public aspiration for some development to take place and that a mixed-use scheme was, generally, the best option as there were aspirations for improved community facilities. Ringwood was currently very successful as a shopping centre, and it was important to develop and progress a vision that maintained its success in the coming years.

The options that had been used to sound out public opinion should not however be seen as the definitive solutions to the development potential of Ringwood. It was important that an open mind was retained so that the best long term solution was identified, as the project proceeded.

Members explored, in detail, the need to allocate funds to progress this project further. The District Council did not have any experience in direct participation in such a major development scheme and it was therefore important to use a development partner in order to protect the Council's position. The necessary work to bring the Council to the point of entering into such a partnership was likely to cost up to £100,000. Members were anxious to ensure that only expenditure that was absolutely essential was actually spent. Members' attention was drawn to recent evidence that shopping trends were changing, not least because of the increasing popularity of shopping on-line. In addition, it looked likely there would be an economic slow down in the near term. It was therefore important that research was undertaken, at an early stage, to confirm that additional retail space was, indeed, still needed to maintain the viability of the Town. It was also important that the developing project should include clearly defined review points at which this project research could, if deemed prudent, be terminated without incurring additional expenditure. Cllr Rippon-Swaine moved and Cllr Cracknell seconded the motion, "That the Cabinet should be advised that, in principle, the further development of a mixed scheme should be progressed".

Following a request from Cllr Thierry it was agreed that a recorded vote should be taken. The vote was recorded as follows:

Cllr Cracknell	For
Cllr Penwarden	For
Cllr Rippon-Swaine	For
Cllr Thierry	Against
Cllr Treleaven	For

Therefore, with four members voting in favour and one against the motion, the motion was carried.

Cllr Rippon-Swaine moved and Cllr Cracknell seconded the motion, that it be recommended to the Cabinet that "A supplementary estimate or expenditure plan bid for £100,000 be approved, to engage the specialist consultancy advice necessary to progress the scheme, leading to the engagement of a development partner, and such expenditure be incurred on a phased basis, to be approved by the Cabinet, but to include staged termination points".

With four members voting in favour of the motion and one against, the motion was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the results of the Public Consultation Exercise be noted

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET:

- (a) *That, in principle, the further development of a mixed scheme should be progressed: and*

- (b) *That a supplementary estimate or expenditure plan bid for £100,000 be approved, to engage the specialist consultancy advice necessary to progress the scheme, leading to the engagement of a development partner, and such expenditure be incurred on a phased basis, to be approved by the Cabinet, but to include staged termination points.***

7. DISTRIBUTION OF CONSULTATION LEAFLETS.

The Steering Group noted the concerns raised by Cllr Thierry, including under the debate on the previous item, that distribution problems with the consultation leaflet may have influenced the result. Members were advised that the officers had taken up the distribution with the company responsible and had received a map of distribution and a schedule of reasons for not delivering to specific individual properties (around 80 properties). It was agreed that this information should be copied to members of the Steering Group but, because of the nature of some of the information it would be inappropriate for it to be more widely available, in order to protect the private interests of individual households.

8. PUBLIC MEETING.

At the request of Cllr Thierry, the Steering Group discussed the need for a public meeting to be held on this issue. It was noted that the Mayor of Ringwood Town Council had already volunteered to undertake a programme of public meetings, should the project be progressed. Members agreed that there was a need for a robust mechanism for public involvement should the scheme proceed, to include public meetings and exhibitions. This was an issue that should be discussed further at the next meeting of the Steering Group, if the project was progressed.

CHAIRMAN