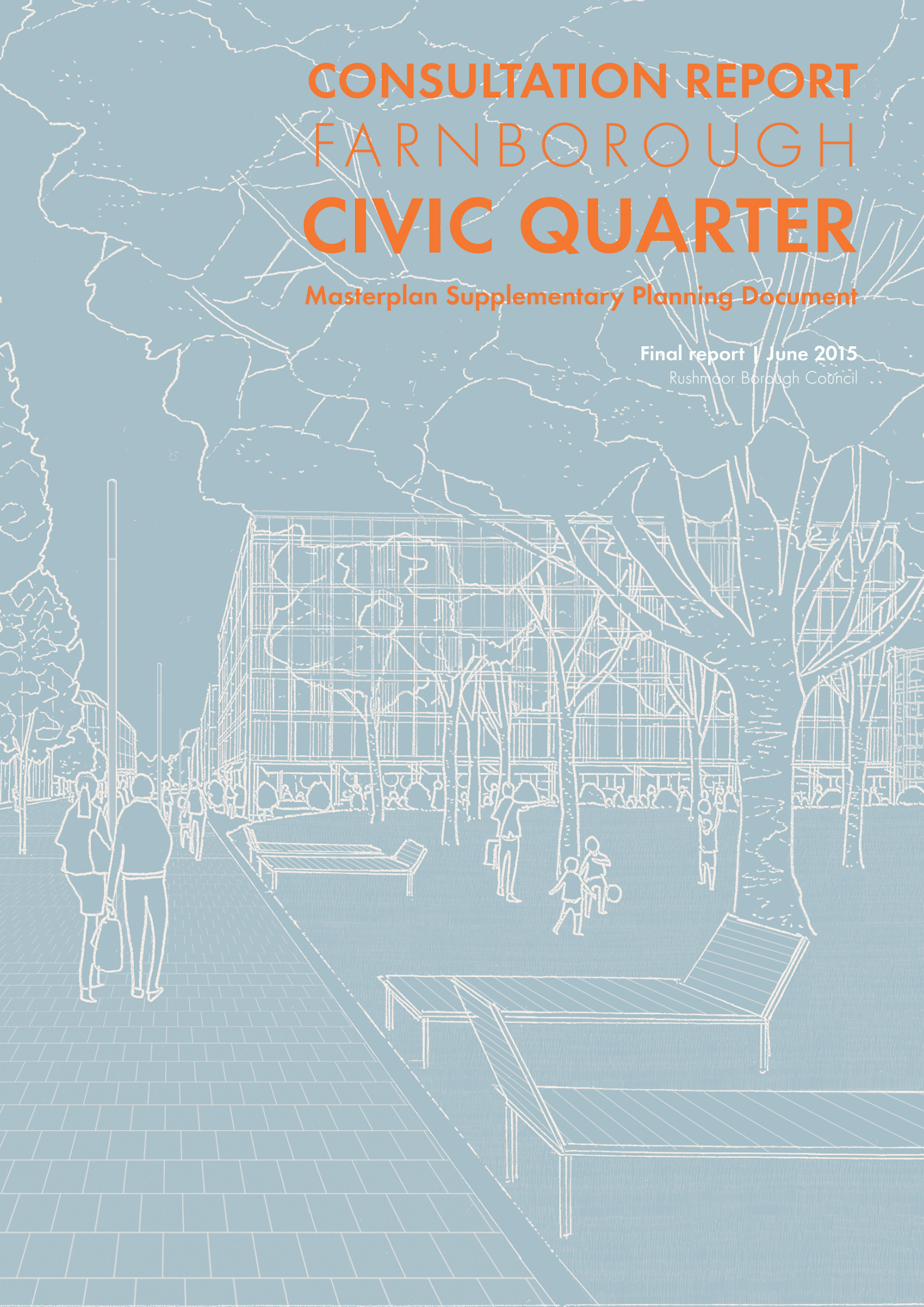


# CONSULTATION REPORT FARNBOROUGH CIVIC QUARTER

Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document

Final report | June 2015

Rushmoor Borough Council







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## **Opposite page**

Farnborough Civic Quarter masterplan site area in context

Plans within this document are produced using Ordnance Survey mapping provided by Rushmoor Borough Council (© Crown Copyright)

# INTRODUCTION

This report sets out the results of consultation undertaken by Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners and Rushmoor Borough Council on the Farnborough Civic Quarter Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The study has been prepared to ensure a coordinated approach to the area that can secure the best long-term future for Farnborough.

The Civic Quarter is located to the south of the town centre, between the retail core and the civic offices, and presents a significant opportunity for development that integrates with the town centre and brings wider, strategic benefits, whilst improving the green space.

This report summarises and sets out the feedback received on the draft SPD during the consultation process. These comments will shape the amendments made to the final draft of the Civic Quarter Masterplan.

Replacement retail at the end of Queensmead with homes above, to integrate with the civic quarter

Redevelopment of the leisure centre on a more efficient footprint, with new community/cultural centre

Redevelopment of the Library services in a new mixed-use building fronting the central green space

The central green space is retained and enhanced to provide more useable open space for visitors

Reprovision of parking in a decked car park to service the community, civic and commercial uses

Office and hub space is expanded and enhanced, connecting the Business Park to the town centre

A quality hotel to service both the Business Park and the town centre

Public sector offices and services providing a civic heart alongside library, community and cultural uses

New duplex homes with roof gardens and/or balconies to bring more activity to the town centre



The existing study area



The development framework - this plan was amended for the final SPD, to reflect feedback

# CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Consultation period for the Draft Farnborough Civic Quarter Masterplan SPD ran from Monday 9 February 2015 until Wednesday 25 March 2015. During this time the document was available to download from the Council's website.

An exhibition summarising the vision, development principles and masterplan was on display during this period in the council offices and library (see the display boards at appendix 1). Staff from the consultant team and from the Council were present to answer questions, discuss any concerns with members of the public and receive feedback on the document on Saturday 28 February and Friday 20 March 2015 in the Princes Mead shopping centre.

A feedback form was provided to record comments from residents and visitors and 130 responses were received from local residents and key stakeholders.

These responses have been analysed and the key messages are presented on the following pages.



**Consultation in Princes Mead shopping centre**

# FARNBOROUGH CIVIC QUARTER MASTERPLAN

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Thank you very much for taking the time to tell us what you think about the draft Farnborough Civic Quarter Masterplan. Your views are really important in shaping the future for the area.

To have your say, please complete this feedback form which can be emailed or posted back to the Council at the address on the back of this form. You can also fill in this form on our website at [www.rushmoor.gov.uk/inspiringfarnborough](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/inspiringfarnborough). Please make sure we have your comments by Wednesday 25 March.

1. The vision for the Civic Quarter is supported by a series of key principles. Do you agree with the principles? Can you explain why you agree or disagree with the principles? Are there any others you would like to add?

2. The developer strategy for the Civic Quarter includes new uses and the re-activation of existing ones. Do you have any thoughts on the best location for particular uses? What do you think of the proposed use for each of the building blocks?

3. The masterplan outlines proposals for an improved green space in the centre of the Civic Quarter. How would you like to see the green space landscaped? How many stores are appropriate for buildings around the green space?

**RUSHMOOR**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

4. What do you think about the longer term opportunities in the Civic Quarter?

5. Please let us know any other comments you have on the proposals set out in the draft Civic Quarter masterplan.

6. We would be grateful if you could answer the voluntary question. We will still take your views into account if you decide not to answer this question.

Gender:  Under 21  Female  
 21-35  
 36-50  
Nationality:  51-65  
 Over 65

**The consultation period closes on Wednesday 25 March.**

You can post your responses to:  
Planning Policy and Conservation, Rushmoor Borough Council, Council Offices,  
Farnborough Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 7JU

You can also email them to [planning@rushmoor.gov.uk](mailto:planning@rushmoor.gov.uk) or you can fill in this form online at:  
[www.rushmoor.gov.uk/inspiringfarnborough](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/inspiringfarnborough)

You will find more details about the draft Farnborough Civic Quarter masterplan at:  
[www.rushmoor.gov.uk/inspiringfarnborough](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/inspiringfarnborough)

Council Offices, Farnborough Road, Farnborough, Hants, GU14 7JU  
[www.rushmoor.gov.uk](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk) 01252 398 399  
[customer.services@rushmoor.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@rushmoor.gov.uk) February 2015

Feedback form

## KEY MESSAGES

All 130 separate written responses have been read, analysed and the issues raised within each response have been coded. This has produced a tally of the number of times that each issue was raised and has identified which issues within the Civic Quarter Masterplan SPD are most important to those who have responded to the consultation. (See appendix for summary table including detailed responses).

Direct requests for individual changes have also been recorded and saved in a separate table for response and comment (see appendix). The commentary below highlights the popular issues raised and the graphs demonstrate the spread of comments. Each question asked within the questionnaire is taken in turn.



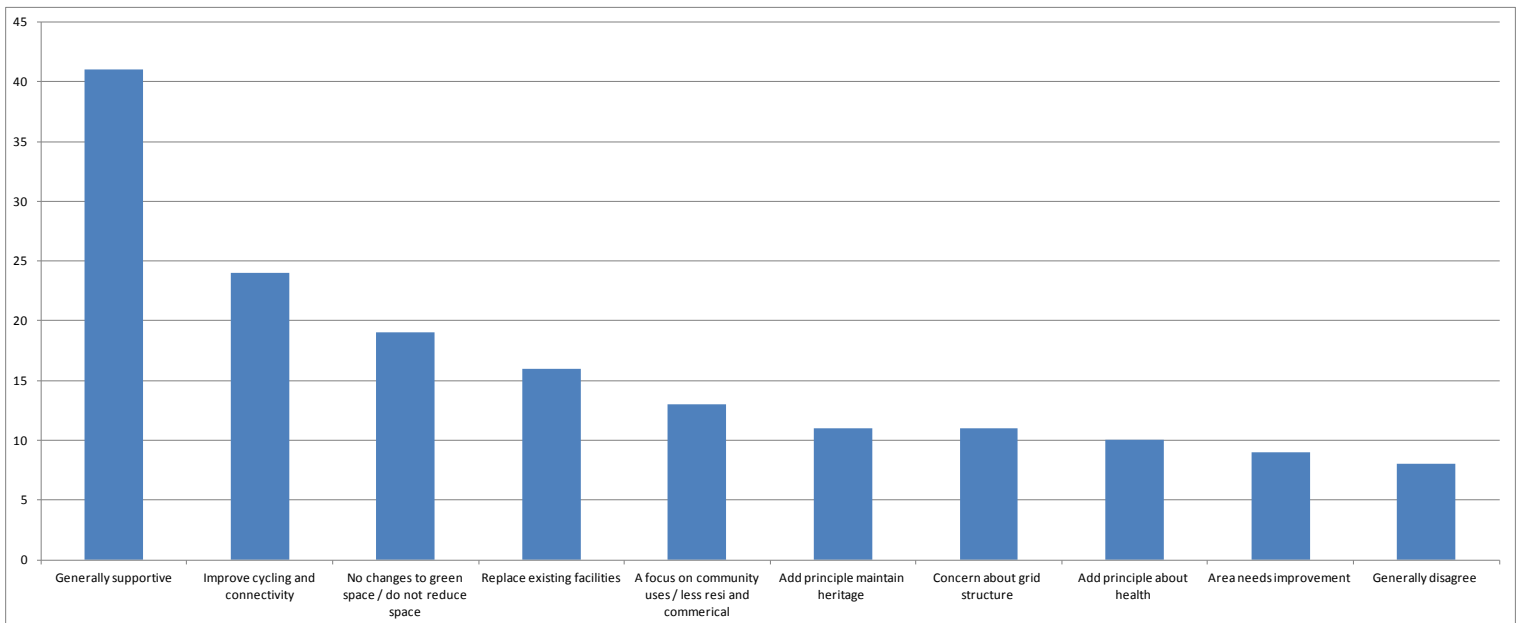
**The vision for the Civic Quarter is supported by a series of key principles. Do you agree with the principles? Are there any others you would like to add?**

Generally comments made were in support of the principles set out within the masterplan, noting that the area needed improvement.

There was a desire to strengthen the reference to new and improved pedestrian and cycling routes, and for the plan to be more specific about the routes and connections made. There was also a desire to strengthen references within the document to health and heritage.

There was some concern expressed about the reduction in the overall quantum of green space and also about the continuity of services such as the library, leisure centre and community space.

**Graph 1: The vision for the Civic Quarter is supported by a series of key principles. Do you agree with the principles? Are there any others you would like to add?**



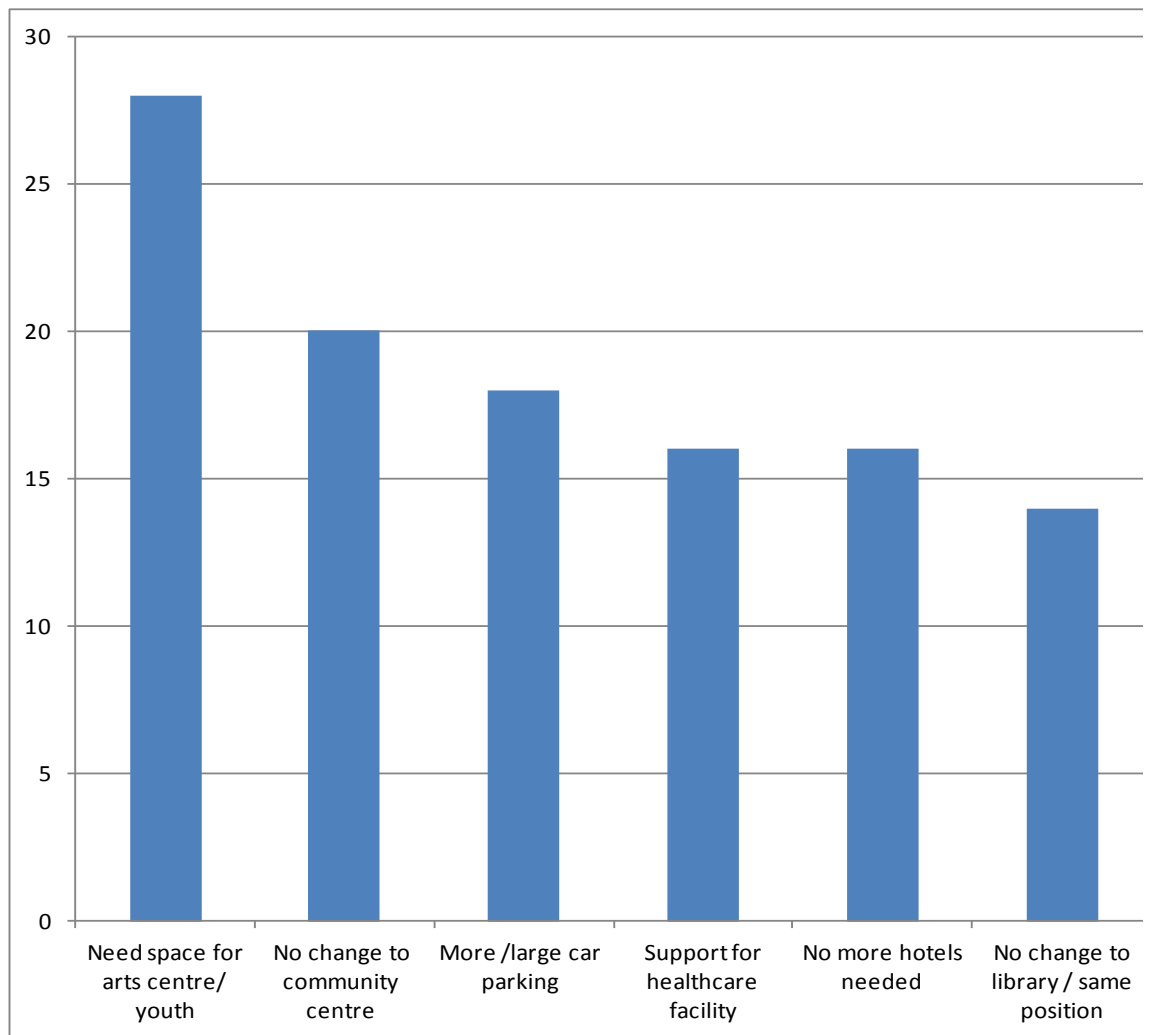
**The development strategy for the Civic Quarter includes new uses and the re-provision of existing ones. Do you have any thoughts on the best location for particular uses? What do you think of the proposed use for each of the building blocks?**

Some comments were made that there were a significant number of ugly and tired buildings in the area but others felt that there should be no change to the library or the leisure centre. Others noted that they felt there was no need for a hotel, new offices or new flats.

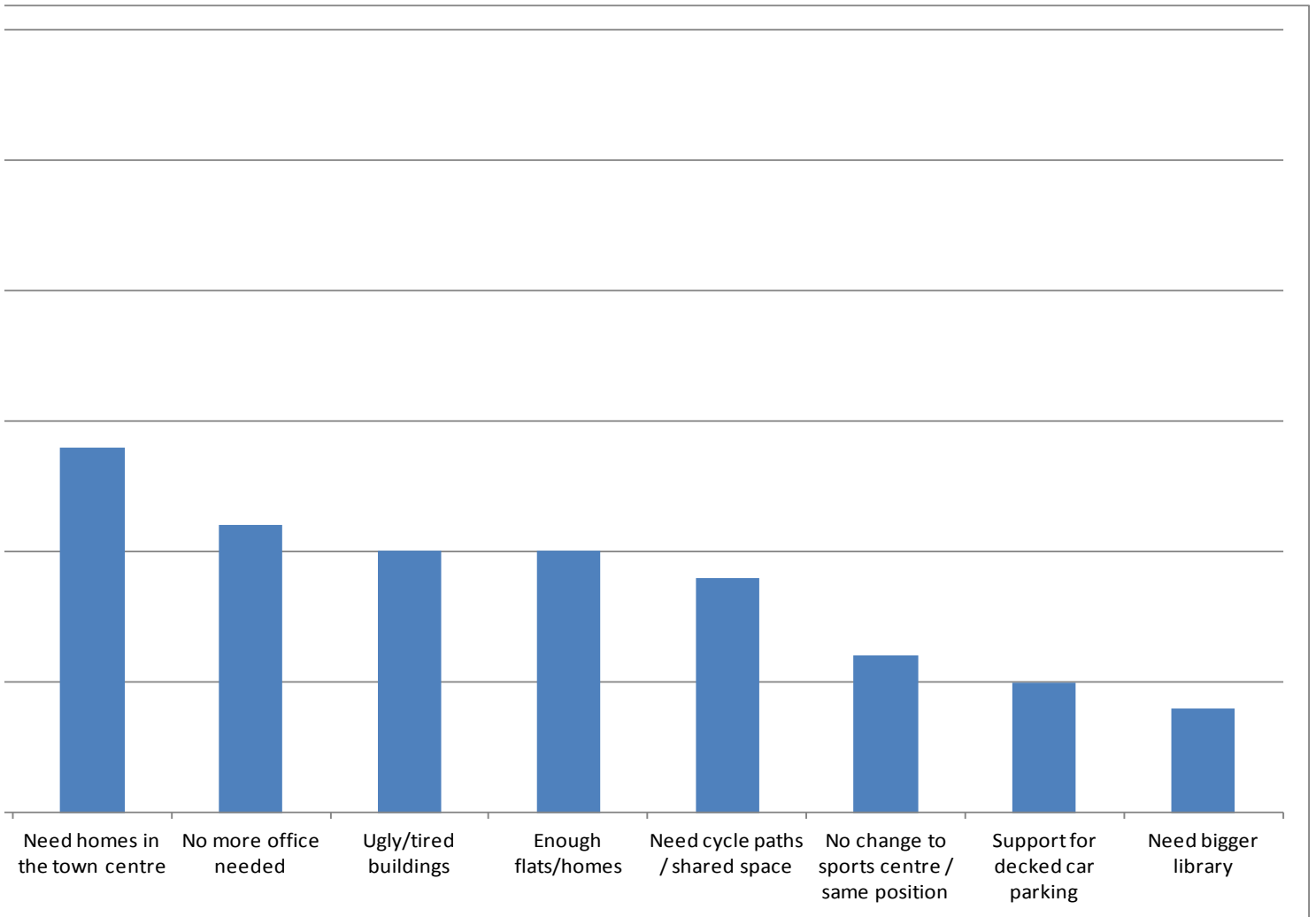
Responses also highlighted the need for appropriate car parking to support these uses.

The responses highlighted support for new community space, a new cultural or performance facility, a bigger and better library, affordable homes and a new health facility within the Civic Quarter.

Many people also commented that the Elles Hall should be retained, as both an important heritage and community asset.



**Graph 2: The development strategy for the Civic Quarter includes new uses and the re-provision of existing ones. Do you have any thoughts on the best location for particular uses? What do you think of the proposed use for each of the building blocks?**

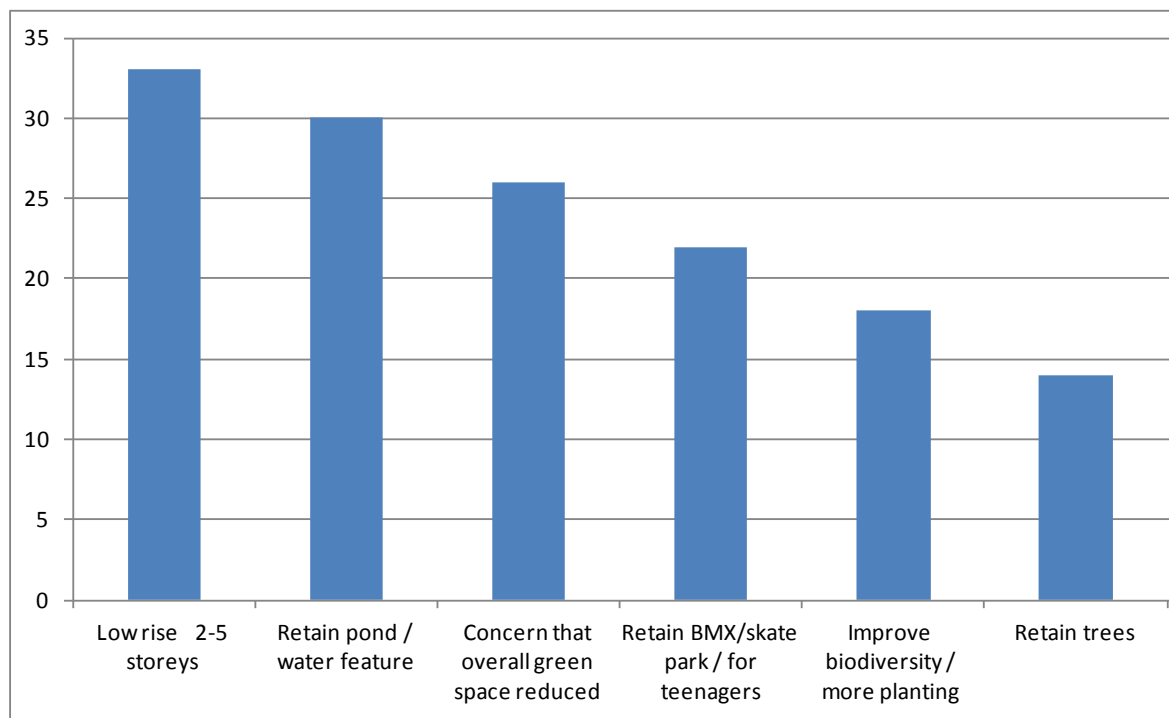


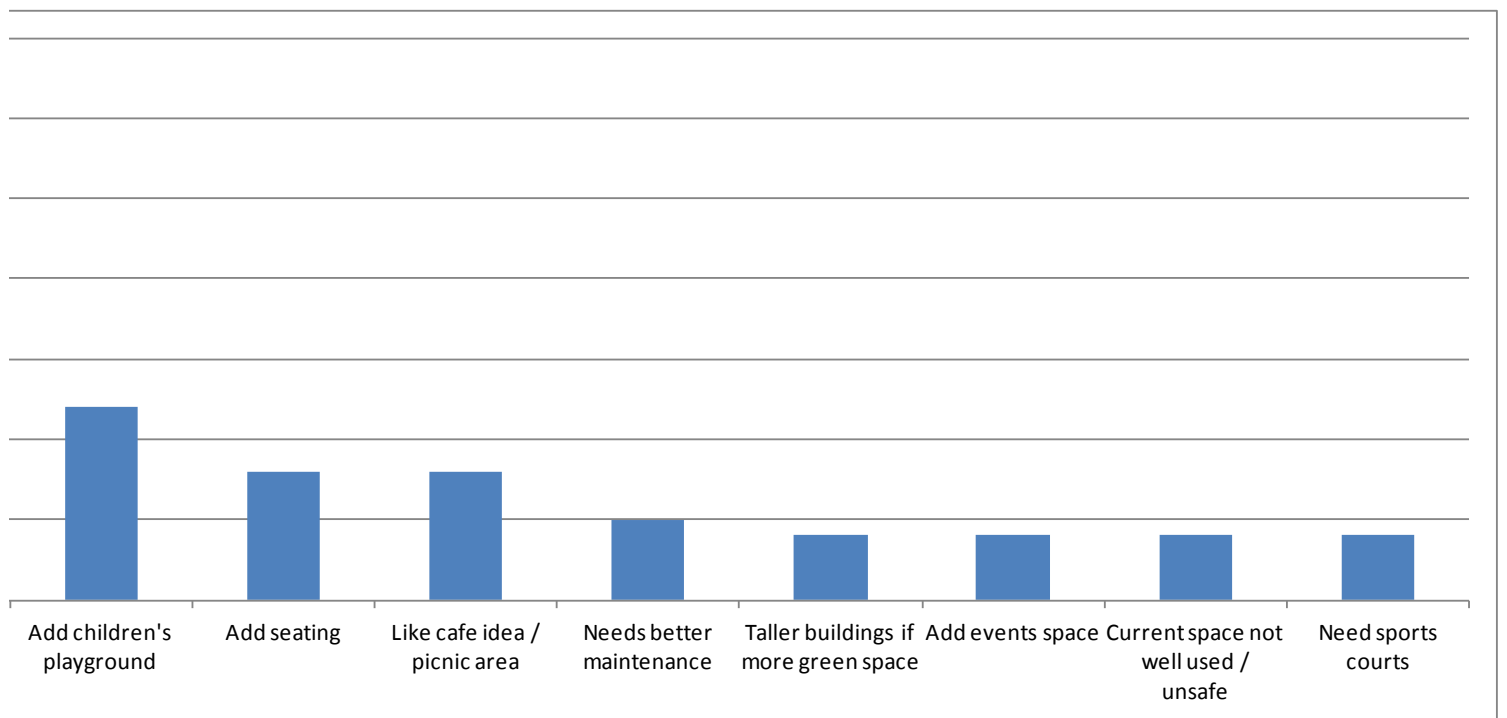
**The masterplan outlines proposals for an improved green space in the centre of the Civic Quarter. How would you like to see the green space landscaped? How many storeys are appropriate for buildings around the green space?**

Comments highlighted the need to ensure that any new buildings around the space should be low rise to allow sunlight to penetrate the green space. Others noted that they felt that the overall quantum of green space had been reduced. In contrast, some respondents felt that the space was unsafe and currently not well used or maintained.

Many people expressed concern about the loss of the pond and called for a need for a new water feature. Others comments that the skate park and trees should be retained. Some suggested that more detail should be included in terms of the design of the space and that it should include more planting, seating, children's play facilities, sports courts and a band stand.

**Graph 3: The masterplan outlines proposals for an improved green space in the centre of the Civic Quarter. How would you like to see the green space landscaped? How many storeys are appropriate for buildings around the green space?**





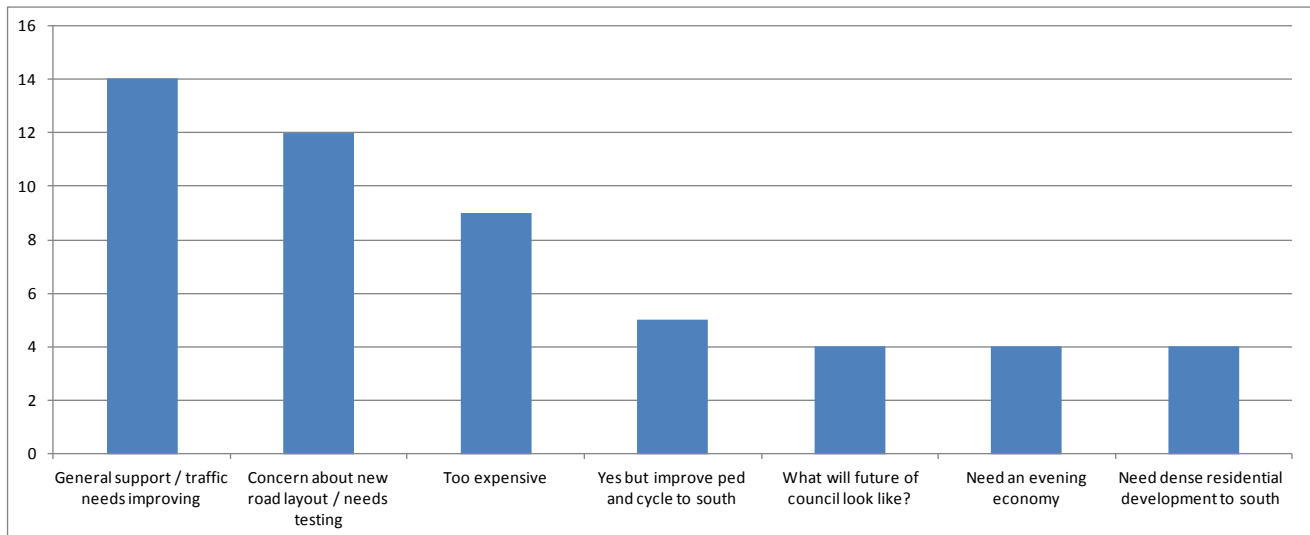
## What do you think about the longer term opportunities in the Civic Quarter?

Fewer people answered this question but the most regular comment was a general support for the proposals, while highlighting that the new road layout needed further testing and must work for pedestrians and cyclists.

However, some expressed concerns about the proposed changes, suggesting it was a waste of money and that there was too much traffic for the idea to work successfully.

Other comments included a desire for a better evening economy in the town centre and a suggestion that there should be dense residential development to the south with better connections to the town centre. However, a small numbers of others expressed concern about the council moving, highlighting that they liked the current building.

Graph 4: What do you think about the longer term opportunities in the Civic Quarter?

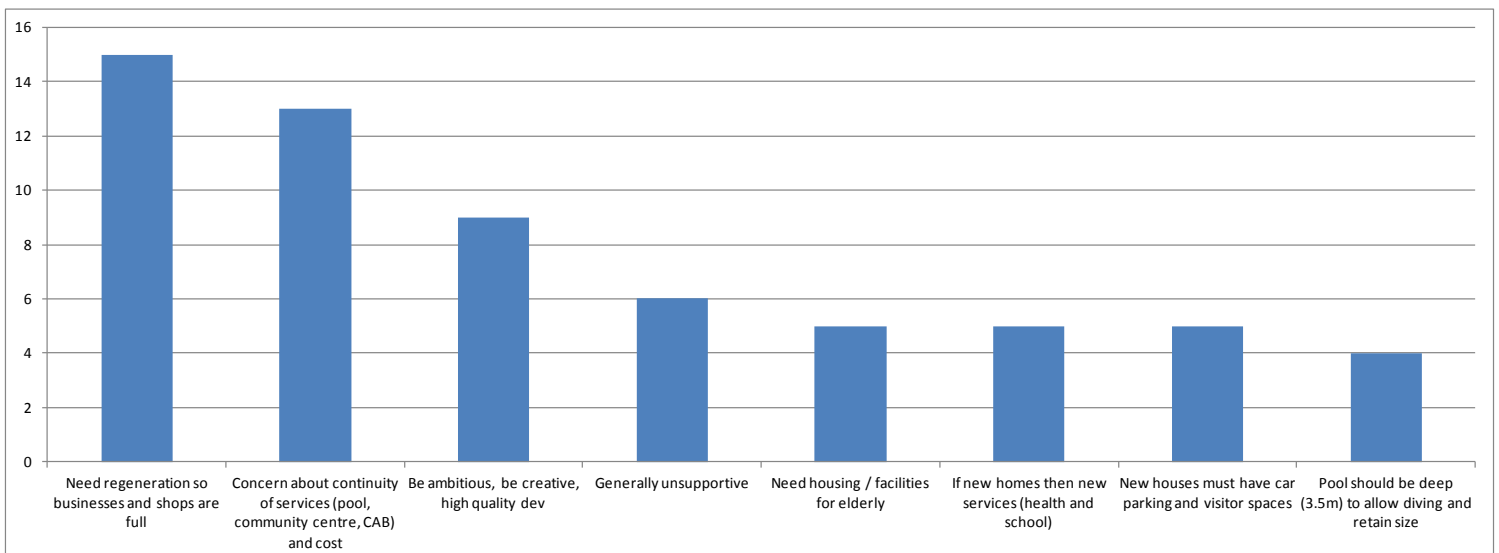


## Please let us know any other comments you have on the proposals set out in the draft SPD.

This last question allowed respondents to add any other thoughts which had not been covered elsewhere. Again, there were fewer responses to this question.

The most significant number of comments expressed that there was a need for change in the town centre, with a need to fill the existing empty shops. The second most regular comment was expressing concern about the continuity of services and highlighting the need for rents for community space to remain affordable.

**Graph 5: Please let us know any other comments you have on the proposals set out in the draft SPD.**



# CONCLUSION

The draft SPD will be amended to address the outcomes of the consultation. A number of the key changes are summarised below (Please see appendix 2 for detailed changes):

- Include an option within the masterplan which retains the Elles Hall building.
- Retain a water feature within the green space and add detail about the design of this space.
- Strengthen reference to cycling and walking routes and include a plan explicitly illustrating these new and improved routes.
- Strengthen reference to the continuity of services including the library, leisure centre and community space.



# APPENDIX 1

## FARNBOROUGH CIVIC QUARTER

MASTERPLAN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Welcome to the exhibition.  
We hope you find it interesting and will want to share your views with us.

### ABOUT THE CIVIC QUARTER

The Farnborough Civic Quarter is bound by Westmead to the north, Kingsmead and Pinehurst Roundabout to the east, Meudon Avenue to the south and Sulzers Roundabout to the west. It acts as an area of transition between the shopping streets to the north, and offices and the business park to the south. It is an important but currently underused area of Farnborough town centre.



The Farnborough Civic Quarter study area (© Crown copyright and database rights 2014 Ordnance Survey 100024264)

### WHAT IS A MASTERPLAN?

A masterplan is a framework through which an area can change and develop. A set of key principles and spatial guidelines influence the pattern of routes, development and open space but because the framework is at a strategic level, flexibility is maintained for how specific sites can come forward.

RUSHMOOR CONSULTING | Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners | MIDTAGU EVANS | The Urban Engineering Studio

### HISTORY OF THE AREA

The current shape of Farnborough town centre results from several major periods of change through the 20th Century. It has a disjointed street network, with weak connections to the surrounding areas and poor links between the Civic Quarter and the main shopping area.



Farnborough town centre, 1928, showing the form and extent of the Pinehurst Barracks in the run up to the Second World War

Top: Queenmead Pavements (1960s)  
Bottom: Farnborough from the air in the 1960s



**EARLY 1900s**  
The pre-war historic map from 1911 shows the suburban development of land to the east of Farnborough Road. By contrast, the area which is the modern town centre is largely undeveloped.



**1930s**  
The military presence developed rapidly with Pinehurst Barracks, the ladder of terraced houses which still remain to the south and a series of barrack buildings further to the north.



**1960s**  
The barracks continued to expand and intensify in the northern area, establishing the strong grid form. The Elies Hall building appears on maps of this date as part of the barracks. Queensmead appears by this point.



**1970s**  
The 1970s saw substantial change in the area, with the clearing of much of the barracks and the emergence of the Civic Quarter. Solartron Road is constructed as the first element of major new highways infrastructure.



**1980s**  
By the 1980s, Meudon Avenue had been constructed, along with the Pinehurst and Sulzers roundabouts, severing the historic continuity of Pinehurst Avenue and pedestrian links to the east.



**FARNBOROUGH TODAY**  
Significant change has occurred south of the Civic Quarter where some new residential development and the Farnborough Business Park has been developed.



# FARNBOROUGH CIVIC QUARTER

MASTERPLAN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

## KEY PRINCIPLES

A number of key principles have been developed for the Civic Quarter masterplan. These will help to ensure the Civic Quarter is as attractive as possible and meets the needs of local residents and people working in the town. By establishing these principles, individual building designs and landscaping of the open space can remain flexible.



### ENHANCE GREEN SPACE AND KEEP SIGNIFICANT TREES

One of the main characteristics of the existing Civic Quarter is the greenery of the trees and parkland. This space could be enhanced with public uses and cafes facing the park, and seating provided in sunny locations. Careful landscaping and retention of the significant trees will enhance the space. The green space would provide an excellent setting for civic and community uses, making it a real 'heart' for Farnborough Town Centre.



### A MIX OF USES THAT ATTRACTS VISITORS

We would like the Civic Quarter to contribute to Farnborough's future vitality. Existing uses such as the library, leisure centre and community centre should be reprovided and potential exists to enhance these by adding a small performance space in the community centre. The borough needs to provide new homes, which can be included. Offices and a hotel could also be introduced. These other uses will help to fund the community uses.



### INTEGRATE WITH SURROUNDING AREAS

The Civic Quarter does not currently relate well to its context due to the elevated Sulzers and Pinehurst Roundabouts. There is a significant opportunity to improve pedestrian connections to Queensmead and south towards Farnborough College of Technology, Farnborough Business Park and potential new housing south of Meudon Avenue by formalising some of the existing crossing points on Meudon Avenue.



### PRACTICAL DEVELOPMENT PLOTS

A key part of success for any masterplan is the establishment of logical development plots which can be delivered in a practical manner. The regular grid form of the plan reflects the underlying historic barracks. To maintain flexibility of use it is important that the size and form of blocks are not specific to one use. A block of 32m x 60m, for example, can be treated either as a single unit, as two blocks above a podium or as two separate blocks for different uses.



### A NETWORK OF CONNECTED STREETS AND SPACES

The SPD will improve the network of streets and spaces in the Civic Quarter, through new pedestrian connections to the south and routes that follow the historic street pattern. Improvements are possible without major changes to the highways infrastructure. However, later development could simplify Pinehurst and Sulzers roundabouts as signalised junctions and release land for town centre uses.



### WORK WITHIN OWNERSHIP AND OCCUPANCY BOUNDARIES

The majority of land in the Civic Quarter is owned by the Borough and County Councils. This means a core of development could be delivered by the public sector alongside a small number of commercial landowners. Proposals ensure that, as far as possible, development blocks do not straddle land ownerships, but support the overall masterplan.

*Do you agree with the principles?  
Are there any others you would like to add?*

# FARNBOROUGH CIVIC QUARTER

MASTERPLAN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

## THE MASTERPLAN

The Civic Quarter masterplan provides one example of how the key principles and site guidelines could be applied. This shows the mix of appropriate uses, with a central usable green space and good links with the town centre and surrounding areas. The masterplan is not designed to be prescriptive in terms of uses or locations and can accommodate a range of new development scenarios.



The existing Civic Quarter



*Do you have thoughts on the best location for particular uses?*

# FARNBOROUGH CIVIC QUARTER

MASTERPLAN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

## THE CENTRAL GREEN SPACE

Buildings surrounding the green space should have ground floor activity and doors opening onto the space. Outdoor seating in sunny locations can support events and activities, making it a real 'heart' for the town centre. Trees are a key feature of the area and significant examples such as the oak trees should be retained.



Existing space



Proposed space



A similar used space at the Peace Gardens in Sheffield



A similar used space at Piccadilly Gardens in Manchester

Above is an artist's impression illustrating the view from the entrance to the leisure centre. The drawing shows the vision for the Civic Quarter with a re-landscaped public space, new leisure centre and new buildings providing active uses facing onto the park. Apartments with balconies are shown above public uses. This will help to deliver much needed homes and fund community uses.

*How would you like to see the green space landscaped?*

*How many storeys are appropriate for buildings around the green space?*

# FARNBOROUGH CIVIC QUARTER

MASTERPLAN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

## LONGER TERM OPPORTUNITIES

Longer term opportunities exist to simplify Pinehurst and Sulzers roundabouts as signalised junctions and release land for town centre uses. Future investment could include redevelopment of the Council's own offices and IBM site to unlock new connections southwards and take advantage land created by the new road alignment. The core Civic Quarter area is shown coming forward as on the previous board.

## GIVE US YOUR VIEWS

This exhibition is a summary of the Civic Quarter Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). You can view the draft document on the Council's website:

[www.rushmoor.gov.uk/improvingfarnborough](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/improvingfarnborough)

Please send us your views by Wednesday 25 March 2015 in any of the following ways:

- At the staffed exhibition at Princes Mead shopping centre on Saturday 28 February and Friday 20 March 2015
- Online at [www.rushmoor.gov.uk/improvingfarnborough](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/improvingfarnborough)
- Post to: Planning Policy and Conservation, Rushmoor Borough Council, Council Offices, Farnborough Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 7JU



In Civic Quarter masterplan, longer term opportunities (© Crown copyright and database rights 2014 Ordnance Survey 100024264)

**New town centre uses**  
Replacement of car parking for new retail space at ground floor, with space above suitable for residential, hotel or office use.

**Roundabout removal**  
Replacement of the roundabout and car park for new blocks which could accommodate business space, a hotel, serviced apartments or office uses.

**Family homes**  
New family housing replacing the current council offices and IBM site, with new at-grade crossings on Meudon Avenue.





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