

Public Questions March Council

1. When will Prestwich Park Rd South be resurfaced? Harriet Levy

Note

Cllr A Quinn

Prestwich Park Road South was considered for inclusion in our planned maintenance programmes alongside other candidate streets, however the street did not rank highly enough to be included.

Unfortunately, despite the additional £30m investment in our roads our budgets are not sufficient to allow resurfacing of all seemingly streets.

2. Can funding be set aside for **independent** Conservation Appraisals, such that there can be no concern that, *in essence, officers are marking their own homework*? Dr Binns

Cllr A Quinn

Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that reviews of conservation areas should be carried out by the Local Planning Authority from 'time to time'.

There is no prescribed time-period between reviews in the Act nor any directions on timescales for reviews in either the National Planning Policy Framework or its guidance notes. However, it is generally regarded as accepted best practice that reviews are conducted broadly every 5 years.

Bury's conservation areas were last reviewed and approved by the Planning Control Committee on the 26th March 2019.

The Planning Team will therefore be gearing up to reviewing the conservation areas again, in line with best practice, and this will coincide with the preparation of the Bury Local Plan. The next round of conservation area reviews will help to inform the Local Plan, including conservation area designations and heritage policies, and these can then be independently considered as part of the Local Plan Examination.

3. Can the Leader of the Council provide an update on the progress being made with the delivery of the Radcliffe Strategic Regeneration Framework? Josh Harcup

Leader

Since the start of 2024, Radcliffe has taken huge steps forward on the road to its future regeneration.

The tired buildings on the site of the £40 million Radcliffe Hub have now been demolished and the site has been cleared, ready for the foundation works to commence. In the coming weeks, the former TSB building will also be demolished and piling and foundation works will begin, ready for the construction of the Hub.

At Radcliffe Market, enabling works are being undertaken in the basement and a new gable wall has been built and at Market Chambers, scaffolding is in place and internal and external work is being carried out.

At Spring Lane, the proposals for the new Star Radcliffe Academy has received the required planning permissions and work is getting underway to prepare the site ready for the first intake of Year 7 pupils in September this year.

Good progress is also being made towards the transformation of a number of brownfield sites within the Radcliffe SRF area, bringing forward millions of pounds to deliver around 600 new homes into the town. This includes 400 dwellings on the Boroughs largest brownfield site at the East Lancs Paper Mill Site, along with exciting developments on School Street and Green Street. These developments will help improve the look and feel of the town and also bring much needed spending power into the centre, helping local businesses. Importantly, 200 of these units will be genuinely affordable for our residents to access.

Members will be aware that we have secured £9 million from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement and later this year, we will be consulting on new active travel routes in and around the town. This will help to provide sustainable and safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists moving around the town, complementing the significant regeneration programme happening over 2024 and beyond.

4. I've heard from many people across our area about the need to resurface Croft Lane. Previously, the Unsworth Councillors have secured the resurfacing of 38 roads including Hollins Brow and Pilsworth Road on either side but can you commit to resurfacing Croft Lane too? **Jodie Hook**

Cllr A Quinn

I am pleased inform you that officers are working on proposals to resurface Croft Lane, hopefully during 2024/25.

5. As the JPA9 - Walshaw site remains in Places for Everyone will the Council be voting against implementing the plan at tonight's vote? **Andrew Luxton**

Leader

On 7 September 2022, Cabinet authorised officers to request that the Walshaw site should be removed from the Places for Everyone Plan in the light of new housing supply coming through that was not confirmed at the time the Plan was submitted. This included the joint acquisition of the Millgate Centre, which will pave the way for more residential development in Bury Town Centre.

The request to remove the Walshaw site was subsequently set out in both the Council's written statement and within the Examination sessions.

Unfortunately, the Inspectors have concluded that the site should remain within the plan and did not accept the request to remove the site. They indicated that the extension of the plan period, to ensure that the plan conforms with national planning

policy to have a 15 year plan period on adoption, has resulted in a reduced flexibility allowance across the housing supply. This and other changes to the plan, has led them to conclude that the site is therefore needed as it makes an important contribution to meeting housing needs in Bury, the northern areas, and the city region as a whole. As such, they stated that they were satisfied that the allocation is justified, consistent with national policy and will be effective in achieving sustainable development.

Whilst it was our preference to see the site removed, this needs to be balanced against the wider benefits of the plan, which means that:

- We will have an up to date plan that can be used to defend speculative planning applications on further Green Belt land
- We will have a housing target that is 76% of the Governments housing target
- We will have a transformational employment site, that will provide significant economic benefits for our residents and businesses
- We will have a plan that allows us to plan constructively for significant investment in transport and other infrastructure such as new schools and health facilities.

So whilst it is not a perfect plan, it is nevertheless one that I can support as the alternative is not something that this Council should be supporting.

6. In your capacity as the Cabinet Member for Environment, Climate Change, and Operations, the subject of pedestrian crossings comes within your remit. We would like to present a case to you for a pedestrian crossing on Brandlesholme Road near Springside View and Old Hall School and a similar crossing adjacent to the Little Holcombe Nursery. You will be aware that a written petition, signed by 521 people, was submitted to Bury Council on 27th April 2023 requesting that two safe crossings be constructed at the top end of Brandlesholme Road (B6214). The petition received widespread support – from residents, the Head Teacher of Old Hall School, management and staff of local businesses, parents of children attending Old Hall School, Tower View Nursery, Little Holcombe Nursery, staff of Choices Killilea House and from our three local councillors – Charlotte Morris, Martin Hayes, and Jack Rydeheard. A survey was carried out in July 2023 on behalf of Bury Council Transportation Team by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM). As you will be aware, the conclusion of the survey was that funding for the crossings from the TfGM funding pot could not be justified. We, the Brandlesholme Residents for Road Safety Group, reject the conclusions of the survey and believe that we have a very strong case in our ultimate aim of preserving the safety of our residents and school children. Would you kindly meet with our Residents Group to ascertain the strength of feeling we have, consider our arguments, and support us in our aims, as we do not want a fatal accident to determine future plans? – we want to be proactive. Finally, we would like to express, on behalf of the Brandlesholme Residents for Road Safety Group, our sincere thanks to you for taking an interest in our campaign. **Adam Loster**

Cllr A Quinn

As you say officers have looked at the collision history data and found that this section of highway does not meet the criteria for current funding streams, which must be focused on reducing injury collisions.

I would be happy to meet residents to listen to their concerns.

7. Under the proposed Northern Gateway part of the Places For Everyone Plan states that there will be 1.2 million sq.m of employment floorspace which may provide 19,000 jobs which will be accessible to Bury residents; will these employment floorspace be offices, commercial and/or manufacturing and what is the marketing plan for the employment floorspace to generate the inward investment necessary and actually secure the projected 19,000 jobs for Bury residents? **Philip Smith Lawrence**

Leader

The Northern Gateway site is one of the largest employment opportunities in the country and has the potential to provide a transformational change not only to Bury's local economy but to the region as a whole.

The allocation requires the inclusion of an attractive business park as part of the development and this is where our ambitions to grow the Advanced Manufacturing and Materials sector will be focused. Our vision to grow this sector with our partners in Rochdale, Oldham and the wider Greater Manchester family is articulated in the collective work that will evolve through the Northern Gateway site being the largest site within the Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone, which will also be the target for Greater Manchester's Investment Zone. This sector, in particular, will help to provide high value and high quality jobs in new technologies and innovation as these emerge through our work with the regional Universities.

However, the scale of the site means that other employment sectors will also have the potential to be accommodated on the site. This will range from smaller scale opportunities, which may be existing local businesses that want to grow and expand on the site – or just to relocate into more modern premises, all the way up to providing the opportunity for regional, national or even international companies to locate on the site (you may recall that it was widely reported the site was being considered by actually shortlisted by Tesla before they decided on Berlin).

The planning policy requires more masterplanning work to be undertaken on adoption to help refine how the site will be zoned and how the necessary infrastructure will be phased in as development comes forward. This will require further public and stakeholder engagement in the coming months and this will pave the way for future planning applications along with more details on how we work with the Combined Authority and Government to ensure that we exploit the full potential of the site.

It should also be noted that this plan should not be read in isolation. For Northern Gateway in particular, we need to reference both:

- The Economic Strategy, that also stresses the importance of the site for our local economy and also the need to ensure that we develop an All Aged Skills Strategy to ensure that our residents have the right skills to access the jobs – including those ‘jobs of the future’ that will come through innovation workstreams – and
- The Transport Strategy – that will be critical in ensuring that our residents are connected to the new jobs and have the ability get to the site in frequent and affordable public transport and sustainable travel.

The PfE plan is critical in allocating the land for development – but we must continue to evolve our local strategies to ensure it is successful for Bury and our residents.

8. After 10 long years in the making and many twists and turns tonight this council gets to vote on the final version of the Greater Manchester plan now known as Places for Everyone.. Andy Burnham Mayor for GM has said many times on record that the plan for Bury is not right and changes need to be made. Unfortunately, these changes haven’t happened to remove the greenbelt element from the plan which is why we are still challenging it after 8 years. In its latest version the plan still proposes to remove greenbelt protection for over 500 hectares of Bury’s countryside which is equivalent to over 700 full size football pitches. I do hope that all councillors will vote independently on this matter to best represent the needs of their residents rather than the needs of this council. Does the council still believe that this is the right plan for Bury residents and the future of our town because 1000’s of your constituents still don’t? **Stephen Cleur**

Leader

Yes, I do believe that Places for Everyone is the right plan and it will bring multiple benefits to Bury.

It enables the Council to benefit from this opportunity to meet its statutory requirement to have an up-to-date development plan in place and without this, the Borough would be left open to speculative and unplanned development with insufficient supporting infrastructure. We know that there are dozens of other sites across the Borough that landowners and developers would be looking to bring forward and this plan gives us the protection that we need to resist these attempts.

As a joint plan of nine Greater Manchester districts, Places for Everyone has also allowed us to redistribute some of our housing needs across the Plan area. As a result, Bury’s housing target in the Plan is over 2,300 (24%) less than what would be required outside of the joint plan process using the Government’s standard methodology so the plan has enabled us to minimise the loss of Green Belt.

As we have heard, the proposals for Northern Gateway represents Greater Manchester’s key opportunity for new inward investment, economic growth and job creation. The site is a transformational opportunity to deliver quality jobs and economic growth for our residents – right here on our doorstep. Without this joint

plan and planning strategically to boost northern competitiveness with our Greater Manchester partners, it would be extremely difficult to justify the Northern Gateway as a local site. It is worth noting that nearly 60% of the Green Belt released is for employment use.

Places for Everyone has allowed us to plan strategically for housing too – meaning that we are able to bring forward a smaller number of large, strategic sites that will pave the way for significant investment in the physical and social infrastructure required to support development – resisting the pressure to release multiple smaller sites that would be unable to fund the necessary infrastructure.

The plan will also help us play our part in addressing the housing crisis - making provision for a substantial number of homes for those looking to get on the property ladder or for those local families who are struggling to find a home that meets their needs. And 1,600 of the new homes on the sites will be affordable, which will provide much needed access for those unable to access the property market.

Overall, whilst difficult decisions have had to be taken, the new homes, investment and jobs proposed in the plan will ultimately help to reduce inequalities for our residents - and help to address the difficult socio-economic issues that we are currently facing.