

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION ABOUT LINEAR PARK

Q. Has the public been consulted about the regeneration proposals and the new park?

Bognor Regis Regeneration Consultation 2015

In the spring 2015 Arun District Council undertook public consultation across the whole district regarding the regeneration of two council owned sites in Bognor Regis.

This was:

- The broadest ever survey conducted in the district by consulting those who live in, work in and visit Bognor Regis;
- As inclusive as possible by consulting a wide range of demographic groups;
- Accessible to all by offering multiple outlets to the public for providing feedback;
- Impartial in its surveying of public opinion and free of bias towards any particular scheme / regeneration option

Over the course of the consultation ADC conducted an extensive range of events, circulated a great number of surveys and advertised the consultation widely and in numerous formats.

Information relating to the public consultation, the public exhibition events and how to provide feedback was circulated in conjunction with Arun District Council's annual council tax bills to 73,000 residents in the district.

Over 350 people registered their attendance at the public exhibitions. Further people attended but did not register.

A great number of responses were received, with 1289 respondents providing their views on the regeneration of Bognor Regis.

From the consultation there was a resounding affirmation of the public's wish to see improvements to Bognor Regis, with 68% of respondents expressing support for this wider regeneration opportunity.

The majority of people that responded wanted to see the Regis Centre site improved (75%)

Most wanted to see cafés, restaurants, bars, hotel, theatre, retail, outdoor performance, entertainment complex or visitor attraction, sports facility (e.g. climbing wall) on the Regis site. Public spaces, water features and new play areas were also strongly supported.

The majority surveyed wanted the Hothampton Car Park site developed (62%)

Most wanted restaurants, cafes, outdoor performance area, arts centre, entertainment complex and open space / public gardens (61%), water features and children's play area (60%). The greatest number - 41% - said they wanted a similar number of car park spaces.

The majority of the public wanted regeneration to go forward on both of the sites. Overall, they wanted restaurants, a theatre, entertainment complex, car parking levels maintained or increased and the Pier improved (although the Pier isn't owned by the Council and is out of scope of the project).

They didn't want a cinema, food store or residential.

From the list of ideas the public supported, the 'Gardens by the Sea' regeneration concept was created. This concept includes the majority of the elements the public wanted to include on the sites.

The Winter Gardens scheme on the Regis Centre site will include:

- An all year round visitor attraction in the form of the Winter Gardens venue
- A new theatre and cultural hub
- Cafes, bars and restaurants with views of the sea
- Decked car parking
- A hotel
- Seafront apartments
- Iconic public art

The Linear Park on the Hothamton Car Park site will include:

- A new 21st Century play and multiple-use park
- A Water Play Plaza, colourful land moulds for imaginative play, a natural play area using reclaimed materials, a covered performance area, and an amphitheatre-style tiered grass lawn.
- A central market square with seating and a pavilion, and a café with both inside and outside seating.
- A new apartment block (around 100 units) with ground floor commercial uses
- Around 200 car parking spaces

The Gardens by the Sea / Winter Gardens concepts were supported by the Full Council in March 2017 and since then the Council has been progressing the proposals.

Linear Park Consultation October 2017

This was a one off consultation event held for one day at the Alexandra Theatre. The council wanted to get feedback on the initial design proposals for the Linear Park and incorporate this feedback into the developing plans.

About 120 people attended the October event and more viewed the design ideas online via the council website.

- The majority of people that responded thought the scheme was good.

- The majority liked the idea although some were negative.
- The majority thought the layout, use and design was good.
- The majority liked the proposed open spaces and improvements to the footpaths and access.

Further consultation will take place as we progress to getting planning permission for the park.

Q. Will the Hothamton site include any residential development?

The current proposals for the Hothamton site include around 100 new apartments over 7 floors and a ground floor retail /commercial unit of 5000 sq ft.

The inclusion of residential in the scheme will help pay for the other community benefitting elements of the project such as the new park – this is a sensible approach for the council to take. The residential units will also support the need for more housing in the district as a whole and include affordable units.

Q. How many car park spaces will the new car park have?

The current proposals reduce the number of spaces from 217 to 180, however, we have looked at reducing the number of trees and removing some of the least important crossing points in the new park and by doing this we can provide a total of 199 parking bays with 23 oversized /accessible bays – access open on one side; and 15 designated disabled parking bays.

This is an 8% loss (18 spaces) in parking bay numbers without a significant impact on the quality of the design. Removing further trees and crossing points will start to feel as though the park is located at the centre of a car park rather than parking integrated within the landscape and park design.

It is worth noting that massive improvements are being made to the parking in terms of quality and accessibility, also by providing oversized spaces in addition to the required disabled bays and some electric hook-up points. The access into the proposed development, visibility splays and tracking may all impact on the parking bay numbers at the next stage so these figures may not remain the same.

Q. Will there be less greenspace?

We can confirm that the overall area of the park (excluding vehicular access and car parking spaces) has increased from 4130m² to 4435m² - please refer to below diagrams for dimensions. This is based on OS survey data and the below plans are drawn to scale so areas are accurate to mm. A full topographical survey will be carried out at the next stage which will give more detailed information including levels.

The proposed play areas amount to an increase of 30m² on existing however the variety of play is much improved with defined zones for natural play, fixed bespoke equipment, water

play and incidental play woven throughout the park and allowances for play catered to different age groups for inclusive play alongside green gyms for adults and the elderly.

With regards to the existing trees and vegetation on site, we will seek to retain where possible good quality trees. We will know this with more certainty when the topographical and arboricultural surveys have been completed. If trees can be retained where appropriate we will do so – for trees that are being removed we will see if any can be incorporated within the park as natural play elements, seating etc.



Q. Is the Health Centre moving?

The possibility of relocating the Health Centre has been discussed for many years. The building is owned and managed by the local NHS Health Trust who will decide if and when it is to be relocated.

As part of this scheme the Council has suggested including the health centre site but this can only happen with the agreement of the NHS Health Trust. If they decide not to move then the residential scheme can be adapted and the health centre site will be excluded.

The Council has also suggested to the NHS Health Trust that the Health Centre could occupy the ground floor of the new residential block. No decision has been made on this.

Q. What about the Anti-social behaviour in the Sunken Gardens - will the same happen in the new park?

The Council has put considerable effort and resources into tackling issues within and surrounding the Sunken Gardens. These relate in the main, to street drinking, anti-social behaviour and rough sleeping. Critical to our success has been proactive partnership working with a wide variety of different agencies including the police, homelessness charities (Stonepillow) and integrated responses from Community Safety, Housing and the Parks teams.

Incidents of anti-social behaviour have decreased significantly over the last five years. The Arun Street Community Outreach Keyworker has been successful in re-housing the majority of rough sleepers / street community individuals who previously frequented the Sunken Gardens on an almost daily basis. Through their intervention and support, these individuals are no longer committing crime or involved in anti-social behaviour.

Where appropriate we also take enforcement action to disrupt and deter street drinking. The Council agreed to impose a Public Spaces Protection Order that gives relevant officers the power to confiscate alcohol from those behaving anti-socially and this has also been used to address street drinking both in Sunken Gardens and in the town centre.

Working effectively in partnership with other agencies we have been able to respond to these problems and find resolutions.

From the work we have undertaken to date, we have consistently observed that the current layout of the Sunken Gardens is cut off from plain sight, inaccessible to many people by virtue of stepped access and off the main routes of footfall, reducing the natural surveillance that the presence of people brings and thus encourages anti-social behaviour.

Our experience of working within varying types of public areas, including parks, is that by improving accessibility so that the areas are well used by the wider community has a positive effect in reducing anti-social behaviour and particularly street drinking: improving natural surveillance and removing hidden corners where people can congregate and remain unseen all have a beneficial impact in reducing problematic behaviours.

Q. Is it safe to have a park near a car park?

There is no potential conflict for vehicles and children within the park as the footpath separate the cars. These will have a raised kerb edges and it will not be possible to simply run across unwittingly.

There is now a process that will be followed as per the RIBA stages and this will include all necessary discussions with statutory bodies and other relevant organisations including adjoining owners, fire and safety, ROSPA with regard to children's play and design related to adjacent parking and car movements. There will also be all the detailed survey work undertaken etc. to inform the final designs, parking numbers etc. This work will be undertaken in conjunction with council officers and the forthcoming planning application will be subject to further public consultation.

Further design features can also be included to add to the safety measures such as -

- The crossing points act as rumble strips to slow traffic and can be detailed to be raised further slowing traffic and giving pedestrian priority
- Areas of planting reduce the roadway to one-way in places to slow traffic and further modelling of traffic speed/flow and visibility would be undertaken at the next stage.
- The play has been combined with the 'green oasis' with planting to the edges to create a soft boundary to the site - there is no location within the play area where running out from the play area would take you directly into the roadway.

Q. Will there be a Wind Tunneling affect between the proposed new tall buildings?

Detailed wind tunnel studies will be carried out further into the project.

Q. When did the Council decide to do the new regeneration proposals?

KEY DATES AND DECISIONS

January 2018 – Full Council – Hothamton Linear Park Regeneration proposals – approval of the design proposals for the new park and next steps.

March 2017 – Full Council - The Regis Centre and Hothamton Car Parks feasibility studies update – this report considered the options for the development of the sites and master plan options.