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Subject: Queen Edith's Community Meeting - Statement

Date: Tue, 12 Jul 2016 09:39:17 +0000

Hi Sam,

I understand you have been in contact with Nicola in my office; thank you for explaining the situation. At this early stage, I am in a similar position to you in terms of needing to gather further information so would be grateful if you could forward the notes of your meeting to me. Given that some of the proposals sit within the City rather than my constituency of South Cambridgeshire, I would recommend also contacting Daniel Zeichner. You may already be doing this.

It's great that the residents of Queen Edith's are gathering in a Community Forum to consider the proposals for their local area over the next few years.

Meetings like this are an important way to disseminate information and for residents to discuss planning proposals that could impact their community.

Queen Edith's is under consideration or involved in proposals for business development, housing development and transport development. Cambridge and the surrounding area is a growing aspirational region but we must balance the need for growth with the preservation of our unique heritage and way of life.

Strong growth places pressures on housing, workplaces and infrastructure which the Local Plan is seeking to address. While the Local Plan is still under review, we are inevitably open to speculative planning applications. However, it that does not necessarily mean they will be approved. The existing local plans are still in place and councils can also use the National Planning Policy Framework to determine applications. Although the NPPF has a presumption in favour of development it can and is used to reject planning applications where the development is deemed unsuitable. Even if planning applications are approved, they DO NOT set a precedence. Each individual application must be considered on its individual merits.

If residents feel any planning proposal will adversely affect their ward, I would encourage them to use the community engagement and statutory feedback process. Resident feedback plays an important part in this process and your views matter. If you wish to have an impact, please make sure your voice is

heard. If you have concerns about individual planning applications, there are two things you must do.

1. Register your objections with the planning department. Details of how to register your comment can be found here: www.scambs.gov.uk/services/planning

2. Make your views known to your local district councillors. For a full list of district councillors and their contact details please see here: www.democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?FN=WARD&VW=LIST&PIC=0

As it is the planning committee rather than me who determine applications, it is vital the planning department and your local councillors are made aware of your views. Equally, if you feel planning officers are not asking the right questions nor seeking the right information about proposals (traffic surveys, sustainability appraisals), your councillors are your voice within the council. Please contact them first, and encourage them to contact the leader of the City Council Cllr Lewis Herbert or then me if they are not receiving satisfactory answers.

I have found over recent months that the most useful and appropriate time for me to add my weight is at appeal time. So far, our planning committee have in my opinion done an excellent job of turning down applications that are not sustainable or welcome. If these have then subsequently gone to appeal, I have added my support through a letter to the Inspector. Touch wood, so far, nothing unwanted has been granted permission. Given the risks associated with an overly zealous MP crying wolf too often, I think it right that I intervene only at appeal stage.

I hope that is helpful, and please be assured I will be reviewing the minutes of this meeting in order to better understand the changes proposed for Queen Edith's.

Best wishes,

Heidi Allen MP

Member of Parliament for South Cambridgeshire