

Collation of Public Consultation at BCA BVH Tues 18th July 2006

After the Developer Roundtable where the original BCA response to Cabinet was discussed with the Developer including emergency services access, disabled access/housing location at the town end of the development, pavement/undercroft parking, linkages between sites and the wider town, environmental & leisure issues, infrastructure issues, please find attached scans of written consultation, comments received, together with overall summary below, including some previously unrecorded comments:

1. Sketches incomplete, inconsistent and lacking sufficient clarity/detail on the sectional views from the town and allotments perspectives of the site and must not be approved as is
2. High profile site needs more imaginative design and "active" effective energy saving measures built in above current Borough Guidelines
3. Monument not Landmark Building
4. Design details inconsistent and unsympathetic to Brookvale
5. Design doesn't reflect Conservation Area character, needs Victorian style houses and Georgian style flats
6. High Rise doesn't compliment Conservation Area
7. Doesn't take into account Brook House redevelopment
8. Social Housing mixed not zoned
9. Residents Gate VH Phase 1 to 2 alongside allotment boundary fence enabling walking/disabled access to Brookvale
10. More "natural" open space needed
11. No Community facilities within the site
12. Site should be left as Nature Reserve
13. Dangerous for children near high speed road, needs bridge
14. Disabled access issues with the site linkages
15. Traffic Lights not necessary for car RHT
16. Move marketing focus from traffic lights RHT to energy saving desirability
17. Lower Speed Limit
18. Traffic Lights for Pedestrian Crossing with traffic calming
19. Bridge if no crossing
20. Traffic noise reduction
21. Prevent rat runs
22. Schooling where?
23. Poppies?
24. Slow Worms?
25. Allotment Shadow
26. Development generates need for rabbit proof fence for the allotment
27. Agreement/Provision to publicise allotments within the development to encourage allotment use/uptake
28. Original allotment soil to be retained for site green areas and communal green space/gardens
29. Park facilities to be also available for use by surrounding area, especially VH Phase1
30. No benefit to Brookvale with already overloaded infrastructure
31. Another development stressing further Brookvale flaky electric, water, sewerage infrastructure.

32. S106 money for Brookvale/VH PH1 infrastructure improvement?
33. No provision for waste recycling or its minimisation
34. No energy initiatives described in these sketches:
 - * Line of turbines on railway embankment to contribute offpeak electric back into grid
 - * Grey/rainwater collection tank(s) for flushing loos in the flatted buildings
 - * Solar collectors to help with water heating in the flatted buildings
 - * Photovoltaics to help with lighting
 - * Combined heat/power generation for the site gaining economy of scale in energy bills and supply continuity/future proofing

Ongoing Work:

- * Collating hall user comments on the planboards display in the hall
- * Working on ROI for the headline energy initiatives for submission to Developer
- * Working on open space issues which will need further community involvement
- * Developer providing more detailed sketches which will need further dissemination and comment

Other comments received:

- 1) At the 30th June meeting, the Developer was requested, and agreed, to show in outline on the plans the TRUE disposition of all the Victory Hill blocks. He also offered to provide a NE-SW cross-section through the proposed "Focal Point" block which will demonstrate clearly the sightline and visual effect of the proposal at the eastern end. The three illustrative designs submitted to Councillor Shaw - date of submission not clear - do NOT carry these modifications and are in fact misleading as they suggest that the proposed Focal Point block lies clear to the east of the Victory Hill development, which of course it does not. So we wish to see these corrections made.
- 2) We do not consider that the BDDC's original Strategy Plan objective of Focal Point buildings at the extremities of the proposed development are relevant any more. The Strategy Plan did not take account of the Victory Hill development nor, apparently the Brook House redevelopment, both of which render a Focal Point block on the Churchill Way East development irrelevant and misplaced. Therefore we consider that the high-rise should be concentrated in the centre and west of the development leaving low-rise in front of Victory Hill.

WHY, WHY, WHY, must we accept such mediocrity? If this development were a car it'd be a Daihatsu; it might get the job done but it looks just awful! If it were a plate of food, Gordon Ramsay might well deem it to be a bowl of effing slop!

Thanks you for the invitation to respond to the pre-application presentation provided for the Old Allotment Site. I would like to say that I wholly support the development of this site in principal and see it as a great opportunity. Sadly, the current proposals are so mundane and characterless I would like to see the scheme vigorously opposed and respond the pertinent 'key benefits' as follows:

1. *Responds successfully to mixed character of the surrounding built environment in terms of its high quality inclusive design, scale and appearance.*
 - a. This is a landmark development site and probably the most visible within Basingstoke. It presents an incredible opportunity to develop a unique, inspirational scheme of outstanding design quality and present an image to the outside world of a 'place to be proud of'.
 - b. Basingstoke suffers severely from a lack of quality, character and identity in its Built Environment which contributes significantly to its 'down at heel' reputation.
 - c. Given the site's visual prominence and landmark status, the ordinary and mediocre appearance of this development, principally of the landmark and gateway buildings, is nothing short of dire and wholly unimaginative. We live in the 21st century and are a nation that has a plethora of world class architects and designers producing great works both in this country and abroad. To ignore these skills and propose yet more dull, pattern-book pseudo-vernacular housing driven by an unimaginative Developer is no longer acceptable.
 - d. Given the Council's absence of a Design Guru and limited visual vocabulary in driving this project forward, I would suggest the following websites for perusal and identify simply what quality can be achieved on development site like these (go to their respective 'housing' sections).

<http://www.architectureplb.com>

<http://www.feildenclegg.com>

<http://www.architype.co.uk/housing.html>

<http://www.levittbernstein.co.uk/projects/newhousing.html>

<http://www.zedfactory.com/bedzed/bedzed.html>

2. *Incorporates sustainable design solutions, (where possible) by the use of renewable building materials, natural solar gain and as a result, seeks to meet the 'very good' Eco-homes rating.*
 - a. Where possible?!?! With a scheme of this size, prominence and importance Sustainability should be a strategic factor influencing the every aspect of the design from the outset not just "where possible". i.e. where it doesn't eat into the developer's bottom line.
 - b. An Eco-homes 'very-good' standard is relatively easy to achieve with all but lip-service. There is no doubt that on this south-facing, sloping site an Eco-homes rating of 'Excellent' rating must be achieved and a Condition of the planning consent to prove that Basingstoke & Deane means business when it comes to matters of the environment; 'very good' is a cop-out.
 - c. Once these environmental matters are properly considered, the ever more complex environmental and technical requirements of modern housing can begin to inform the appearance of the buildings much more directly to create an appropriate contemporary aesthetic; not this drab semi-rural housing resplendent in concrete roof tiles, low-quality facing bricks and acres of uPVC.

In summary, this development on such a visible site contributes nothing to the Built Environment of Basingstoke. It is a faceless development with no unique sense of character and could as well be in Slough or Hull as in Basingstoke. Come on guys, show some passion and care for the reputation and quality of this town, give us some identity and reject the proposals and demand something worthy of appreciation.