

Town Centre Area Action Plan Issues and Options **A Summary of the Consultation Responses**

BOUNDARY

There is a preference for option 1 (use the same Town Centre boundary as the Local Plan 2003). It was selected by 28% of respondents. It was closely followed by option 3, which was chosen by 22% of respondents (use the Local Plan 2003 boundary but include growth to the north along Woodbridge Road).

Initial comments suggest that it would have been useful to list the advantages and disadvantages of each boundary option.

HOUSING

There is a clear preference for option 1 as it was selected by 60% of respondents (provide more housing in the town centre), oppose to option 2, which was selected by 24% (retain the existing amount of housing).

In terms of providing more housing in the Town Centre, there is general agreement with all the options suggested, however, there is a certain amount of disagreement with the proposed method of delivering high density housing in the Town Centre, stemming from concern about overcrowding and increased traffic.

TOWN CENTRE FACILITIES

There is no clear preference for either option 1 (increase the existing level of services and facilities in the Town Centre) or option 2 (resist the loss of services and facilities in the Town Centre).

When asked which services and facilities there should be more of in the Town Centre, health and welfare e.g. doctors surgeries were chosen as the most important closely followed by cultural, leisure and health/welfare facilities.

The initial comments received suggest that more pubs/clubs/casinos would not be welcome in the Town Centre, however, more food shops would be.

ENVIRONMENT

There is a clear preference for option 1 (increase protection of the Town Centre's historic and physical environment). It was selected by 65% of respondents.

There is general agreement with all of the methods proposed to achieve option 1.

OFFICES

There is a clear preference for option 3 (reduce the amount of by releasing some existing office space for housing and other uses). It was selected by 65% of respondents.

SHOPPING

There is a preference for option 2 by 46% of respondents (retain existing level of shopping facilities, allowing for the Friary extension). The quarter that did select option 1 (provide more shopping facilities in addition to those planned for the Friary Centre extension) agreed with the proposed methods of achieving this, apart from with no. 6 (provide additional larger shops) to which there was a significant level of disagreement.

MOVEMENT

The preferred options to reduce congestion and improve movement are safer walking initiatives and more Park and Ride facilities. There was disagreement with options 2 (provide more cycle lanes) and option 4 (encourage minimum on-site parking in new developments).

There is a vast range of comments which have been received on this subject. There are conflicting views about park and ride and cycle lanes. There is definite recognition of a serious movement problem in Guildford, with a variety of proposed solutions ranging from congestion charging, a light mini rail service and all children travelling to school on busses.

TOURISM

There is a clear preference for option 1 (seek to enhance the Town Centre's role as a quality tourist destination). It was selected by 55% of respondents. There is general agreement with both options proposed to achieve this, however the comments made suggest improvements to the walking route from the station to the Town Centre, better advisement of and signs to the Tourist Information Centre and a need for more quality and middle range hotels. A few respondents queried the notion of 'providing more attractions', commenting that 'Guildford is what it is'.

OTHER ISSUES & OPTIONS

Many respondents have raised the issue of bars/clubs/casinos in Guildford, and have stressed that Guildford does not need any more. Many respondents have noted their desire to have an Arts Centre in Guildford. The issue of movement across the Town Centre has resulted in many respondents expressing concern over congestion and parking facilities.

OTHER SUGGESTED SITES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Many respondents have stated that they do not wish to see any more development in Guildford beyond the major sites already known, as they fear for the character of the Town Centre. Possible areas suggested include; around Woolworths, Walnut Tree Close/Woodbridge Meadow and the George Abbott car park by the River Wey.

ANY OTHER COMMENTS

These mainly focus on the themes already raised, especially in relation to movement. There are a great variety of comments.