LONDON BOROUGH OF SUTTON
QUESTIONS: STANDING ORDER 8.13

1. Question asked by Councillor Tom Drummond to Councillor Manuel Abellan, Chair of the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee

At 11:55pm on 4th March 2019, the Heathrow Airspace and Future Operations Consultation was officially closed.

In our neighboring borough, the Epsom and Ewell Council closely analysed the consultation documents. Council leaders, including the Chair of Epsom’s Environment Committee were deeply concerned and submitted a robust, deeply critical response. This response can be read on-line and provides complete transparency as to their view point. I noted from their response a number of interesting points:

• The increase in air traffic volumes combined with a lowering in height from around 7,000 feet to just 3,000 or even 2,000 feet from the ground.
• A four or five-fold increase in sound intensity from overflying aircraft.
• The resulting increase in air pollution, and adverse effect on air quality, identifying harmful pollutants within in aviation fuel.

It is clear to me reading this response, Epsom and Ewell’s residents have been well represented, just as they should be.

I can not find an equivalent submission on the Sutton council website. My search of ‘Heathrow’ results in only historic documents being found. There seems to be nothing relating to the consultation.

Since the window for submissions has closed, can you advise what if any response has been submitted by the London Borough of Sutton?

If a response has been submitted, please forward it and advise where it is on-line for the residents to read?

Response from Councillor Manuel Abellan

The Council submitted a response to the Heathrow consultation on Monday 4 March and published the response on its website on Wednesday 6 March. An abridged and full copy of the Council’s response is available at:

https://www.sutton.gov.uk/news/article/361/heathrow_airport_proposed_expansion
2. Question asked by Kerrie Peek to Councillor Jayne McCoy, Chair of the Housing, Economy & Business Committee

With H+M finally opening and another coffee shop opening soon do you have any other plans to fill the empty units on the high street and what are your plans to keep people shopping on Sutton High Street when Croydon Westfield opens.

Response from Councillor McCoy

I would refer you initially to my response to your question about bringing shoppers back to Sutton High Street put to the January council meeting as it references the work being done to ensure empty properties are put to good use:

I am really pleased that you have asked this question. There is a lot of understandable concern about the future of high streets across the UK, and here in Sutton there has been a huge amount of work going on for some time. However this work doesn't always get talked about as it is often 'behind the scenes' and ongoing.

There are three key strands of work covering the short term, the medium term and the longer term.

For the longer term we have a Town Centre Masterplan. This looks at major redevelopment and the infrastructure of the town centre and what is required to meet the needs of the high street of the future. We know that online retail has completely changed the way people shop, and what they want from their high street. The demand now is for more leisure activities, experiences and events. Our Masterplan is timely as we are able to plan ahead for that change. Increasing housing in the town centre will also bring more consumers to our high street, and if we can get the Tram here it will help even more.

This longer term focus has already led to the change in ownership of the St Nicholas Centre; the redevelopment of Times Square and its purchase by Sports Direct; the redevelopment of the Empire Cinema; H&M taking over the BHS site and developer interest in many of the key sites in the town centre.

In the medium term the council has used its Investment Portfolio to attract and retain businesses that will ensure a vibrant high street. The council already owns a number of properties in the high street so it can help ensure we retain good quality businesses. It can also invest in new properties to prevent them being left empty or under occupied as it has done with the BHS and RBS buildings. There are also exciting plans afoot to revitalise existing spaces.
In the short term we encouraged the set up of the Town Centre Business Improvement District called Successful Sutton. It is known that places with BIDs tend to have more resilient and vibrant town centres. The BID supports local businesses and retailers, ensures the area is attractive for shoppers and has been responsible for all the major events such as the Christmas light switch on, seasonal markets and the fantastic Big Bang event. These events are key attractors for shoppers and are supported by the local shops and businesses. The BID also helps to market Sutton as a place for business and investment and have been great partners for the council in recent years.

In addition, I can advise that the Council works with landlords of vacant shops to encourage ‘meanwhile’ and long-term use and speaks directly with retailers to encourage them to locate in the High Street. To support the continuing vibrancy of the High Street, the Council seeks to maintain full occupancy in the properties it owns and it also acquires property when it can make an impact and it is prudent to do so.

In respect of the Westfield development, if and when it does take place, we do not see this as having a significant impact on Sutton town centre. Our neighbouring boroughs of Croydon and Kingston have always had a major town centre retail offer but Sutton has been able to hold its own against this competition. Studies have shown that Sutton town centre has a loyal customer base who only venture to other more substantive shopping centres on occasion. Sutton’s offer is that it is safe, of ‘human scale’ and parking is easy and cheap.

3. Question asked by Charlie Mansell to Councillor Jayne McCoy, Chair of the Housing, Economy & Business Committee

What land in the borough has been de-designated as Metropolitan Open Land and Green Belt through development of Local Plan Policy over the last 5 years and in listing this can it be set out what the land's current designation now is in planning terms?

Response from Councillor McCoy

The following land has been de-designated from the Green Belt in the past five years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land De-designated</th>
<th>Reason for De-designation</th>
<th>New Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential properties on Roman Way, Lawson Way, Kenny Drive and Burns Close (-9.3ha)</td>
<td>Council considered that the current use did not represent Green Belt.</td>
<td>The area had been in residential use for approximately 15 years. Previously it was developed land in the Green Belt, being the nurses' home for Queen Mary Hospital.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Council's preferred option was to have the Green Belt designation wash over the site so that it could revert to Green Belt if not required for a Gypsy and Traveller site in the future.

The following land has been de-designated from Metropolitan Open Land in the past five years:

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<tr>
<td>Land West of Beddington Lane (-4.4ha)</td>
<td>Inspector’s Change. The council argued vehemently against its de-designation at the Local Plan Examination-in-Public.</td>
<td>Industrial Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former All-Weather Pitch and Part of the Tennis Centre (-2.6ha)</td>
<td>Inspector’s Change. The council’s preferred option was to have the MOL designation wash over the site so it could revert to MOL if a school was not required in the very long-term.</td>
<td>Currently built development in MOL. New use: Secondary School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following land has been designated MOL in the past five years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Designated</th>
<th>Reason for Designation</th>
<th>New Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land at Mayflower Park (+1.4ha)</td>
<td>The Hamptons development provided more open space than originally anticipated.</td>
<td>Public Open Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land at Grove Park (+0.7ha)</td>
<td>A playing field previously used by a school has been incorporated into the park.</td>
<td>Public Open Space</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following land has been designated as either Public Open Space or Urban Green Space (green space which is not freely accessible to the public):
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<table>
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<td>Mayflower Park (all of the park, +12.4ha)</td>
<td>Park creation following The Hamptons development.</td>
<td>Public Open Space (already most of it was MOL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land at Grove Park (+0.7ha)</td>
<td>A playing field previously used by a school has been incorporated into the park.</td>
<td>Public Open Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen Mary’s Park (+8.5ha)</td>
<td>Park creation following nearby residential development.</td>
<td>Public Open Space (already Green Belt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beddington Farmlands - Wandle Valley Regional Park (+44ha)</td>
<td>Park creation following the cessation of landfill operations.</td>
<td>Public Open Space (already MOL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beddington Farmlands - Wandle Valley Regional Park (+68ha)</td>
<td>Habitat creation following the cessation of landfill operations.</td>
<td>Urban Green Space (already MOL)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The Hackbridge Primary School on Land North of BedZED, Hackbridge has the MOL designation washing over it as the Inspector forgot to order it be taken off.

4. **Question asked by Charlie Mansell to Councillor Ruth Dombey, Leader of the Council**

In view of the comment at paragraph 1.13.19 on page 35 of the Epsom and St Helier Trust Report: *Two Year operating Plan 2017/18 and 2018/19 - Refresh 2018-19* which says "St Helier site - when the renal facility has been re-provided we would like to demolish these buildings. This will enable us to sell surplus land for high density housing. This land sale could be scheduled for 2019/20.", will she indicate what discussions the Council has had with the Trust or its agents in terms of land ownership and planning status of the site or, if not, whether any are planned; and in doing so will she set out clearly to the public what is the Council policy towards a potential sale of any land there of which Sutton Council is the long-term freehold owner setting out whether the Council opposes such a sale of land and also of any change to the land's current planning status?

Link to the Epsom and St Helier Trust report is here and a copy is also attached [https://www.epsom-sthelier.nhs.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jijm4n9057.pdf&ver=22233](https://www.epsom-sthelier.nhs.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jijm4n9057.pdf&ver=22233)

Response from Councillor Dombey
The Sutton Local Plan (adopted in 2018) identified St. Helier Hospital as Site Allocation S55 and allocated it for “Health.” As the allocation shows, the Council expects development to take the form of:

- improving healthcare available to residents
- improving access to and from Wrythe Lane
- utilising car parking facilities more efficiently
- incorporating Tramlink/Sutton Link into the design and layout of the site

The Epsom and St Helier Trust objected to the allocation in the Draft Local Plan (Representations, see page 84). However, the Council and the Inspector at the Local Plan Examination-in-Public dismissed the objection. As a result, I can confirm that the land, under the current Local Plan, cannot be developed for housing.