

Highfield Road Car Park

Public Consultation



Please note this drawing is a concept only

Contents

Introduction	3
Key site information	4
Fakenham Town Council survey	6
Highfield Road potential layout	7

North Norfolk District Council is proposing the sale of Highfield Road Car Park. How can any money received be used to attract future investment into Fakenham and boost its economy? That's the question we would like your views on.

North Norfolk District Council (NNDC) wants to retain and improve services for the community; at the same time we are faced with a £2.2 million reduction in Revenue Support Grant from the Government over the next five years. Given the financial situation the District Council is looking at how we can best use land and property assets we own to benefit the whole community.

NNDC has to live within its means and the financial climate means other sources of income have to be found to ensure public services can be delivered in the future. By 2020 the District Council's grant from government will be down to zero and the District Council has no wish to ask Council Tax payers to make up this difference. This

means NNDC, working with the community, has to find ways to pay for the services it delivers.

In 2016 NNDC appointed a strategic property company to review owned land and property to see what opportunities there may be to improve facilities for the community and raise an income for public services.

As part of this approach the Council is proposing to advertise Highfield Road Car Park in Fakenham for sale for residential development to provide accommodation for over-55s.

This leaflet outlines the reasons why the Council believes this development may be the best option for the site and asks for your views on the proposals and what we should do with the money raised from any sale.



Highfield Road Car Park - Key Site Information

Site Information

- 0.36 hectare site off Highfield Road
- It is an unsurfaced free car park
- It is 600 metres north of the town centre
- It has a 1970s toilet block
- It is in a residential area
- Costs of maintenance and insurance are paid by the District Council

Car Parking

NNDC believes there is sufficient parking in Fakenham to meet demand. NNDC has protected car parking in Fakenham town centre. Current parking is available at:

- Tescos on Oak Street (247 spaces) for customers and shoppers with time restrictions
- Aldi on Norwich Road (102 spaces) for customers and shoppers with time restrictions
- Free shoppers car parks with time restrictions at Millers Walk/White Horse Street

- Aldiss Store on Oxborough Lane
- Bridge Street Pay and Display (96 spaces)
- Queens Road Pay and Display (114 spaces)
- The Limes Pay and Display (119 spaces)
- Fakenham Community Centre on Oak Street (23 spaces)

Current Use

The Highfield Road Car Park is not particularly well used. Current users are thought to be people working in the town centre, local residents who may not have private or on-street parking close to their homes and students at Fakenham College.



Options

a) Charging to park on Highfield Road

Car parking charges could be introduced on the site. The District Council believes that if charges were introduced people would choose to park elsewhere in the town. Also, with Fakenham College moving to Field Lane, it is expected that fewer students would choose to park on the Highfield Road site.

Discounted: This would not be value for money for Council Tax payers and residents.

b) Commercial vehicle parking hub

Fakenham Town Council has suggested that the site is currently used by commercial vehicles, buses, coaches, HGVs and market traders. Coach parking is provided by the District Council in Sheringham and Cromer, for which charges are levied.

Coach Parking

NNDC does support the business community's wish to attract more coach passengers to Fakenham, e.g. the town could be an additional stop for people visiting Thursford Christmas Show. However, the District Council thinks that coach passengers would prefer to be dropped off in the centre of town and then picked up later. Coaches could then park at the Racecourse or at Fakenham Sports Centre.

Since the height restriction barrier was put in place at the Highfield Road Car Park in 2016 the District Council has not received any comment directly from visiting coach or local bus companies complaining about the restricted access.

Lorry Parking

Lorry Parking is not provided at any location in the district by the Council and given that the car park is in a residential area and HGVs cause damage to the car park surface it is not thought this would be an appropriate use of this car park.

Transport Hub

Some local residents have suggested that the site could be developed as a bus station, along with new public toilets and a café or shop. However, it is not known how such a development would be financed or whether bus companies would use it. For a transport hub to be viable the District Council believes it would need to be in the centre of a town and this is not the right location.

If shops were to be built on the site the Council believes they would not be viable – partly because other shops are standing empty on Oak Street, and the former Wells Road Post Office and Budgens store has been vacant for a number of months. The site is too far from the town centre to make this option attractive.

Discounted: This would not be value for money for Council Tax payers and residents.

Residential Development – Preferred Option

Commercial advisors have said that the site is under-used, is an ongoing cost to Council Tax payers and that such sites are attractive to developers of residential sites for the over-55s.

The District Council believes this is a good idea because:

- This is mainly a residential area, so it would be sensible to provide more homes here
- A residential development would fit within the planning policies
- There is demand for homes for people aged over 55 years of age.
- There are a number of developers looking for sites to build homes for the over-55s. Developers are looking at sites in North Norfolk currently and

the Council is confident that developers of older persons housing would be interested in this location

- Such developments help to boost the local economy with people shopping locally. It is estimated that 45 apartments would see an annual expenditure of approximately £650,000 in the local economy

Issue – Residents parking on Highfield Road

People living in homes on Church Lane traditionally used the area to park.

The Council is proposing a formal agreement with these residents which will provide an access road to enable parking at this location to continue.

Fakenham Town Council Survey

NNDC understands there are concerns about the loss of parking. Fakenham Town Council recently carried out a survey in the Market Place and on the Town Council website in the Spring asking people for their opinions. The results were reported to the Town Council on the 13 June 2017 and a further survey of users was agreed in July to canvass users of the car park.

The District Council believes people were asked to give their view without knowing the context to the proposals and understanding that car parking charges might be introduced.

From 2012 to 2014 the Town Council had responsibility for the operation and management of the car park. The Town Council handed the car park management back to the District Council because of the high maintenance costs of operating a free car park, and the fact it represented poor value for money for Fakenham Town Council Tax payers. Such a position also applies to District Council Tax payers.

NNDC is therefore asking for people to give their views on this proposal once they have had the opportunity to see the full range of options.

Questions:

If you are a resident, shopper, visitor or business owner with an interest in Fakenham we would like your views and thoughts on the proposal to sell the Highfield Road Car Park for development:

- 1 If the land is redeveloped how would you like the money to be invested in Fakenham and the wider district?
The capital receipt from the sale of the land could be used to put towards creating start-up offices in the area for businesses and/or improve public toilets at the Bridge Street and Queens Road Car Parks, or improved facilities for the district as a whole. Which option would you prefer?

- 2 Do you think that drivers would park in the car park if charges are introduced? Yes/No
- 3 Could the area be developed into a transport hub? If yes, how could it be funded and who will pay for the ongoing operating costs?
- 4 Do you have any other suggestions for how the land could be used?

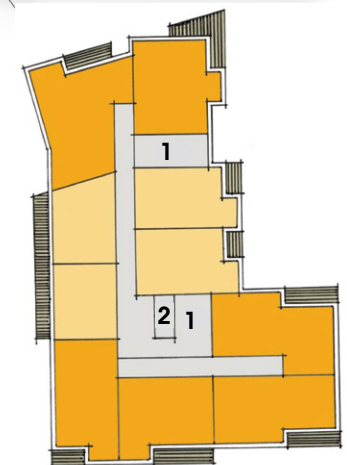
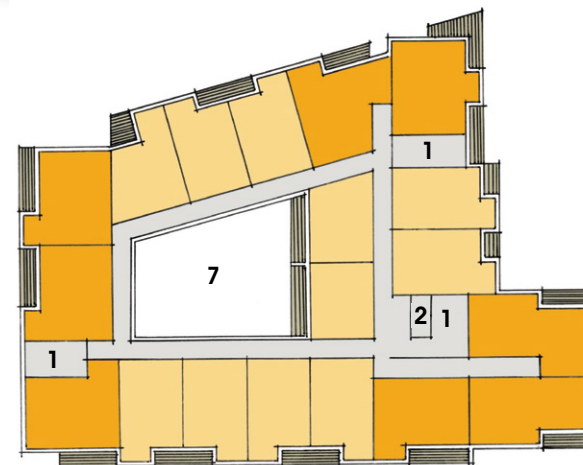
Your views are important to us and we welcome any comments or thoughts on the proposals.

You can:

- respond to the survey online if you prefer by visiting: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Highfieldcp
- email: haveyoursay@north-norfolk.gov.uk
- write to: **NNDC, Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer NR27 9EN.**

**Closing date for comments:
Friday 29th September 2017 at 5pm**

Highfield Road Potential Layout



Key to plan

- | | | |
|-------------|----------|---|
| One bedroom | 1 Stairs | 5 Entrance |
| Two bedroom | 2 Lifts | 6 Landscaped courtyard |
| Circulation | 3 Refuse | 7 Void over landscaped courtyard |
| | 4 Lobby | 8 Potential car parking for Church Lane residents |

Contacts



01263 513 811



haveyoursay@north-norfolk.gov.uk



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