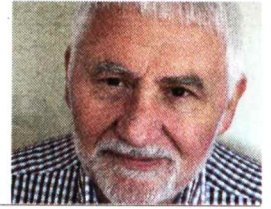


Horsham Society

with Malcolm Willis



Have your say before it is too late

Horsham District Council is in the process of finalising its Horsham Town Centre Vision Statement and has asked for the public's views. This is a major document which will guide the council for the next ten to fifteen years.

A public consultation earlier this year looked at the following key points:

Town centre strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

How to address current and future issues.

Strategic plans for the town centre.

Opportunities and potential development.

Enhancing the Bishopric.

As a result of this consultation HDC is now asking for our views on the draft Vision before finalising the document in November. It is available online and makes interesting reading.

However, it is 97 pages long and that doesn't include the associated documents detailing the responses to earlier consultation. It contains many facts and figures with some interesting suggestions for the town's future. A lot of research



An artist's impression of a light stack, one of the ideas for town centre improvements.

and thought have gone into this. It would have been nice if the council had provided an overview, summarising each area with key points and the possible stages of development. This I am sure would enable a broader spectrum of replies and have kept the wider public informed of the Town Vision.

If you don't have the capacity for the whole document, then at least read the last seven pages. This includes the conclusion

and the delivery schedule. Here you will see proposed next steps and, importantly, those partner organisations that the council intends to work with.

The Horsham Society has been referenced on a number of occasions and we will continue to monitor and advise as this process develops. The society does this on other plans affecting the future of our town with the aim of achieving the best possible outcome from any development.

A good example of Horsham Society's involvement in planning was when the Puries Place car park was originally built. The society suggested that HDC used the concept of screening the car park through the building of Burtons Court. This worked well and we hope that the same principle will be used with its redevelopment.

We are concerned about the height of this development, and the subsequent visual impact upon the Carfax and its surroundings, and call upon the planners to ensure that this does not impact upon our historic buildings.

We were not successful in objecting to the location of the ice rink. We agree that an ice rink is a good idea, but in the park? There is a great deal of concern that this

is the start of further encroachment into our beautiful green spaces, leading to a permanent hardstanding.

A real positive here, however, is the formation of the 'New Friends of Horsham Park'. Through members of the public speaking out there is now a group who will, I am sure, watch vigilantly over any developments in this area.

You may then ask whether you should bother to comment on the new consultation if others are already doing it. Yes, do so and tell your friends to take part. Public voice matters and can make a difference. You have until October 16th to comment, to be part of the decision making and have an impact upon the future of our town. HDC has asked for your view, don't miss this opportunity.

Horsham Town Vision Statement can be found on the following link: socs.in/kQOkg

The Horsham Society is concerned about the past, present and future of the town. It seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces. Membership of the Horsham Society is open to anyone who shares these concerns. For more information, visit the website www.horshamsociety.org or phone 01403 259038.