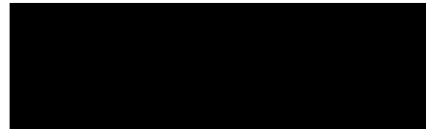


Linda Ford
Programme Officer



FOXIDENTON HOUSING

7 June 2011

You asked me to write about the reference to the Chadderton District Partnership. I was concerned that the impression was being given by the council that the issue had been analysed by that body and that the housing allocation was part of the 10% of the overall allocation for Chadderton.

1. In February 2009, an LDF exhibition was held at the entrance to the partnership meeting. I could see no reference to the development of Foxdenton at that exhibition which was at Kingfisher school on Foxdenton lane.

At the same meeting, the then Regeneration officer Ruth Billingham addressed the meeting for 15 minutes on the regeneration of Chadderton and Foxdenton was not mentioned.

2. The proposed development seems to have arisen from ORESA (Oldham and Rochdale Economy and Skill Alliance) which had a prospectus signed off by the two council leaders. It took me approximately six weeks to obtain a copy of this document. ORESA is an offshoot of the Oldham Partnership and as the Chadderton representative on that group, I reported back to the Partnership. The exact discussion was as follows:

Self "I turn now to Foxdenton"

Cllr Hibbert Chairman - "I don't want to hear about Foxdenton".

Self "But it is important."

Cllr Hibbert "No. Next item."

3. As a result of this exchange, I asked the press to run a story which they did in October when Cllr Hibbert pointed out that there were no development proposals at that time.

Any sub committees report back to the main committee and any Foxdenton discussion has not come before the Partnership. All the meetings are recorded by Angela Langsdon who is the council's Neighbourhood Manager and the position can be verified by reference to the past minutes.

4. The lack of discussion is in contrast to the Saddleworth section of the plan which was debated by the parish Council in a special meeting and mentioned again in two other meetings.

I trust this dispels any impression that the allocations have been analysed and agreed. I think the fact that no councillors have attended the inquiry indicates their lack of awareness.

5. The plan itself lists Foxdenton on p152 "which will have a small amount of ancillary residential development to facilitate bringing forward the infrastructure requirements of the employment site".

The 25% of the site mentioned at the inquiry amounts to 11 hectares which could equate to 500 houses depending on density. In addition the last page summarising the comments received contains a request that further land should be allocated for housing at Horseshoe Lane as an extension to this site.

Earlier papers which no longer appear to be on exhibition mentioned that developers were pressing for 40% of the site to be allocated for housing.

6. No doubt the council will consult at the master plan stage. It will then only be possible to move the pieces around the board rather than comment on the principle.

7. The council said that warehousing was required to suit the requirements for a prestige headquarters. The Rochdale plan seeks redevelopment of the Vitafoam site two miles away at Mills Hill. They have corporate headquarters, manufacturing and a distribution depot where the wagons leave at 4am. Lorry ban notices are currently painted over and take effect on 1 December (subject to the legal objection process). I do not know whether there is a done deal, but developers do not normally purchase 45 hectares without a user in mind. The housing element seems to be included to make the rest of the site marketable rather than arising from any scientific analysis of housing need agreed with the District Partnership.

Yours faithfully



Eric Trigg