

# St Mary's Lands Q&A Session

Monday 25 September 2017, Warwick Town Council

## Hotel

- 1. Do you agree that the most contentious item is the hotel? The land for the hotel is owned by the public and to sell it would be like selling off the family silver.**

Warwick District Council has owned the land since 1974 and hasn't proposed to sell any land. It will need to consider whether this is an option, but it is not the only option.

- 2. Would a hotel have a negative impact upon the views and character of St Mary's Lands?**

A hotel proposal will have its own business plan and a feasibility study undertaken at the time. The Council will look at what form the hotel will take and judge its impact physically – there are a lot of stages to go through yet.

- 3. Have you thought of other places to put the hotel?**

Yes Barrack Street is not WDC's and is not free until 2020 at least. The Stable block car park has been considered but it is likely to be too small and too distant from the town centre, visitors want to stay in the town centre rather than near Junction 15.

- 4. What scrutiny has been made of the two reports on the hotel?**

The Working Party received the reports before the Council saw them. All reports go to the Council's Executive, and are bought before two Scrutiny Committees – Finance & Audit and Overview & Scrutiny.

- 5. Haven't Lord Leycester Hotel and other hotels closed down because Warwick District Council has granted planning permission for them to be redeveloped?**

I have worked for the Council for just over 20 years and the Woolpack and Westgate hotels had been derelict for many years before I came. Decisions were made back then based on the reality of the market we were operating in, back in the late 1990s that these were not sites that the hotel industry wanted to develop as hotels.

- 6. What is the financial incentive for the hotel? Who gains?**

There has been no deal and no agreement made with anyone. If the Council was to proceed with a hotel, then you'd expect it to benefit and in benefitting, it would be able to re-invest into its services for example our parks and open spaces would benefit from increased resource.

- 7. Will the hotel report be updated to take on board the Castle proposals?**

Yes, an assessment would be made of the cumulative impact of a hotel at the castle.

- 8. The economic benefit to the town – has this been calculated following the introduction of lodges in the castle?**

We will ask the castle if they can supply us with an update – and share it with you on the website.

- 9. What will the impact of the hotel be upon other smaller businesses?**

It is expected that a new hotel would not take trade away from existing businesses.

**10. How will traffic be managed at the hotel?**

This will be investigated as part of the business plan for the hotel.

## The Mop

**11. Where will the Showmen stay for the Mop in future years?**

This will be examined and is one of a number of detailed points that requires further work.

**12. Were the Mop (Showmen) part of the Working party?**

No, they were not.

## Working Party & Consultation

**13. Why were the working party meetings confidential?**

They were not confidential; they were workshops initially with representatives from all the local groups. You can find the outcomes of the meetings on this on our website – [www.warwickdc.gov.uk/stmaryslands](http://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/stmaryslands) - which are reflected in the reports to the Council's Executive.

**14. Why was the Caravan Club not consulted?**

Their views were considered to fall within the responsibility of the Racecourse but we will follow this up directly with the Caravan Club.

**15. Why has FSML membership on the Working party dropped from two to one?**

There are limited places on the Working party and so now there is space for one representative from key groups within the town centre – to keep the Working party a manageable size.

**16. Why was the consultation not more creatively delivered?**

We sought to use a variety of channels to get people's views e.g. using the Council's website which 400 people used; a public exhibition, including at the market place and Shire Hall, as well as an on-line survey.

## Racecourse

**17. What prevents more land being developed and further erosion of green space in the future?**

The Masterplan vision "is for a future for St Mary's Lands where the natural and cultural heritage is protected and enhanced." There is a presumption against the loss of green space.

**18. Will the rent the racecourse pays be made available?**

No, this information is confidential.

**19. Why was the cycle track changed?**

It was felt that the canter track route offers a traffic free route and one which would be open for longer.

**20. The surface of the canter down is unsuitable for cycling, why can't there be a dedicated cycle track?**

It is proposed to use fibre sand which is acceptable to cycle users.

**21. When will the wooden fence at the Sainsbury's end of the racecourse be moved back to the edge of the race track?**

During October 2017

## **Car Parking**

**22. Why do we need the extra parking opposite Bread and Meat Close?**

The area represents an opportunity to improve the overall parking provision in the light of promoting greater use of the park but it will also allow us to create a traffic separated route for cyclists.

**23. Is Linen Street car park going to close?**

There is no specific date as the structure is being inspected on a monthly basis and so far it does not need to be closed, but it is felt it will do at some point. When we know we can let everybody know.

## **The name**

**24. Will it be changed depending on who invests? And end up being called Sainsbury's lands for example?**

The suggestion was a result of consultation where local residents had a number of different names by which they referred to St Mary's Lands. The question was regarding a collective name which could be used for marketing purposes to strengthen the brand of the area, rather than it being known by different names.