

Your Kirkby Your Future - Your Questions

6. What impact would a development have on green space, sports areas and schools?

We recognise the value of green space, sport and schooling and will always do our best to protect and enhance these vital resources. If a development is proposed on an area of open land, the loss of the green space will be taken into account at the planning application stage. The council would need to judge the benefits of the new development against the loss of any open space. The council has already provided two artificial football pitches as part of the new Kirkby Leisure Centre. In addition, the council is in consultation with Sport England, UK Athletics and the Disability Sports Federation to develop an athletics track suitable for people with a disability as part of the new South Kirkby Learning Centre.

Since the original plan to establish three new learning centres in Kirkby a review of pupil numbers and the schools they attend has identified potential problems. It showed an increase in the pupils going to 'faith' schools and a decrease in pupils attending a community secondary school. A major issue was that a learning centre could be built and might have to be closed within a few years leaving the council with a large bill for a school that is not needed.

7. Will a development affect property prices?

Initial discussions with estate agents show that there has been little impact so far during the discussions to develop the town centre. We understand that property prices are important and need to do some further work in this area to determine the short-term and long-term effects to Kirkby.

8. Would there be a possible increase in costs to Knowsley Council?

A key issue for the council is the impact on council services. In considering any future proposal for the Tesco/Everton development, the council may seek an agreement with the developer to make sure the costs are not met by the council. This could include funding for policing and street cleaning.

9. How will consultation be managed in future?

The recent exercises were just the beginning of the consultation programme. The development of Kirkby town centre is one of the biggest projects the council has ever considered. We need to take our time to get it right and to make sure that the community's views and concerns are considered and addressed as far as possible. The council has already agreed to revisit the proposals made by the developer in response to the concerns expressed at this first stage of consultation. We need to develop a comprehensive plan that takes into account all the issues raised so far. It could take several months to do this. We will then consult the community again about creating a new vision for the town centre. We would like to establish a vision before we consider any planning application.



Dear resident/business owner

Welcome to the latest Your Kirkby, Your Future update which provides you with a summary of the main findings from our recent consultation on the future of Kirkby town centre.

This summer saw the biggest consultation exercise ever undertaken by Knowsley Council to find out how people who live, work and learn in Kirkby want to see the town centre developed in the future. We received more than 950 completed questionnaires from residents, along with more than 1,100 comments through the questionnaires and other sources including letters and emails.

An independent company called Base Line Research and Survey (Liverpool John Moores University) has been commissioned to produce the findings which are detailed later in this update. Base Line's summary report will be available on the council's web site from next week.

The overwhelming response from the community is that there is a clear need for a major regeneration programme in Kirkby town centre. While some of you expressed full support for such a programme, others expressed some concerns, which we have begun to address later in the newsletter.

We would also like to stress that it is still early days for a development of this size and the council has not reached 'a done deal' with any developer. We are still at an early stage in our discussions and committed to work with Tesco, Everton Football Club and Development Securities (the existing town centre owners) to explore the potential for the major regeneration of Kirkby town centre. It is our duty now to explore all the options for the benefit of Kirkby residents and businesses.

This means there is a lot more that we have to do. At this stage we can again confirm that no planning applications have been received. We remain determined to get the best outcome for Kirkby and the borough of Knowsley. To ensure this, we have taken on board all of your comments and have already committed to revisit the masterplan for Kirkby over the next couple of months.

It is also important to highlight that this was the first part of a long consultation process. We will continue to involve you as we proceed with our investigation into the possibilities on offer. Because we want to make sure your views are fully considered as part of any proposed development we will keep you informed about future consultation events.

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to attend one of the consultation events and/or complete the questionnaire. Your views will play a vital part in helping us to gain a good understanding of how you would like your town centre to be developed in the future.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Ron Round
Leader of the Council

Sheena Ramsey
Chief Executive

Your Kirkby Your Future - Consultation

A wide range of consultation events were organised across Kirkby, these included:

- An information brochure and questionnaire sent to every household in Kirkby
- Two-day community drop in event at the Kirkby Suite
- Five separate neighbourhood meetings
- Nine road show events across Kirkby
- A two-week exhibition in the Kirkby One Stop Shop
- The future generation of Kirkby, children and young people were asked what they like and dislike about their town and how they would like it to look in the future.

Anyone who attended the events or received the information brochure was given up-to-date information about possible approaches to develop the town centre. These are:

- An existing approach to develop Kirkby town centre, which follows current council policy. This could include land within the current town centre and vacant sites being developed to create more new shops and possibly include a new bus station on Cherryfield Drive.
- A new approach to grow Kirkby town centre. This could involve a major re-development of the current town centre as outlined above as well as additional shop space, a Tesco superstore, a new stadium for Everton Football Club and leisure facilities.

Your Kirkby Your Future - Your Comments

Many of you were very positive about the proposals to regenerate Kirkby town centre but some of you also raised concerns. Here is just a sample of some of the comments made by those people who took part in the consultation.

Superb - Kirkby has made some progress, but this radical regeneration is desperately needed.

The new development is what is needed - with the exception of the football stadium which will ruin the area, communities and house prices.

I'm totally for it. Kirkby has stagnated over recent years and needs this regeneration, my only concern is for the loss of the green access provided by Valley Road which would be lost by the grounds prominence, if that could some how be addressed.

I applaud the council for allowing residents to have their say. Change is good. This development will be beneficial to all involved. Kirkby was chosen for this proposal as Kirkby could do with a large positive regeneration.

I am heartened by the thought of any development creating jobs, especially full time jobs, as long as the long term unemployed and the young people of the area are given the opportunity to work. That is the only way the economy will be boosted if people are in work and they have the choice of where to spend their money, which will hopefully be in the area where they live.

Your Kirkby Your Future - Your Questions

We always want to hear from people who live and work in Kirkby to help us to understand your needs. Your views are important because they can help us to make sure that any future plans for your town centre are as close to what you want as possible. Any form of regeneration is complex. Full consideration of the benefits needs to be given alongside any potential impact it could have on the community as part of the decision making process.

Many of you raised questions about the proposals to expand Kirkby town centre. The most frequently raised questions are listed here along with how the council plans to address them:

1. Why do we need a stadium?

The council has not taken any decision yet as to whether a stadium should be built in Kirkby and no planning application to build a stadium has been submitted. Tesco's current proposals do include a stadium, so the council has been considering whether this could be the best way forward for Kirkby. The recent consultation exercise made it clear that the stadium was not the only option. The stadium development would enable the council to totally transform Kirkby in a way that it couldn't do otherwise. The benefits could include new jobs, leisure facilities and the attraction of high street shops to Kirkby.

2. Will there be an increase in traffic congestion and pollution?

Any future planning application would have to be supported by a range of reports including a Transport Assessment, an Environmental Impact Assessment and a Health Impact Assessment. All would have to be produced by the developers. These assessments would include information on the impact of a development on transport levels, examine air quality, noise and vibration and the effect air quality, noise and vibration might have on people's health. All of these assessments would need to be provided for the council's consideration before a decision could be taken on any planning application.

3. What would be the impact on my quality of life?

The council would consider the impact on quality of life as part of any planning application. We recognise that people want to know what impact a development could have on their lives. Feedback from this consultation states that the current facilities in the town centre are insufficient to meet our residents needs. A large-scale development could enhance the quality of life for Kirkby residents. This could include creating new jobs, new shops, new leisure facilities (e.g. hotels, cafes and bars) and new public facilities (like a one stop shop or a library). We now need to take into account the impact of any development (using the impact assessments described in answer 2 above) and balance this against the significant benefits to be gained from developing the town centre. This will be a very complex task, and that is why we will take some time to consider all of the options - and consult with you on them as we get more information - before making any decisions.

4. Would there be an Increase in crime and disorder and antisocial behaviour?

We have seen a recent decrease in crimes. These include a 10% reduction in violent crime, 29% reduction in theft of a motor vehicle, 18% reduction in theft from a motor vehicle and 5% reduction in house burglaries. More work is being done by the Knowsley Partnership to reduce these crimes even further. The partnership would consider necessary measures to manage any crime and disorder and antisocial behaviour issues effectively. This too would have to be fully considered as part of the planning application.

5. Would there be an increase in noise and light pollution?

We would fully consider the impact of noise or light pollution arising from any planning permission for a development. Our duty is to make sure we are satisfied that these issues have been fully addressed by the developer. Any developer would need to include information on the level of noise and lighting as part of the environmental impact assessment. The council could also impose specific compulsory conditions on the developer if and when planning permission was granted.