

Press release: 6 July 2018

-STARTS-

Big turn-out for consultation about Spelthorne's new leisure centre

Nearly 600 people turned up for the first stage of the public consultation about Spelthorne's proposed new leisure centre and sports pitches.

The Council is seeking to consult as widely as possible with users, residents throughout the borough and other interested groups. All feedback will be fully noted and taken into consideration when the Council decides its next steps. As yet nothing is definite.

Richard Mortimer, the project development manager for Spelthorne Borough Council said, "We were delighted that so many people took the time to come along and share their views. We are welcoming comments on every aspect of our initial proposal including the proposed building's design, its location, and the potential outdoor pitches as well as what sport facilities should be included.

Councillor Ian Harvey, Leader of Spelthorne Borough Council said, "We are keen to provide the best possible facilities that residents of Spelthorne deserve and desire.

Our only motive is to provide a modern, 'fit for purpose' leisure centre that everyone will use and value, and that has the added benefit of improving their health and wellbeing.

We are aware of some local concerns with the project but believe that this is largely based on misconceptions which we are seeking to clarify".

Perceived loss of open space, parking, traffic, and access routes were raised as possible concerns. There are also concerns that the proposed outdoor pitches could take up too much of the park's green spaces. As members of the project team explained, a large proportion of the park will remain as public, open space with footpaths and pedestrian access retained or enhanced, to enable people to freely access local schools, the railway station, and the town centre through the park.

Similarly, they were able to explain that parking at the new centre will increase compared to that available on the current site, and that traffic access would be from Knowle Green and not from any of the residential roads that surround the park.

In respect of the concerns raised about the loss of open green space, if the current proposals go ahead, there would still be 3.08 hectares of accessible green space in Staines Park. To put this into context, the accessible green space in Lammas Park is 3.33 hectares.

A detailed questionnaire, which is also available online (www.spelthorneleisure.info), means that people who were unable to get to the two-day drop-in event can still make their views known. The responses will inform a further consultation to be held in the autumn. Further information and updates, as well as responses to some of the issues raised, will also be published on the webpage.

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