

Roger Busby

Keynsham Town Centre Redevelopment

I am speaking on behalf of the Keynsham Civic Society. When we first saw the plans for the proposed redevelopment of the Town Centre we expressed our concern about the ‘blocky’ design, but were assured that this was not to be the final design. We are now at a stage just prior to the Planning Application and, despite public comment^(a) and representations on the Focus Group, the plans still look like a repeat of the adjacent Riverside Offices.

The proposed roof design has aslope of only 9 degrees, that is, almost flat. The optimum inclination for solar PV panels is 35 degrees, but because the design doesn’t incorporate south facing pitched roofs, the panels have to be almost flat to avoid overshadowing one another.

The draft Core Strategy^(b) envisages a district-heating scheme for this area of the town and yet these plans make no mention of this potential to reduce Keynsham’s carbon footprint, for example, using hydroelectricity from the River Chew across the road.

We have been told that the financial appraisal assumes a life of 60 years for this development. Surely Keynsham deserves a more iconic design than something that resembles the development that went on in the Town in the 1960s.

We consider these proposals to be inadequate on the grounds that the design does not:

1. Reflect the historic market town;
2. Embrace the potential for a district-heating scheme; and
3. Represent sustainable development.

Roger Busby
Keynsham Civic Society

Notes

(a) Over 80% of the more than 2000 people who responded to the Town Plan Questionnaire, wanted “future developments to reflect the character of the old market town”.

(b) Page 110 of the draft Core Strategy.