

Supplementary Question to Mayor Redfearn (26 November, Council Meeting)

I submitted a response to the Council's consultation about the Murton Gap Masterplan that took place over a period from 2015 to 2017. In that response I included this statement:-

Both Marden Quarry and Briardene are open spaces designed for recreation and leisure, part of North Tyneside's green infrastructure provision, and subject to the following policies in the Local Plan – S51.1 Strategic Green Infrastructure, DM5.2 Protection of Green Infrastructure, DM5.3 Green Space Provision and Standards, S5.4 Biodiversity and Geodiversity, DM5.5 managing effects on Biodiversity and Geodiversity, DM5.12 Development and Flood Risk, DM5.13 Flood Reduction Works, DM5.14 Surface Water Runoff and DM5.15 Sustainable Drainage – all of which must be accounted for in the planning applications for the Murton Gap site development.

On reading the final version of the Murton Gap Masterplan I noticed the absence of a reference to policy DM5.2. The graphic extract below records its entry in the Local Plan:-

DM5.2 Protection of Green Infrastructure

The loss of any part of the green infrastructure network will only be considered in the following exceptional circumstances:

- a. Where it has been demonstrated that the site no longer has any value to the community in terms of access and function; or,
- b. If it is not a designated wildlife site or providing important biodiversity value; or,
- c. If it is not required to meet a shortfall in the provision of that green space type or another green space type; or,
- d. The proposed development would be ancillary to use of the green infrastructure and the benefits to green infrastructure would outweigh any loss of open space.

Where development proposals are considered to meet the exceptional circumstances above, permission will only be granted where alternative provision, equivalent to or better than in terms of its quantity and quality, can be provided in equally accessible locations that maintain or create new green infrastructure connections.

Proposals for new green infrastructure, or improvements to existing, should seek net gains for biodiversity, improve accessibility and multi-functionality of the green infrastructure network and not cause adverse impacts to biodiversity.

Marden Quarry has been heavily flooded during the last two years due to the excessive amount of surface water directed from the area of Rake Lane and the Murton Gap site such as to close the path around the lake and submerge the bridge and land in the area to the north west of the lake. This continuing problem will be made worse as the Murton Gap site is developed and with the impact of climate change. Structural modifications need to be made within Marden Quarry and these should be considered as infrastructure needed for any development that would otherwise undermine its contribution to the green infrastructure.

I ask the Mayor to ensure a requirement for including the application of DM5.2 for consideration in all planning applications where developments in one area (such as Murton Gap) have an impact on the sustainability of the green infrastructure in another area.