

REIGATE AND BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL

THE REIGATE AND BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL (MARKETFIELD WAY)

COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2018

AND

ASSOCIATED APPLICATION TO EXTINGUISH PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

AND

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976

AND

ACQUISITION OF LAND ACT 1981

SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE

OF

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DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

FOR

REIGATE & BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Planning Inspectorate and Planning Casework Unit Reference:
APP/PCU/CPOP/L3625/3198457

Department for Transport Reference: NATTRAN/SE/S251/3220

September 2018

Background

The redevelopment of Marketfield Way (The Site) for a mixed-use retail/leisure/residential development has long been an aspiration of the Council to secure various social, economic and environmental regenerative benefits for Redhill.

Redhill is the largest town within the Borough of Reigate and Banstead and is identified as a transport hub yet it does not fulfil its potential. It underperforms by virtue of its lack of high quality retail and leisure offer as well as its lacklustre image. Despite recent investment, it still suffers from weak market perception as a town in which to invest and many residents are forced to travel out of the town, and Borough, to access the quality retail and leisure offers they desire.

The redevelopment of the site, in combination with other regeneration activities that have already taken place or are underway in the town would provide the crucial piece in the jigsaw in promoting long-lasting social, economic and environmental regeneration of the town.

This is in part due to the Site's prominent location close to the centre of town and transport links; its scale and potential for it to provide a mixed use retail, leisure and residential development which would ensure increased footfall and activity within the town throughout the day and night to enhance the evening economy.

Policy context

The Council's regeneration aspirations for the site and the town as a whole have been set out and supported by a range of planning policy documents, over recent years.

The site is specifically identified within Policy Rd3 of the 2005 Borough Local Plan for a mixed use retail and entertainment redevelopment. This policy was rolled forward from the 1994 Borough Local Plan outlining the long-standing aspiration of its redevelopment and is a saved policy forming part of the current development plan.

The ambition to regenerate Redhill featured within the 2008 Community Plan and 2011 Corporate Plan with the detailed strategy being fully set out within the Redhill Area Action Plan. This built on the identification of Redhill as a Regional Hub and centre for significant change within the 2009 South East Plan.

The Area Action Plan evolved from a 2009 preferred options version to a 2012 Consultation Draft both of which included the site as a specific allocation with the latter version requiring retail, cinema, food and drink and residential uses within a mixed use redevelopment of the site. It was envisaged that the Area Action Plan would be progressed to a Development Plan Document but due to timing it was instead decided to subsume it within the emerging Development Management Plan.

The Redhill Area Action Plan was underpinned by parking and retail/leisure needs evidence which demonstrated an oversupply of parking and a need for both retail and cinema uses within the town respectively. The parking oversupply is not considered to have diminished since the date of that assessment, with a new development at the Warwick Quadrant recently completed which provided a 365 space town centre car park for public use.

The Reigate and Banstead Core Strategy was adopted in 2014 and sets out the strategic spatial vision for the Borough to 2027. A key objective is to enhance the role of Redhill town centre as a centre of strategic importance, part of a regional transport hub, and as a safe and attractive retail, culture, leisure destination with a high quality environment. In terms of quantum, it requires up to 750 new homes in Redhill town centre to 2022 as well as 15,480 sqm comparison retail with supporting or complimentary leisure uses.

The Core Strategy along with the National Planning Policy Framework provide general policy support for redevelopment of the site by virtue of its making more efficient use of land, helping promote the competitiveness of town centres and providing the new homes and other uses required in a sustainable location.

The Development Management Plan (DMP) provides the detailed policy matrix for the strategic principles and targets set out in the Core Strategy. The Regulation 18 version of the DMP included the site within a specific allocation RTC1 for mixed-use redevelopment with 3,500 sqm retail, 1,200 sqm food and drink, a six screen cinema and 150 residential apartments. This reflected the 2016 retail and leisure needs study which found significant need for a cinema within the Borough and for this to be located within Redhill.

By the time of Regulation 19 and submission of the DMP in May of this year, planning permission had already been granted for the mixed use redevelopment of the site and for this reason the site allocation that featured within the Regulation 18 version was omitted with the DMP being clear that sites with planning permission are not included as allocations.

In July this year the new NPPF was published which emphasises the role of town centres at the heart of local communities, promotes the effective use of land and the need to build at higher densities within town centres, as well as signalling a likely increase in the Borough's housing need through the standard methodology, all of which would be provided through development of the Site.

Regeneration objectives

Mixed-use redevelopment of the site would achieve all three of the objects for the purposes of Section 226 (1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The need for a multiplex cinema has been identified from qualitative and gap analysis and would help attract complimentary food and drink uses to improve the evening economy, bringing activity to the town in the evening hours, reducing anti-social behaviour whilst the improved retail offer would have potential to attract larger multipliers and improving consumer choice. Combined with the benefit to helping meet the identified housing need, this would bring significant social regenerative benefits.

Redevelopment of the site would bring environmental benefits in the form of improved public realm with a landmark development and active ground floor frontages, bringing activity and vitality to what is currently a predominantly dead space. The provision of new housing in a sustainable town centre location with minimal parking is also highly sustainable, bringing further environmental benefits.

Economic benefits would result from the significant number of new jobs offered by the new retail and leisure units as well as the knock-on positive impacts this would have for the rest of the town as a greater number of people are drawn to it during both day and evening hours. In particular, benefits to the evening economy would result from the new leisure anchor and its potential to attract complimentary food and drink uses at the site and elsewhere within the town.

Overall, I consider the benefits to social, economic and environmental well-being to be delivered by development of the Site would be significant and would positively transform Redhill and address many of the negative issues affecting it and perceptions of it.

Consented development

Planning permission was granted on 20th January 2017 for a mixed-use redevelopment of the site for a new multiplex cinema, 11 ground floor retail units and 153 apartments which accorded with the various policies set out above, both for the site and the regeneration of Redhill as a whole. It was therefore found acceptable in planning terms. The application was accompanied by a suite of accompanying documents and technical information all of which found the scheme to be acceptable.

The development incorporates a number of elements that would help to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons sharing a protected characteristic under the Public Sector Equality Act 2010 and persons who do not.

The Council also had due regard to the Human Rights implications (particularly Article 8 and Article 1 of the First Protocol) both when permission was granted and when it resolved to use its compulsory purchase powers. Ultimately the Council was fully satisfied that the loss of parking at the Site and the delivery of the scheme were in the public interest and justified any interference in human rights and any minor reduction in accessibility.

The Committee Report identified significant benefits associated with the scheme including helping improve consumer choice in the retail offer as well as the leisure/cinema and food and drink offers within the Borough; helping improve Redhill as both a shopping destination with potential for larger and modern retail units attracting national multipliers to the town; helping improve the evening economy and reducing anti-social behaviour and helping to meet some of the identified housing need for the town.

The planning permission remains extant and there are no known impediments to its delivery.