

Rainbow Industrial Estate – summary of consultation responses on the draft planning brief (June-July 2013)

1. Overview

Between 13 June and 25 July 2012, Merton Council undertook public consultation on a draft planning brief for Rainbow Industrial Estate. The consultation methodology included:

- Direct mailing to every postal address (residential and business) within 800m of the site in advance of 13 June 2012.
- Press notice in the local papers
- Attendance at the Raynes Park Community Forum on 20 June 2012 and at a separate meeting in Raynes Park library organised by local councillors on 10 July.
- A public exhibition on Friday 29 June 12.00pm to 5.00pm and on Saturday 30 June 12.30pm-4.00pm at Raynes Park Methodist Church Hall.
- Mailouts and publicity from local community groups and councillors helped to inform people about the consultation and encourage responses.

51 responses were received throughout the consultation process, including a petition opposed to development which contains 277 signatures.

25 people completed the comments forms which were available as part of the public consultation process. A further 21 separate representations were received from individuals and organisations, including residents associations who represent a large number of households.

Responses were accepted after the deadline date.

A review of the comments forms and the key themes emerging is set out below.

2. Key Issues

- Relationship between Workspace and Merton Council
- Introduction of housing to the site – and any further housing in the local area as a whole
- Traffic impacts
- Parking
- Density of housing
- Impact on local schools and associated infrastructure

3. Comments forms analysis

(25 comments forms received. However not all those who completed the forms responded to every questions, other questions allowed more than one response, therefore totals may not add up to 25)

1. *What should be the most important objective from any new development on the Rainbow Estate?*

- | | | |
|---|---|----|
| a. <i>Better employment space</i> | - | 10 |
| b. <i>Better environment of the site</i> | - | 11 |
| c. <i>Provision of housing (including affordable housing)</i> | - | 3 |
| d. <i>Improvements to the site access and provision of kiss n ride-</i> | - | 11 |
| e. <i>Reducing the numbers of HGV vehicles visiting the site</i> | - | 10 |
| f. <i>Other (please specify)</i> | - | 5 |

Comments in response to question 'f' focused on:

- Retention of low cost industrial and small units
- Local residents will also need parking on site
- The local area needs schools
- Better connectivity to the surrounding area

2. *How do you view proposals to create an employment zone providing light industrial workshops and offices in new buildings?*

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|----|
| a. <i>Positive</i> | - | 18 |
| b. <i>Negative</i> | - | 4 |
| c. <i>Don't Know</i> | - | 2 |

75% of respondents supported the proposals for an employment zone in the local area.

3. *Is it important to you that employment numbers increase in a regenerated Rainbow Estate?*

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|----|
| a. <i>Yes</i> | - | 16 |
| b. <i>No</i> | - | 4 |
| c. <i>Don't Know</i> | - | 4 |

67% of respondents view an increase in employment numbers in the local area as important.

4. *There have been discussions about whether the business space should be based around a single block to be enclosed and contained (Option A) or in two blocks to make it more permeable (Option B). Do you have a preference?*

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|----|
| a. <i>Option A</i> | - | 0 |
| b. <i>Option B</i> | - | 11 |
| c. <i>No preference</i> | - | 11 |

50% of respondents preferred Option B with a further 50% having no preference.

5. *Do you support proposals for mixed-use on the Rainbow Estate – i.e. homes alongside employment?*

- | | | |
|---------------|---|----|
| a. Yes | - | 13 |
| b. No | - | 9 |
| c. Don't Know | - | 2 |

54% of respondents support the principle of proposals for a mixed-use development on the site.

6. *The proposals are for 200-250 homes on the site situated around courtyards and gardens including affordable homes and a mix of one, two and three bedroom homes. What is your view on this?*

- | | | |
|---------------|---|----|
| a. Positive | - | 7 |
| b. Negative | - | 13 |
| c. Don't Know | - | 1 |

33% of respondents support the proposals for homes on the site. Many of those who opposed the plans stated concerns

Much of the concern around the provision of housing centred around the density of housing and the perceived lack of facilities, including car parking, schools and transport connections.

Several respondents commented that there should not be any more houses in the local area at all.

7. *The proposals show two options, and has a maximum height of 6 storeys (Option A) and the other allow for a maximum height of 7 storeys (Option B). Do you have a preference?*

- | | | |
|------------------|---|----|
| a. Option A | - | 10 |
| b. Option B | - | 1 |
| c. No preference | - | 9 |

50% of respondents preferred the lower option of housing. Several respondents stated 'neither', setting out their opposition to the development as a whole.

8. *What is your view of the proposals to reconfigure the entrance to the site and Station Approach?*

- | | | |
|---------------|---|----|
| a. Positive | - | 20 |
| b. Negative | - | 3 |
| c. Don't Know | - | 2 |

80% of respondents supported the plans to improve the entrance to the site and Station Approach, recognising the contribution this could make to the local area and the problems which currently exist.

9. *What sustainability measures would you like to see incorporated into any development on the Rainbow Estate?*
- | | | |
|--|---|----|
| <i>a. Renewable energy to supply buildings on site</i> | - | 17 |
| <i>b. Combined heat and power plant</i> | - | 6 |
| <i>c. Energy efficient building materials</i> | - | 18 |
| <i>d. Sustainable urban drainage systems</i> | - | 18 |
| <i>e. A car club</i> | - | 9 |
| <i>f. Rainwater harvesting</i> | - | 17 |
| <i>g. Any other suggestions (please let us know below)</i> | - | 4 |

Sustainability measures generally received wide support from respondents. Those who opposed the plans in general highlighted areas which were viewed as important should the proposals go ahead.

10. *Do you have any other comments about the outline proposals for the Rainbow Industrial Estate?*

The main comments received in response to this question were:

- Concerns over the volume of traffic and impact on existing problems.
- Heights of building.
- Need for schools in the local area
- Access to and from the site
- Concerns over the consultation and SPD development process
- The need for high quality design
- Need for parking
- The numbers of people in the local area and questions over the 'need' for any additional housing here or elsewhere in Raynes Park
- The existing house by the entrance to the site (requests for it to be demolished and other requests for it to stay)
- The needs of existing residents
- Types of housing – flats/apartments etc
- Great improvement on the existing site
- The need for employment and industrial to remain on site

4. *Additional representations analysis*

Public meeting at Raynes Park library, Tuesday 10 July 2012, attended by approx 35 people (count carried out for the motion at the end of the meeting.)

Two motions:

- "This meeting rejects the draft supplementary planning brief and urges Merton Council to produce its own planning brief in accordance with planning rules" – passed unanimously.
- "This meeting rejects residential / housing on the Rainbow site" – passed by approximately two thirds majority.

Wimbledon Society Planning Committee:

- The proposal needs to be rethought;
- Concerns over loss of existing businesses;
- Concerns over height of the buildings
- View that no further housing is needed

Raynes Park and West Barnes Residents Association:

- The Council should not be representing the views of the developer as their own;
- The industrial estate has entered a period of wilful neglect;
- The jobs figures are unreliable;
- There should be references to alternatives to the site;
- There would be no opportunity to change the impact on local roads due to parking needs;
- The documentation is misleading in terms of promoting S106 as a means to relieve pressure on infrastructure;
- The document does not demonstrate the need for residential to improve the industrial, Workspace should use capital or debt to do so and not the planning process;
- The Planning Brief is heavily skewed to allow residential;
- The site is wholly inappropriate for residential development due to lack of access, proximity to the railway lines, strain on infrastructure etc.
- Car parking is grossly inadequate

The Residents Association of West Wimbledon:

- Current designation of the site should be retained and no change of use permitted;
- The plans should contain adequate investment to upgrade it for modern mixed commercial use.

Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust

- This development could justify investment in 0.5 a GP, with a potential premises requirement of 120sqm gross internal area.
- The Primary Care Trust may require the redevelopment to fund this additional capacity.

Raynes Park ward councillors

- More employment could be created from reviving the site solely for employment use (SMEs). Potentially more people are employed off-site that have not been recognised.
- Feasibility of second bridge or tunnel entrance to the site has not been properly explored.
- Need for family homes with gardens for children, limited need for apartments
- Site should be considered for a new school.

Dundonald Liberal Democrats:

- Merton needs to maintain and improve employment land;
- Concern over the relationship between Workspace and the Council;
- Impact and response to local amenities;
- Employment numbers should be increased;
- How will housing be managed?
- Concerned over impact on traffic and parking.

Network Rail (received over a six month period)

- Network Rail could only support the planning brief when details between Network Rail, Workspace and Cunane (*planning applicant for former station house conversion to six 1-bed flats*) have been resolved.
- Network Rail would also insist that any proposed Kiss and Ride at Raynes Park must be able to incorporate Network Rail's proposals for the refurbishment of Station House and associated car parking.
- Network Rail want to ensure no vehicular conflict around the entrance to the site (outside the former station house, proposed Kiss and Ride area)
- Network Rail may seek best value for their road at the site's entrance if public access is to be formalised and they want to know what legal mechanism will be used to formalise this.
- Network Rail would like the council to investigate trucks using its (Network Rail's) land
- Questions about the process.

Residents/Other Respondents (19 representations)

- Would strongly oppose any waste treatment facility;
- Welcome redevelopment to improve the site and landscaping proposals but concerns over number of homes and density;
- Opposed due to unsuitable access, inadequate parking, pressure on local amenities, increased traffic, lack of employment, empty work units.
- Proposals for mixed-use would be ideal but 200 homes should be the maximum with 4-storeys as the maximum height;
- The site could be used as a car-park;
- Concerned that Workspace are telling the Council what to do, concerned about schooling and access to the site, concerned about industrial development alongside residential;
- The plans are well-considered but concerns over the height, green spaces could also be reconfigured to include a children's play area;
- Overall in favour of the plans as the site is run-down, entrance must be widened, concerned about contribution to schools;
- Too much housing already on and around Grand Drive and associated issues;

- The site should not be used as a school as it only has one entrance
- The site should not be used for offices, industrial or housing
- Concerns over the impact of housing on local schools;
- Concern over relationship between Workspace and the Council, conflicts of interest and due diligence;