

Committee: Borough Plan Advisory Committee

Date: 20 September 2012

Agenda item: supplementary

Wards: All

Subject: Rainbow Industrial Estate – update on public consultation

Lead officer: Director for Environment and Regeneration, Chris Lee

Lead member: Cabinet Member for Environment and Regeneration, Councillor Andrew Judge

Forward Plan reference number: N/A

Contact officer: Strategic Policy programme manager, Tara Butler

Recommendations:

A. That Members note the content of the report.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Public consultation took place on a draft supplementary planning document on Rainbow Industrial Estate between 13 June and 26 July 2012. Responses were accepted into August 2012.
- 1.2. A summary of consultation results is contained in appendix A to this report.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. 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
- 2.2. 51 responses were received throughout the consultation process, including a petition opposed to development which contains 277 signatures.
- 2.3. 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.

2.4. Appendix 1 summarises the consultation results. All responses are available on Merton Council's website:
http://www.merton.gov.uk/environment/designandconservation/design/rainbow_estate/rainbow-consultation.htm

2.5. The key issues raised included:

- Relationship between the landowner Workspace and Merton Council
- Traffic impacts
- Parking
- Density of housing
- Layout and design.
- Impact on local schools and associated infrastructure
- Whether the site should remain entirely employment, entirely residential or a mixture of both.

Next steps

2.6. Officers are still reviewing the consultation results and some of the actions now being undertaken are set out below (in no particular order).

2.7. **Development viability:** Workspace has agreed to produce a comprehensive viability report, setting out all of the costs that could be associated with the proposals. The viability work will include the ranges of employment and residential development proposed in the draft planning brief, and compliant with Merton's planning policies. These reports will be available by October 2012.

2.8. **Network Rail's** response to the consultation was very succinct, only two sentences long. Officers are encouraging Network Rail to provide a much more complete response to the proposals in the draft planning brief, ideally to include reference to their operational requirements, views on development of any kind near the railway lines and views on whether or not development would impact on the structures and operations within Rainbow.

2.9. Officers are also encouraging a written response from the London Fire and Emergency Planning Unit.

2.10. **School places.** Officers have already conducted an analysis of the potential additional school-aged children that may arise if the residential proposals in the draft planning brief were taken forward. This data is also being considered as part of the options appraisal to inform the demand for school places beyond the current primary school expansion strategy. This report is due to be published by the end of 2012.

2.11. **Healthcare.** Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust have responded to the consultation on the draft planning brief, stating that the proposals may result in a need for 0.5 G.P. with a space requirement of 120sqm, which could need to be funded from the development.

2.12. **Utilities.** Thames Water has responded to the consultation with general comments but no specific comments on Rainbow or the Raynes Park area. Officers have undertaken an initial assessment of the drainage and culverts

relating to the site. There is an electricity substation adjacent to the entrance of the site on the southern side just to the west of the railway arch. Development on the site may require increase in electricity capacity, which may mean moving the substation within the site as part of these improvements.

- 2.13. **Traffic and parking.** Officers have undertaken a variety of assessments including:
- Analysis of the available data relating to traffic generation from the current site, including historic data (c2008)
 - Trip rate analysis from the potential redevelopment in accordance with the draft planning brief.
 - Assessment of trip generation and parking impacts from other sites in Merton, and Transport for London research findings for sites across London.
- 2.14. A comprehensive report on transport and parking will be prepared to illustrate the findings. This report will include details on the Kiss & Ride proposed at the entrance to the site.
- 2.15. **Dropoff point / Kiss & Ride.** The Raynes Park Enhancement Plan 2009-12 (actions) set out local community's aspiration for a drop-off point connected with Raynes Park station, and stated that its delivery would probably be connected to any development proposals for the Rainbow Industrial Estate.
- 2.16. Cunane town planning have submitted a planning application on behalf of Holborn Associated Homes for the conversion of the Network Rail-owned Former Station House at the entrance to the site to three one-bed and three studio flats.
- 2.17. The planning application originally submitted proposed that car parking for this development be allocated to the north of 9 Grand Drive, at the other side of the road to the Former Station House.
- 2.18. In June 2012, officers encouraged the three interested parties – landowners Network Rail and Workspace and the applicant Cunnane Town Planning – meet to address any issues arising from the two proposals (the proposed Kiss & Ride element of the draft planning brief and parking set out in the proposed planning application). Workspace and Network Rail representatives met to address the issues.
- 2.19. As at September 2012, representatives of the three parties are meeting to try and ensure that any proposals are complimentary and do not compromise the potential for a drop-off point for Raynes Park station.
- 2.20. **Site layout / density / design.** To review the potential of the site in accordance with the views of several respondents to the consultation, a workshop will be held with Raynes Park Association members, design professionals, officers and Workspace to review and look at potential options for the layout, design and densities for the site.
- 2.21. **Site uses:** set within the parameters of Merton's Core Planning Strategy and national planning policy, all of the above assessments will influence the uses and quantum of development on-site.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. None for the purposes of this report.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. As set out in the body of the report. Initial responses have been sent to everybody who responded to the consultation, thanking them for taking the time to respond. We will write to everybody who responded before the end of 2012 to update them on progress.

4.2. Officers are attending community meetings in the Raynes Park area, including the Raynes Park Community Forum on 20 September 2012, to keep

5 TIMETABLE

5.1. It is expected that many of the assessments above will be completed by the end of December 2012.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. None for the purposes of this report.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. None for the purposes of this report.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1. None for the purposes of this report.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1. None for the purposes of this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

10.1. None for the purposes of this report.

11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- Appendix 1: summary of the draft Rainbow planning brief consultation results

Appendix 1.

Rainbow Industrial Estate – summary of consultation responses

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.
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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?*

a. Renewable energy to supply buildings on site	-	17
b. Combined heat and power plant	-	6
c. Energy efficient building materials	-	18
d. Sustainable urban drainage systems	-	18
e. A car club	-	9
f. Rainwater harvesting	-	17
g. Any other suggestions (please let us know below)	-	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

- 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.

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;