

Wandle Riverside

Meeting with the Hackbridge & Beddington Corner Neighbourhood Development Group

9th May 2012 held at Red Lion Pub, Hackbridge Road.

Transcript of introduction by Hugh Cave of CPP Plc.

Good evening to you all and thank you for cutting in to your own time to come along again.

I was going to say it was a pleasure to welcome Councillor John Drage to this meeting but sadly he does not seem to be here. I know he was hoping to get here by the skin of his teeth having only arrived back at the airport from Ireland late this afternoon.

I recognise many of the faces around the table, but for the benefit of any newcomers it is probably a good idea to go round again and re introduce ourselves.

Helena Barrowclough (Chair: HBCNDG)

Peter Lloyd

Dean James (Sutton Council)

Pat Hart

Francesca Bellucci

Danielle Reid

Steve Pearce (Sutton Council)

Norman Jones

Marianne Rasmussen

Bill Forsdick

David Goymour

Sue Riddlestone

Peter Alfrey

Simon Courage

Stephen Trenwith (Charles Church)

Charles Webster (Oxford) Architect.

Hugh Cave (City & Provincial)

At previous meetings and events, we have discussed the land east of the River Wandle, where, given the substantial number of flats either being, or imminently being built, elsewhere in Hackbridge, we are proposing a development of predominantly family houses, with low rise starter flats. The aim of this is to encourage regeneration by enabling people to put down roots and become permanent members of the community, thus enhancing the existing cultural and economic strengths of the suburb.

We have previously agreed with you that any development must aspire to true sustainability, with a minimum build standard of Code 4 and embrace where possible the ten principles of One Planet Living. Whilst there were other specific concerns expressed, there appeared to be a general consensus of support for this as this residential component of the mixed use site allocation proposed in the Core Strategy and Site Development Policies documents, now adopted.

However, in concentrating on this residential aspect, I understand that you as a group are concerned that we have seemed to have glossed over the employment component required under the adopted plan, and if this is the case I apologise.

The requirement for provision of employment is defined as being "40% of the site area retained for employment uses", with suitable uses for this land defined as being --

- B1 (b) research and development
- B1 (c) light industry/ business park
- B2 general industry
- B8 storage

Small and medium sized units are to be encouraged.

This is all fine as a broad and over arching policy, contained within Borough wide strategic planning documents, but when you hone in on this specific site I would suggest that it is partially inappropriate. For example, B2 uses cover general industry and such activities are not compatible with housing. They should be accommodated in areas specifically allocated for the purpose (industrial estates) where their anti social activities will not blight residential dwellers. Similarly, apart from employing very few people – one per 70/80 square metres, B8 storage is probably an inappropriate use given the large vehicles involved and the restricted access via Goat Road.

This leaves B1 (b) and B1 (c) as possible uses under the approved plan, although I cannot think why straight B1 (office space) has not been included. For example the Bio Regional offices in BedZed

would fall under this category. I still think that true B1 (c) light industry would be better accommodated elsewhere within Hackbridge and the adjoining neighbourhood, where vacant space is freely available.

B1 (c) / (b) and other non residential uses can be and often are successfully integrated into mixed use residential lead schemes. In fact, I have one on the stocks in Deptford, south London, right now. However, this scheme is 905 flats and no houses spread over an 11 acre site, surrounded by existing high rises – in other words, a totally urban context.

Hackbridge on the other hand, with its river running through it, is mercifully different all together, and I guess that is why you are here. We have already largely discounted flats and have tried to move on from the embedded mixed use flats and other uses that under pinned the 2008 thinking.

However, back to policy –

What does “40% of the site to be retained for employment uses” actually mean?

Well – our total land area holdings measure 2.3 Ha or 23,000 sq.m.

So, the 40% policy means that 9,200 sq.m should be set aside for the previously mentioned uses.

Were one building B1 (c) (light industrial) or B2 space, a general rule of thumb is that roads, pavements, lorry and car parking, vehicle loading bays, turning circles and landscaping would account for 60% of the land area of the estate, meaning that in this case space left for the actual footprint of the buildings would be 3,680 sq.m or about 40,000 ft.sq.

The definitive “Employment Densities Guide” published by Offpat and the HCA gives an area per employee of 47 sq.m for B1(c) usage and this would equate to 78 employees in total. However, given that such accommodation would have a certain small office content, where employee density would be greater, it is probably fair to add to that figure.

So what the over arching 40% policy actually aims at and calls for is the provision of circa 100/110 jobs.

When on the subject of employment previously, you as a group have suggested that appropriate uses for the employment land should include the housing of small sustainable industries and allied companies. We support this view and would like to add start up/incubator units, studios – possibly with an on site sale of product, work shops, research and development facilities, small start up

offices and the like. All this to be contained within a newly formed enterprise community to be developed on the land to the west of the river. The buildings housing such uses would need to be constructed to high standards of sustainability although simple, well naturally lit and ventilated and capable of very small sub division. An absolutely non negotiable imperative of any such scheme would be the creation of say 120 new jobs.

If you support this vision, to ensure its robust future, we will be very happy to assist where possible in you incorporating the finally agreed solution in your yet to emerge Neighbourhood Plan. I would like to think that such action would carry firm weight in terms of refined planning policy for this specific site – after all I think this is was the new Localism Bill is all about.

Different building types require different skills and I now have pleasure in handing you over to Charles Webster of Oxford-Architects who is being appointed to deal with this island site in an architectural collaboration with our residential architect.

NEXT STEPS

- (1) Helena to co-ordinate all queries an comments, both housing and employment land and send to CPP via Jessica at Consense, by Wednesday 23rd May, together with notes of meeting.
- (2) CPP to answer questions where possible by email to Helena, before next meeting.
- (3) Next meeting to discuss queries and comments to be held at Red Lion at 7.30.pm on Wednesday 6th June.