

REIGATE AND BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL: 11th February 2016

Questions by Members

Question by:	To be answered by:	Subject:
Cllr J.C.S. Essex	Executive Member for Property and Regeneration, (Councillor Mrs N.J. Bramhall)	Demand for a Business Park – evidence for the Core Strategy
Cllr M.A. Brunt.	Executive Member for Property and Regeneration, (Councillor Mrs N.J. Bramhall)	Merstham Regeneration project - progress
Cllr R.W. Coad	Executive Member for Property and Regeneration, (Councillor Mrs N.J. Bramhall)	Redhill Regeneration works - progress
Cllr J.C.S. Essex	Executive Member for Property and Regeneration, (Councillor Mrs N.J. Bramhall)	Expenditure on the Airport City Gatwick project
Cllr J.C.S. Essex	Executive Member for Planning and Development (Councillor T. Schofield)	Coast to Capital LEP Strategic Economic Plan

Council Meeting: 11 February 2016

Councillor J. Essex will ask the **Executive Member for Property and Regeneration, Councillor Mrs N.J. Bramhall** the following question:

Demand for a Business Park – evidence for the Core Strategy

At the last Council meeting, in answer to residents' questions, Cllr Mrs Bramhall repeatedly told us that the Council had identified demand for a business park. Given that this evidence did not form part of that used to write the Core Strategy, which was examined at Public Inquiry, please confirm when this new evidence will be published and similarly scrutinised?

Observations

Thank you Councillor Essex for the question. The Core Strategy does not make direct reference to the specific proposal of the Horley Strategic Employment site, but as you will already know, it does identify that options for strategic employment development opportunities in the Gatwick Diamond area should be explored. This is what this Council is doing.

In terms of when this information will be provided, we will include this information as required to support the consultation associated with the Planning Application which as you will know will be independently reviewed by the Planning Committee as part of any Planning Application, when as we expect it is submitted.

What I can say is that we are aware that at least three different sets of developers have expressed an interest in bringing forward business park proposals in the area around Gatwick Airport. This is about us responding to that interest and seeking to shape development proposals for the benefit of the Borough and its residents.

What I can also say is that in taking the decision to progress this initiative we have taken the advice of leading property advisors, to ensure the scheme that is put forward is of the type and nature that businesses will be attracted to. The view is that a business park in this location would be attractive to occupiers because of its strategic location with high quality access to the local town centre, a major international airport, train stations, motorway network and associated access to London.

I can also say we have already had preliminary discussions with a tenant looking for over 100,000 sq ft of exactly this type of accommodation. Whilst we think this enquiry maybe premature, given we have not even begun to start marketing this opportunity or obtained the necessary Planning Consent, it does give a healthy indication of what we believe is sustainable demand.

Council Meeting: 11 February 2016

Councillor M.A. Brunt will ask the **Executive Member for Property and Regeneration, Councillor Mrs N.J. Bramhall** the following question:

Merstham Regeneration project - progress

It has been impressive to see the steady progress being made with construction work on both the former Iron Horse and Triangle sites in Merstham, can the portfolio holder please provide an update on when the council expects construction works to be completed and when the community can expect the buildings to be open.

Observations

Thank you for the question. We are pleased with the excellent progress made, with the roof finishes currently being installed on both sites. Both contractors have reported they are currently a few weeks behind their construction programme, predominantly due to the adverse weather over the past few weeks. However both contractors are working hard to keep to the overall completion date for the building works of June 2016 as planned. This includes facility for our tenants to fit out starting from April onwards. We will continue to monitor the construction over the coming weeks, evaluate the effects of the poor weather on the construction programme if any and provide further updates on progress as soon as they become available.

I am extremely pleased with the hard work that this Council has done in bringing together the regeneration scheme with two of our strategic partners Raven Housing Trust and Surrey County Council to provide increased affordable housing, a community offer of a new library, youth facilities, and accommodation to support the work done by the Merstham Community Facilities Trust. As it will be well known to this Council, it has been a long held aim to demolish the Portland Drive shops and flats so new improved housing can be provided.

Clearly we are at a key stage in the project but I am very pleased to be able to give such a positive update at this stage of the project.

Council Meeting: 11 February 2016

Councillor R.W. Coad will ask the **Executive Member for Property and Regeneration, Councillor Mrs N.J. Bramhall** the following question:

Redhill Regeneration works - progress

The residents of Redhill have been very patient waiting for their long promised new town centre. Memorial Park was transformed in 2014 into the lively community heart we had hoped for with the fabulous children's play area, sports zone and multi-use games area, community orchard, sensory garden and excellent Pavilion cafe. In 2015, residents watched daily as Lombard House was brought down making way for the new Sainsbury's site the building of which is now well under way and visible for all residents and visitors to see. During this time Redhill residents have endured traffic disruption, a major gas leak and roundabout paving stones lifting, however they continue to remain patient and hopeful knowing that it will all be worth it in the end.

Please can the Executive Member for Regeneration reassure me and the patient residents of Redhill that the regeneration of their town, including the proposed development for Marketfield Way, which started so well with the transformation of Memorial Park - 'will all be worth it in the end'.

Observations

Thank you for the question. I am personally delighted with the progress that has been made with the regeneration of Redhill. The Warwick Quadrant is on site and the new Sainsbury's store, gym and hotel is programmed to be finished by the Spring next year. I'm looking forward to the transformation of the public realm in London Road in the next few months, including the reduction and modernisation of the Warwick Quadrant stair canopy.

Additionally the Marketfield Way scheme with its new cinema, flats, food and beverage and retail offer is making steady progress with a Planning Application anticipated around April this year. We will hold a public exhibition on this project in the coming weeks. I am excited by the growing momentum of private sector investment in the town centre, and am confident that residents will be rewarded for their patience with a more diverse retail and leisure offer.

I recognise that some residents are frustrated about the MarCity site, and are keen to know timescales for the station site. Please be reassured that my Officers are

being proactive in seeking progress of these sites, whilst recognising that, as privately owned sites, we cannot control the timescales for their delivery.

The Council has also taken the decision to progress the re development of its Cromwell Road site which will lift this corner of Redhill as well.

The work on the balanced network is complete with Surrey County Council resolving some snagging issues. The scheme, in particular the conversion to two way working, has given residents greater choices. Also as you have rightly mentioned the park has seen some significant improvements, again a project I have been personally delighted with.

As your question recognises however, undertaking all this work has been challenging and at times some disruption has been caused. I would like to give my thanks to the Redhill residents for their continued patience, but I hope that in return they will be seeing a Council that is proactively managing the regeneration of the town centre which will provide a much improved retail offer, better public facilities and an improved road network.

Council Meeting: 11 February 2016

Councillor J. Essex will ask the **Executive Member for Property and Regeneration, Councillor Mrs N.J. Bramhall** the following question:

Expenditure on the Airport City Gatwick project

How much of the £545,000 in this year's budget to be spent on the Development of Land for the 'Airport City Gatwick' project will be spent before full public consultation takes place?

Observations

Thank you Councillor Essex for your question. Before all the approved budget is spent there will be a full pre planning application public consultation on the proposals, which is the usual practice prior to a Planning Application being submitted.

Council Meeting: 11 February 2016

Councillor J. Essex will ask the **Executive Member for Planning and Development, Councillor T. Schofield** the following question:

Coast to Capital LEP Strategic Economic Plan

Please can the Executive Member provide details as to which clauses in the Coast to Capital LEP's Strategic Economic Plan are included in the council's evolving Development Management Plan and confirm that these cross-references will be included when the plan is released for public consultation?

Observations

The Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) published its Strategic Economic Plan in 2014.

National planning practice guidance recognises that local planning authorities – such as this Council – will need to work collaboratively with their LEPs to ensure the successful delivery of policies for strategic growth in Local Plans.

Work is currently underway to prepare material for the first round of public consultation on the Development Management Plan, which is programmed to take place in the Summer.

You will appreciate that it is too early to say exactly what the content of this consultation document will be. However I can confirm that account will be taken of the strategic development and infrastructure priorities set out in the C2C Strategic Economic Plan as plans for future growth in the borough are progressed.

Outside of the plan making process, the Council continues to work closely with the LEP at both member and officer level. In this way we can influence their work to ensure it is aligned with, and helps to deliver, this Council's own objectives.