

Redbridge Local Plan: 2015-2030

Statement of Common Ground between the London Borough of Redbridge and the AECOM (on behalf East Thames) regarding land at Billet Road.

May 2017

Introduction

This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared jointly between the London Borough of Redbridge (“the Council”) and AECOM (on behalf of East Thames).

The purpose of this SoCG is to assist the Examination of the Redbridge Local Plan, by informing the Inspector and other parties of areas of agreement between the Council and AECOM (for East Thames) in response to the Inspector’s Issues and Questions (IED004).

Each party’s full position on each Inspector’s matter is set out in more detail in their respective hearing statements.

Background

The Billet Road proposed site allocation is currently designated as Green Belt. As set out in the draft Local Plan, Billet Road is proposed to be released from the Green Belt and allocated as a Development Opportunity Site in order to meet some of the borough’s development (housing and infrastructure) needs.

AECOM’s (on behalf of East Thames) representation in response to Regulation 19 Consultation dated 29th September 2016 (which built on their previous representations) sets out in detail their justification for support for the proposed removal of Billet Road from the Green Belt and allocation as a Development Opportunity Site.

Following Regulation 19 consultation, officers from the Council have met with AECOM and East Thames to discuss the nature of their representation. Many of the issues raised in the original representations have been overcome through engagement and discussion.

This Statement has been prepared to identify areas of agreement between all parties in response to the issues raised in IED004 Inspector’s Issues and Questions.

Issue 4a Crossrail Corridor

Question i) – Is the Crossrail Corridor aptly named?

As set out in respective hearing statements, both parties agree that this Investment and Growth Area is aptly named. By naming the area in this way, the Council is recognising the cumulative effect of growth and transformational change anticipated to come forward in this location. Both parties agree that the allocation of Billet Road represents opportunities for increasing connectivity, by improving the quality of pedestrian and cycle connections linking Goodmayes station to the north of the Corridor.

Question ii) - Are the strategic sites justified when compared to other reasonable alternatives, deliverable within the plan period having regard to any constraints and consistent with national policy? Is the detail about the site allocations adequate in respect of use, form, scale, access and quantum of development? Could they provide the number of dwellings anticipated having regard to the concept masterplans (LBR 2.78)?

As set out in respective hearing statements, all parties agree that Billet Road is justified compared to other reasonable alternatives, as set out through the evidence base supporting the Local Plan – including the Green Belt Addendum (LBR2.41.1) and the Sustainability Appraisal (LBR1.11.2).

AECOM has confirmed that its client's landholding at Billet Road is free from constraints, available and ready for development now. They also understand this to be the case for the other landholdings across the rest of the site, including the neighbouring site of Hainault House where, although emerging at a relatively late stage in the process, the landowners have clearly signalled the availability and deliverability of their land.

AECOM's Regulation 19 representation, noting this availability and deliverability, suggested that the site could be delivered in an earlier phase. In its response, the Council has amended the phasing period so that the site can come forward in phases 2 (2020-2025) and 3 (2025-2030). AECOM welcomes the proposed moving forward of the phasing period.

Through their Regulation 19 representation, AECOM queried the indicative capacity of 1100 and whether it was too high given the site's context. Following discussion and the Council's proposed modification to reduce capacity to 800 homes, both parties now agree that the Billet Road allocation can provide the number of dwellings anticipated, along with the supporting community infrastructure needed to meet not just the needs of the local area, but the borough as a whole, having regard to the concept masterplan.

Both parties agree that the allocation of Billet Road is consistent with national policy. The full explanation is set out in the respective hearing statements.

Question iii) - How would the development of the strategic sites promote sustainable patterns of development?

As set out in respective hearing statements, all parties agree that Billet Road can contribute to a sustainable pattern of development in the borough, required by the NPPF (para 84) on the basis of matters such as:

- Assisting the regeneration of Marks Gate Estate, where some local services exist;

- Site size, meaning that a range of dwelling types and tenures that support mixed and balanced communities can be provided, further contributing to a sustainable pattern of development; and
- The site has been tested against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework, on a consistent basis with the other Green Belt parcels put forward for development by landowners.

Question iv) - Do the strategic sites meet any of the 5 purposes of the Green Belt in paragraph 80 of the NPPF?

As set out in respective hearing statements, both parties agree that Billet Road does not meet any of the 5 Green Belt tests as set out in paragraph 80 of the NPPF – as demonstrated through the Green Belt Addendum (LBR2.41.1)

Question v) - Have there been any material changes in circumstances since the original designation of the Green Belt?

Yes, both parties agree that there have been material changes in circumstances since the original designation of the Green Belt. Population growth and high levels of housing need represent one such material change in circumstances from when London's Green Belt was first designated in this location

Question x) - Are schools required on each of the allocated strategic sites?

In relation to the Billet Road site, both parties agree that a school is required.

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2017) (LBR 2.21) identifies the education infrastructure required to support planned growth sustainably, effectively and at the right time in Redbridge. It specifically identifies a need for high secondary education provision across the borough (47 forms of entry) and both parties support the provision of a secondary school on the Billet Road site.

Through ongoing discussions between both parties, AECOM has confirmed the client's willingness to help deliver a secondary school. Future detailed masterplanning will address issues such as land-take for key infrastructure including the new school. All relevant landowners at the Billet Road site will be involved in this process.

Signed on behalf of the London Borough of Redbridge

Name & position	Signature	Date
Ciara Whelehan Planning Policy Manager		26 th May 2017

Signed on behalf of AECOM (on behalf of East Thames)

Name & position	Signature	Date
Jesse Honey Associate Planner		26 May 2017