

THE REIGATE SOCIETY

The Civic Society for Reigate, Redhill and Merstham

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(RS) REPORT No. 32.6e (01.2012 Updated August 2013)

REIGATE and REDHILL AREA Core Strategy and DMP **(See also Reports Nos. 1.1, 18, 27, 28, 31, 44)** **Consultation Response**

Because of the statement made by Sir Jeremy Heywood it has been decided to resubmit the updated RS Report No. 32.6d for further consideration and review.

1.0 SUMMARY;-

1.1 In general the expanded list of problems to be addressed and resolved by others are agreed but the methods and standards proposed or void may lead to failure and SOCIAL UNREST.

The current debate about the role of LEPs (local enterprise partnerships) and the local authority (LA) duty suggests that;-

Capitalism and the business function is that of income profit and growth but may not always have to do with excellent design, fairness and social justice. Areas of common interest may or may not provide a desirable local environment and a balanced team of specialists or consultants will be required rather than proceed on an ad hoc basis as individual development sites become available to different developers.

1.2 Housing Design and Population density Policy;-

1.2.1 It is generally agreed that some existing and recent development proposals in Redhill have a poor visual impact.

Some members of the public consider the West Country Bath terraces have a good visual impact and others consider the new river frontage at Kingston on Thames to be good. There is no reason why the appearance of affordable homes should have a poor visual impact on the observer or have a short economic life or fire risk when excellent quality design standards can be achieved by a good design management team.

1.2.2 Outstanding Development matters;-

It is suggested that each sub area of the reconstructed District needs to have an ultimate population density target be it in housing, flats, tower blocks or work places. This information can then be used by others to determine the infrastructure needs supplied by all the service providers.

a. Drainage;- The risk here is that older Sewers suffering from surcharge may cause serious damage and may need to be enlarged, or pumping stations provided.

b. Transport;- Assuming that industries are provided for the new population, provision needs to be made for the Industrial Traffic with safe access for employees.

Assuming that there are no new industries, Space will be required for new safe cycle lanes and other means of transport to the Transport Hub parking areas, also provision of off street secure vehicle parking for those who need to travel independently.

c. Other services;- The provision within landscaped verge areas for Water, Gas, Electric, telephone and other cable services.

d. Provision also needs to be made for bus, and rail facilities, parking areas, schools, parks,

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recreational areas and retail facilities.

2.0 Sir Jeremy Heywood Government Cabinet Secretary in a statement to senior Civil Servants at the end of June 2013 is reported as stating;–

That the cuts made to public services to date were not sufficient and austerity measures would have to continue for 10 years and might extend to a 20 year generational battle to beef up the economy in a way not seen for many decades. The ONS committee reported that output is now 3.9 % below the prerecession 2008 peak. The financial deficit was still rising and ministers have told Government to look at waste and tackle inefficiency. Despite all our efforts our Debt/GDP ratio is still rising rather than falling.-

2.1 Risks;- The progressive decline in export manufacturing industry, the rising cost of energy, imported materials and products presents a problem for the future. The new objective of low cost export growth for a population without transport will require the provision of workshops or workplaces within walking distance of their homes. The need for individuals without jobs to seek itinerant employment should be recognised and provision made for personal transport and off street secure parking at home and at work. The present trend in Redhill towards family unfriendly micro-flats without storage space, garden or secure parking for any form of transport, combined with the history of local crime and expressions of anger in vandalism and damage. Residents may wish that they could vacate such an area or may participate in social unrest.

3.0 Transport Bottlenecks;-

Both Redhill and Reigate suffer from through traffic transport Bottlenecks.

The Highway Authority scheme proposed to increase traffic capacity in Redhill by enlarging the Roundabouts. This scheme proved to be unacceptable.

The present Transport proposals for Redhill creates rather than resolves the following problems;-

- a. Increased maintenance costs and energy consumption on traffic signals and associated traffic delay costs with the related non productive time for all users.
- b. (see Report No.18 on the value of Roundabouts versus Traffic Signals)
- c. The introduction of new traffic bottlenecks and proposed increase in traffic flow at the Railway Station.
- d. The lack of space for safe cycle routes.
- e. The small bus station and lack of Bus parking facilities, the obstruction caused to main traffic routes by on street bus parking.
- f. The effect of the extra carbon emissions on air and noise pollution and population health.
- g. Because the current proposals will increase through traffic journey times some vehicular traffic can be expected to transfer to the other bottleneck at Reigate.
- h. It is therefore again requested that all traffic routes through the Borough be subject to a transport review with particular attention being given to the effect of the proposed Redhill scheme on the other transport bottlenecks.
 - i Debottlenecking roads through the urban area may prove to be excessively expensive as well as unacceptable. The alternatives previously suggested for consideration may prove to be more in accordance with the waste and inefficiency objectives set out in paragraph 2 above.**

4.0 Other Items;-

(a) The present Borough policy of ensuring that homes are provided for families should be

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in conflict with the objective of employment and Export led growth.

(f) It is suggested that the function of traffic suppression rests with Central Government rather than the LA i.e. The Possible use of the Carbon Tax, and removal of the subsidised leased vehicle from the long distance commuter transport market.

(g) It is suggested that it is the function of the Highway Authority (HA) to provide a Transport System that provides a free flowing low cost route for all those engaged in the Export objective. **However it is unreasonable to expect the HA or any other infrastructure provider to make provision for traffic flows, safe cycle, pedestrian routes and other essential infrastructure facilities without there being detailed knowledge of the sub area population growth target.**

8.0 TRANSPORT an OVERVIEW

Ref. ANNEX "C"

ANNEX B;-

REDHILL PARKING;-

Belfry Car park;- (controlled by the Belfry management) To be retained with provision for roof level expansion . Park closes at 19.30. This may need to be extended to allow for use by late night café opening and residential parking assuming that security is not a problem
Marketfield car park (council owned and operated)
Space for residential use with Options for a, Town Square, b, leasing, c, Other uses.

Clarendon Road (Council owned and operated)
Retain to accommodate and reduce the obstruction problem of on street parking

Gloucester Road (Council owned and operated)
Needs to be retained for secure day and overnight lorry, residents parking

Brighton Road, & London Road North, On street, time limited, free parking at entrance to market field,, Brook Road, and Cromwell/ Fairfax road area. If deleted for traffic flow reasons alternative sites will be required.

Where housing units are not provided with garaging and in order to reduce and avoid divisive and obstructive on street parking it is assumed that residents will be able to obtain long term parking permits for use within the council run car parks

Railway Station HUB (commuter parking)
The population expansion within the Borough and LEP area makes necessary additional parking for cycles, scooters, vehicles, taxis and busses. **The present proposals are quite clearly inadequate at both Redhill and Merstham stations.**

Supermarket and business parking;-
Parking schemes operated and priced to ensure the viability to their business. Other businesses should provide space for Employee parking rather than park on narrow service roads or footways and cause obstruction.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS;-

It is suggested that the residential parking for the 700 + town centre units and adjoining development areas be subject to review.

The minister's relaxation of the parking space restrictions per housing unit appears to be at

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variance with the new 25%- 50% additional restrictions proposed within the plan.

The potential lack of secure garage parking facilities for vehicles including cycles and scooters ,within an area reported to have a high crime rate, may in practice be a deterrent and may result in the failure of the early morning work ethic and frustrate the journey to work and full employment The effect of treating Redhill residents differently and to an apparent lower standard than other residents within the County of Surrey seem unfair, may result in social unrest and have an effect on the desirability of the housing units and profile of the town. Local estate agents advise that flats in the town centre without parking facilities are difficult to let. Developed areas such as Park 25 and at Watercolour developed in recent years, have divisive on street parking problems. .

Commuters to whom the £ 5 plus parking fee is a serious matter, needs are satisfied by parking in residential areas outside the limits of the parking zones. This parking not only infuriates residents but damages the footway, obstructs, cycle lanes, access for delivery, maintenance, and the emergency vehicles. This growing demand for Parking places and any restriction proposed should be recorded and included in any realistic proposal to increase or reduce the number of off street parking places.

Some business experts recommend that profits can be improved by reducing the price and increasing turnover.

BUS and COACH PARK;-

In the Plan there is no mention of provision for the parking for buses, the bus depot at Lesborne road having been converted to offices. A feature of the bus station is the lack of facility for parking buses prior to the time at which the journey starts. The current use of Market field way blocks the cycle lane and one of the two lanes on this important route, obstructs the sightlines and the pedestrian route across the A23 /A25.

The Redhill Hub at one time had an excellent coach service that passed through the town but Traffic delay through the area has resulted in the service being diverted via the M23.

PARKING MESSAGE DISPLAY BOARDS

Expanding Towns make maximum use of the existing parking spaces by the provision of automatic message boards located at the entrances to the town. With such a high percentage of vehicles drivers passing through the town or parking on the highway without updated knowledge of the parking spaces available the provision of parking vacancy display signs may prove to be of value.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

Various solutions to the problem of pedestrian access between the Town, Rail and Bus station, school and areas to the East have been discussed. As funding may be only by the developer / retailer their views and alternatives to the footbridge need to be sought.

.David P & JMC January 2012

ANNEX “C”

TRANSPORT and STAINABILITY OVERVIEW (in conjunction with reports previously submitted)

The objective is to discuss recent developments that may materially affect transport and carbon emission.

1.0 Recent Developments;-

1.1 The research, development, construction and operation of Refinery processes for the conversion of **GAS to OIL** are now in operation.

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1.2 The process of “ **Fracking**” enables substantial volumes of Gas to be released from the Jurassic geological strata.

1.3 These developments have to be related to the previous estimates for the remaining life of low cost carbon fuels, carbon emissions and the Government carbon tax designed to reduce fuel consumption and carbon emissions both locally and internationally.

1.4 All nations with growing populations need low cost sources of energy. Does the plan make provision for and space to support this need?

1.5 Some comparable but approximate figures have been produced at Cambridge to show the relative energy consumption of various forms of transport.

Energy consumption in kilo-watt hours to carry one tonne a distance of one kilometre;-

Air freight	---	1.6
Road freight	---	1.1
Rail freight	---	0.1
Shipping freight	---	0.05
Electric car	---	0.1

Approximate and with a range problem.

2.0 Sustainability;-

2.1 The action plan attempts to address the problem of sustainability. Sustainable energy sources in the Redhill area are likely to be limited to solar energy and some wind power other sources such as wave, wind, hydro, tide and tide flow will only be available elsewhere and in any event suffer from the normal electrical transmission losses.

2.2 It is suggested that the carbon emission and cost of transport for goods in the drive for low cost export growth will be lower if work places and homes are positioned close to a Port. Perhaps the most cost effective location with the lowest carbon emission for export related development will be where there is an unemployed workforce near white land within easy and free flowing access to the shipping routes. If work places are to be provided within the borough an easy access to the Motorway / Rail sidings will be necessary for both low cost and low carbon export competitiveness.

3.0 Cycle accidents;-

In considering the recently reported growth of cycle accidents and death rates within London, the associated personal stress and distress, consideration has also to be given to the costs to the community in lost working time, income and cost to the Hospital services. It is suggested that in designing for an expanded community with the accent on greater use of the cycle proper consideration be given to the segregation of vulnerable travellers from other vehicular traffic rather than create a London accident rate here in Surrey. Recent inspection reveals that the North Europeans are well in advance of our present standards.