



Pre-Application Reference:	PE/00977/2018
Location:	ROM VALLEY WAY RETAIL PARK AND SEEDBED CENTRE, DAVISON WAY, ROMFORD
Ward:	ROMFORD TOWN
Description:	REDEVELOPMENT OF SITE TO PROVIDE RESIDENTIAL LED MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT
Case Officer:	Simon Thelwell

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This proposed development is being presented to enable Members of the committee to view it before a planning application is submitted and to comment upon it. The development does not constitute an application for planning permission and any comments made upon it are provisional and subject to full consideration of any subsequent application and the comments received as a result of consultation, publicity and notification.
- 1.2 The proposed planning application has been the subject of pre-application meetings with Officers.
- 1.3 The scheme is at an early stage of development and the proposals will evolve over the coming months. At this early stage, Member feedback in regard to broad principles for the development would be useful.

2 PROPOSAL AND LOCATION DETAILS

2.1 Proposal

- Redevelopment of site with demolition of all existing buildings.

- Provision of employment floorspace to replace the Seedbed Centre.
- Residential development would be the predominant use of the site.
- The quantum, layout and density of the development is at an early stage and subject to a masterplan being developed for the site.
- Vehicle access would be as existing from Rom Valley Way, using the current access opposite Queen's Hospital, and from Davison Road.

2.2 **Site and Surroundings**

- The site is located on the northeast side of Rom Valley Way, opposite Queens Hospital and the former Ice Rink site.
- The site measures 2.81 hectares.
- The eastern and southern boundary of the site is the River Rom, whilst to the north is the Homebase site.
- The site has very good access to public transport and other services, it is approximately 600 metre walk from Romford station. The PTAL of the site ranges from 6a to 4.
- Vehicular access to the retail park is via Rom Valley Way, whilst the Seedbed Centre and Snow & Rock Store is accessed by Davidson Way.
- Currently on the site are five retail units, providing around 6,000 sq metres of floor space and forty business units of various sizes providing around 3,500 sq metres of floorspace.

Planning History

- 2.3 The site was developed in the late 1980's. There have been various planning applications in relation to the retail and employment uses but none of particular significance.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 At this stage, it is intended that the following will be consulted regarding any subsequent planning application:

- Mayor of London

- London Fire Brigade
- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Thames Water
- Essex and Suffolk Water
- EDF Energy
- National Grid
- Transport for London

4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1 In accordance with planning legislation, the developer will be engaging with key stakeholders, such as local Members and businesses, on these proposals as part of the pre-application process.

5 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The main planning issues raised by the application that the committee must consider are:

- Principal of development
- Quantum of development
- Design Quality and Scale
- Housing mix and affordable housing provision
- Access and servicing
- Parking
- Impact on infrastructure provision

5.2 Principal of Development

- Within the current policies in the Local Development Framework, the Seedbed Centre is designated as a Secondary Employment Area. Policy DC10 protects such areas for light industrial, industrial and storage/distribution uses.
- The Council's submitted Local Plan is under examination with the examination due to reconvene in May 2019. The Local Plan designates the Seedbed Centre as a Locally Significant Industrial Site with policy to protect the site for continued industrial and employment use (Policy 19).
- In order to comply with policy, there would need to be retention of existing employment uses or a commensurate or improved provision as part of any

redevelopment. Relocation of/reprovision for existing businesses would also need to be considered.

- There is no planning policy protection for out of town retail and as such there is no in principle objection to the loss of the retail units
- Subject to the retention/replacement/reprovision of suitable employment space, there is considered scope to provide residential development on the site as part of any redevelopment.

5.3 Quantum of development

- Given the site is located in the Romford Housing Zone and close to existing services and public transport, there is an opportunity to make the most of the site in terms of the quantum of units, taking account of the requirements regarding housing mix. It is considered appropriate for a design led approach to be followed to formulate a masterplan that informs the optimal level of development on the site.

5.4 Design quality and scale

- The buildings currently on site are of limited quality although their impact is reduced due to their limited height and position set back from the dual carriageway. A high quality design would be expected, deriving from a masterplan which would inform the scale of any buildings and their relationship to surroundings and the resulting character formed by the new development.
- The relationship to the River Rom and key routes to and from the site are important considerations.

5.5 Housing mix and affordable housing provision

- Planning policy seeks to provide a range of housing sizes in new development and it would be expected that a reasonable proportion of larger size dwellings be provided in any redevelopment, subject to providing suitable amenity space.
- In accordance with the Mayor of London's policy and draft Havering Local Plan policy, a 35% provision of affordable housing with 70% social rent would mean that no viability testing of the proposals would be required. Any lesser provision would need to be justified through viability appraisal.

5.6 Access and Servicing

- Further information on traffic levels is required to assess whether there are any likely impacts on existing junctions.
- Part of the masterplanning process should ensure that all areas of the development can be adequately serviced including allowing flexibility in the type of employment uses that can be accommodated.

5.7 Parking

- Given the proximity of the site to Romford town centre and related services, the level of parking could reasonably be limited for both the residential and employment components of the proposal, although it should be demonstrated that the proposal would not result in any overspill parking in streets surrounding the development.

5.8 Impact on infrastructure provision and mitigation

- At this early stage of the scheme development, options for any on-site infrastructure requirements arising from the development should be considered.
- The Council's proposed CIL charges are currently under examination and may be in place by the time an application is submitted. Subject to that and any on site provision, contributions may be sought for the following:
 - School places
 - Pedestrian/cycle improvements
 - Town centre environmental improvements
 - Public transport contribution
 - River Rom improvements
 - Open space/sports facilities provision/improvement
 - Health facilities
- As well as the above, the proposal may attract the following section 106 obligations to mitigate the impact of the development:
 - Apprenticeship scheme for construction jobs
 - Job brokerage for new jobs created
 - Affordable and/or Start-up business space provided
 - Restriction on parking permits

- Car club provision
- Affordable housing

5.9 The proposal would attract the following Community Infrastructure Levy contributions to mitigate the impact of the development:

- Mayoral CIL towards Crossrail, based on increase in floorspace
- If applicable, Havering CIL, based on increase in floorspace

5.10 **Other Planning Issues**

- Archaeology
- Ecological Impact and Mitigation
- River Rom improvements
- Sustainable design and construction measures
- Secured by Design

Conclusions

5.11 The proposed development is at an early stage in its development and will be developed through a design led masterplan approach over the coming months. At this early stage, Members' guidance will be most helpful to incorporate as the various elements are brought together.