

THE REIGATE SOCIETY

The Civic Society for Reigate, Redhill and Merstham

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5th.draft for consultation

HP REPORT, No.46.F (see also No.44, and 45)

METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT. TRANSPORT LOGISTICS, EMPLOYMENT,

CORE STRATEGY CONSULTATIONS
REIGATE and BANSTEAD (RB) 03.02.2013.

SUMMARY of SUGGESTIONS;- No.1.0, 1.4, 2.3,3.6, 3.7, 3.8. And Options.4.0.

1.0 THE METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT (MGB) and Metropolitan Open Land (MOL).
Ref; Para. 8. Of the core document.

It is SUGGESTED that the CORE proposals are not in accordance with the various published policy documents set out below.

1.1 The mayors London Plan (LP) incorporates the Metropolitan Green Belt and states;-

(i) " Para. No.4. No net loss of open space designated for protection"

(ii) " Strong support for economic growth that contributes positively to quality of life but without having an unacceptable impact on the environment or encroaching on the Metropolitan Green Belt"

(iii) The South London Boroughs, investigated by the Reigate Society, appear to have incorporated the London Plan in their CORE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.

(iv) An Inspector said;-

" Para.3.20 Thus notwithstanding the council's evidence that there is demand for additional land for warehousing/logistics, if that demand cannot be met through redevelopment, it will have to be met elsewhere in London or outside its boundaries. Seeking to meet that demand, locally, would not justify the development of open land in the borough contrary to objective 1 of the LP".

"Para.3.23 Under the LP (MOL) is synonymous with Metropolitan Green Belt".

1.2 The Epsom and Ewell District Local Plan for the MGB (also a member of the coast to capital LEP) sets out Government Policy, and the Surrey County Structure Plan in some detail.

1.3 The Reigate and Bansted 2012 Core Strategy Amendments are a major reversal of the policy set out in R&B Chapter 4 COUNTRYSIDE MGB and the Surrey County Structure Plan Policy. The proposed continual nibbling of the Green Belt at the edge of the developed Urban periphery can only result in a major MGB land take and is therefore contrary to and may frustrate the objectives of neighboring Local Authorities and the London Plan for the maintenance of the Metropolitan Green Belt.

1.4 IT IS SUGGESTED ;- That the Development proposals appear to be contrary to the published policy objectives of Local Adjacent Districts, the County of Surrey structure Plan Policy, and the London Plan policy to protect the METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT.

1.5 The South London Councils Core Strategies may have an effect upon R & B for example;-

- One Authority states that it has a demand for 27,000 homes some of which need to have 3 or 4 bedrooms, but has only found space for 20,200 homes.

Q-----SO WHAT of the 16 UK DISTRICTS with a recorded static or DECLINING POPULATION ?

- Several state that Brown Field sites will be used for new homes.

Q-----WHAT IF The 1.1 million projected extra population for London and or Reigate cannot find employment because brown field sites are no longer available for business expansion?. Will this lead to more travel or alternatively more unsustainable unemployment?

- Other LA's expect to redevelop property along major traffic routes (Ribbon development?) as well as town centers.
- Some say that there are flooding risks to be taken into consideration.
- Other London Boroughs expect the Developer/Contractor Team to meet infrastructure costs,.
- The South London Boroughs attribute some of the high unemployment problem to the poor road infrastructure and transport facilities.
- In considering employment opportunities and transport requirements several quote Heathrow and the Gatwick Diamond for future employment

Q-----WHAT IF ; - The best option for travel to and from work is personal transport?

2.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT at MERSTHAM and EAST REDHILL;-

2.1 The Press release statement;- "Areas that we have chosen - within the Green Belt- are areas that most people would not recognise as good agricultural green belt land."?"

2.2 The high standard of the metropolitan green belt landscape is best demonstrated by the view to the West from Merstham cricket ground and at Spring Bottom further to the East.

2.3 Less appealing aspects of the Merstham area are related to the ACT of MAN for which past planners must accept their element of responsibility. A plan for future restoration of the Metropolitan Green Belt is needed for the benefit of the growing London and local communities.

2.4 The Economic profile of SURREY states that;- " Merstham is one of Surrey's four super output areas that are among England's most deprived 25%." and as a result the reconstruction of poor development to higher standards is agreed. in principle. What is not agreed is the suggested green belt take from one of the most attractive valleys between the Chalk and Sandstone Surrey hills.

2.5 In some, but not all, cases the ACT of MAN is related to the failure to restore mineral extraction workings where cash funds or financial bonds were not put aside for planting and landscape restoration to lakes and islands within the Green Belt before being sold or abandoned and or the Company placed in liquidation Please See RS Report No.8 for further details.

2.6 Attention is drawn to the traffic restrictions and poor access to East Merstham that is at;-

- a) Rockshaw Road over Rail bridge, (b) The narrow School Hill Road and its poor junction with the A23 and the road under rail low bridges. (c) Battlebridge Lane road under rail low bridges and (d) the single track access to the new Watercolour Estate via the Industrial estate.

2.7 Previously factories and workshops were located on brown field sites and provided employment for local residents. But is now allocated to homes. Please see Report No. 45 for other details.

3.00 TRANSPORT and LOGISTICS (See also previous reports No.1.1 etc.)

3.1 The Published ECONOMIC PROFILE OF SURREY dated 24.09.2012 States that;-
" The motorway system in Surrey is currently operating close to or above operational capacity where flow breakdown is increasingly occurring, and resulting in congestion".

3.2 " The population of Surrey is projected to grow by 19.5 % between 2008 and 2033."
Please see Report No. 45 for the projected growth at R&B of up by 32,000 or 23%

3.3 Isabel Dedring Deputy Mayor for Transport is reported as saying there is a need to plan for the increase in population and the need to boost investment in the road and rail networks "
"That. Roads carry 80% of all trips in London."-. NCE;-28.06.2012.

Q---WHAT IF;- The the projected population rise of 1.1 Million by 2031 arrives or is exceeded?

3.4 Recently the Ministry for Transport has been requested to review and possibly reinstate the one time proposed M23 / A23 Interchange at Hooley north of Merstham in Surrey

.3.5 The Ministry for Transport M25 ORBIT STUDY REPOPRT published in 2003 states ;-
"We consider that developments in the vicinity of the M25 which generate large volumes of vehicle trips should be controlled so that the benefits of the newly provided Trunk Road capacity are not eroded. We recommend that a review of current controls on land-use development adjacent to the trunk road and motorway network should be undertaken."

3.6 IT IS SUGGESTED ;- That this Orbit Report has been overtaken by events and makes necessary a Review of the South London Motorway policy. The policy might include the current transport flow and and predictions for future traffic growth up to 2035 and beyond.

Q--- WHAT IF;- The projected traffic growth figure for the SE of 44% by 2035 proves to be correct or is exceeded See also RS Reports No's.1.1 and 35 and 36.

3.7 IT IS SUGGESTED;- That the M23/A23 Hooley Interchange proposal has also been overtaken by events in that, should it provide improved access to the motorway network will increase the THROUGH TRAFFIC FLOW on the A23 through REDHILL and that consideration be given now to its relocation to the South of Redhill. So that through traffic can be transferred to this M23 North / South Bypass.

3.8 IT IS SUGGESTED ;- that the draft traffic scheme for Redhill places the town at the center of an island ROUNDABOUT similar in some ways to that at the Elephant and Castle in London

with the added disadvantage of being located in a potentially air polluted valley hollow contained by the high railway embankment on the down hill South side of the town.

The suggestion made in para.3.7 above may help to resolve this problem,

See also RS Reports No's 5 and 7.

4.0 ALTERNATIVE BUSINESS OPTIONS ;- for consideration.

4.1 It is reported that the UK current account deficit is minus -£12.83 billion. and that export growth is now needed for the long term maintenance of employment and UK living standards.

4.2 Successful export industries in the past had ample supplies of energy and materials,with low transport costs.and a skilled workforce. Today the lowest cost transport is that of shipping and the highest is air freight. See RS Report No.24.para 5.2.

4.3 The ONS population Report for 2011 indicates that up to TEN local authority areas close to Ports have a declining population, may be suitable locations for the encouragement of growing export industries, and may have the added attraction of clean air and other recreational health benefits.

4.4 Should it be decided that the population expansion overflow on to the Metropolitan Green Belt is not the right solution then as suggested in some of the London Boroughs,amended Core Strategy and Inspectors Reports, the expansion should take place elsewhere presumably on white land within the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area or any other other LEP areas.provided with an adequate supporting transport and employment infrastructure.

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