

List of Planning Benefits

Application Ref. 19/0646/FUL – Richmond Council
Greggs, Gould Road, Twickenham, TW2 6RT



- The scheme delivers 116 new homes, including 46 affordable homes (equating to 40% of units), many of which are family-sized with private gardens to meet demand in the borough.
- The affordable homes are provided as affordable rent, intermediate rent and shared ownership units in a mix agreed with officers to best meet an acknowledged local need for affordable housing. It has been accepted that the affordable housing offer is the best the site can viably sustain. All homes are Part M4(2) compliant with all apartment buildings accessible via a level threshold and a lift ensuring accessibility for all and suitability for lifetime occupation.
- Since Greggs relocated their operations over 2 years ago, the site has been marketed extensively for employment uses without success. In line with paragraph 120 of the NPPF (2019), it is considered that there is no reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the site's allocated use and an application has been made for an alternative use that will contribute to meeting an unmet need in the area through the delivery of housing, including affordable housing. Locally, there is substantial unmet need for affordable housing, with Richmond's latest Annual Monitoring Report (2018/19) stating that just 17% of units delivered that year (70 units net) were affordable, considerably below the borough's strategic target (50%). This is echoed in the Mayor's comments in the GLA's Stage II referral for the development at the Former Stag Brewery in Mortlake (refs. 18/0547/FUL, 18/0548/FUL and 18/0549/FUL), which stated that "over the last three years Richmond Council has underdelivered on its housing targets and significantly and consistently underdelivered on its affordable housing targets." Without a viable residential-led scheme, it is highly likely that the site would remain dormant for many years to come.
- The redevelopment of the site will not prejudice the future of other identified employment sites elsewhere in the Borough as each application is considered on its merits and this site has its own particular circumstances. As recognised by the recent grant of consent on the adjacent employment site which could not sustain a commercial operation in this location, as well as submitted marketing evidence and commentary, this site is also unattractive to the commercial market. It is poorly located within a residential area, which in the past when active, gave rise to a long history of neighbour complaints regarding noise, disturbance, highway safety and damage to residents' vehicles from commercial vans and lorries. The use of the site for a food manufacturing/preparation operation in the heart of a residential area is an anachronism. In designating the site for employment, the Council's own consultants (Peter Brett Associates) recognised the shortcomings of the site in preparing employment evidence for the local plan (the London Borough of Richmond

Employment Sites and Premises Study (2017)). In the past, officers themselves have acknowledged the access issues of the West Twickenham Cluster. Resumption of the use of the site for food preparation/manufacture is likely to be unpopular with local residents.

- The new scheme provides 175sqm of high-quality affordable workspace (Class B1), provided at 50% of market rent, to benefit local small businesses. This provision is anticipated to create approximately 18 full time jobs which would not be viable without the subsidy arising from this scheme. Without subsidy, there would be no employment use at all on the site. The construction process will also result in substantial local job creation, training and apprenticeships.
- There will be significant improvements to the amenity of neighbouring residents by removing an unneighbourly industrial use. This will decrease nuisance arising from noise, long operating hours and HGV movements. Furthermore, since the site has been vacant it has been the subject of anti-social behaviour and given rise to significant security concerns with neighbours having reported break-ins and incidences of individuals climbing on the roof of the disused buildings to access adjacent residential properties. The on-site security alarms have also been activated on numerous occasions, creating disturbance for nearby residents.
- As demonstrated in Point 2 Surveyors' Daylight/Sunlight Assessment, the proposed development would result in large gains in daylight and sunlight for the majority of properties along Norcutt Road (3-59 odd) as well as Mereway Cottages. Overall, 30 properties surrounding the site contain rooms/windows that will experience some form of daylight or sunlight benefit as a result of the implementation of the development.
- The site currently comprises poor-quality vacant buildings in a walled-off and unsightly industrial site. The proposal has been carefully designed to respond to the site and surrounding context and was developed alongside engagement with the local authority, local community and stakeholders. High quality architecture with traditional forms but contemporary detailing is proposed with robust, natural and hard-wearing materiality that references the residential character of the area and the site's industrial history. The proposal completes the street frontage along Edwin Road with harmonious massing and architectural design. The design results in an appropriate density for the area that optimises the site for housing delivery while minimising impact to resident amenity. The proposed architecture and landscape design represent high-quality design which will significantly improve local townscape, street scene and visual amenity.
- The proposal will enable public access to the River Crane at the northern end of the site to the public through provision of high-quality landscaping and play space. This will also facilitate public access to the proposed pedestrian footbridge across the River Crane providing a link for surrounding residents to the Mereway Nature Park (Metropolitan Open Land). The proposal results in an increase in biodiversity and planting across the site. As the existing industrial buildings come up to the riverfront,

the proposals will result in an improved riverside condition with reduction in light spill and provision of a natural corridor along the river designed in consultation with the Environment Agency. Contributions towards in-river channel works are also secured by Unilateral Undertaking.

- The proposal has been designed with sustainability in mind, with provision of rooftop PV panels, air source heat pumps, efficient mechanical ventilation, efficient lighting, sub-metering to mechanical plant and controlled heating. The development provides a 37% improvement on Part L Building Regulations and provides an offset payment to meet zero carbon targets. BREEAM 'Excellent' is targeted for the affordable workspace. Electric car charging points are integrated into the proposal to ensure future-proofing.
- The proposal is accompanied by a Unilateral Undertaking to secure planning obligations, including financial contributions, to mitigate any potential impact arising from the development. Planning obligations secured include:
 - 46 units of affordable housing;
 - 175sqm of affordable office workspace;
 - Contributions towards off-site play space;
 - Payment towards Richmond's carbon offset fund;
 - Contribution to Richmond's Air Quality Action Fund;
 - Contribution towards in-river channel works;
 - Local Employment Agreement for the construction process;
 - Public right to access the Riverwalk;
 - Restriction on resident access to car parking permits in the CPZ;
 - Provision of 5 years of free car club membership to residents of the development.