

DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting for the hearing of deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes following which the Cabinet Member may speak in response. The deputation will be thanked for attending and its subject matter noted.

(a) Deputation concerning Anston House, 137-147 Preston Road, Brighton – Mr Nick Green (Spokesperson)

We are writing on behalf of the freehold owner of Anston House, a company called 06001182 Ltd in relation to the e-petition for compulsory purchase that we understand is to be considered by the Cabinet Member on 10th March 2011.

The petition states:

“We are calling on the Council to exercise its powers under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to undertake a Compulsory Purchase Order on Anston House and the adjacent site, in order to return the site to use, and to create a landmark building at this important gateway to our city.”

Contrary to what the petition states, a considerable amount of work has been undertaken in respect of the site in the last 6 months. The purpose of this letter is to explain what has taken place, and what is planned from this point onwards.

Summary of the work undertaken to date:

- LPA Receivers have been appointed in order to take back control of the site from the former owner (a dissolved development company) with a view to working up a viable development scheme in the current market with the financial support of the mortgagee.
- Travellers have been moved on from the site, and the site has been secured and swept for needles.
- During 2010 meetings took place between representatives of the freehold owner and senior planning officers at the Council. The overall approach to the development of the site was discussed during these meetings, including the mix of uses and the issues of height and density.
- We have submitted comprehensive representations in response to the consultation on the draft Core Strategy Preferred Options.
- The freeholder has overseen the appointment of Urban Splash (www.urbansplash.co.uk) a well known property development company with an excellent track record of successfully redeveloping challenging brownfield sites, to act as development manager for the project.
- Toward the end of 2010, interviews were held with 4 firms of architects, in conjunction with the design officer at BHCC. As a result of this, renowned architectural firm Allford Hall Monaghan Morris (www.ahmm.co.uk) has been appointed to draw up plans for the redevelopment of the site.
- Other professionals have been appointed to cover such matters as rights of light, planning and commercial development.

The next steps:

- We have been instructed to progress the development plans and preparation of a planning application. We are intending to discuss the evolving proposals with Planning Officers at a series of meetings over the coming weeks.
- The experienced professional team is working to an agreed programme requiring the submission of a planning application in August this year for redevelopment of the site for mixed residential and office purposes.

As you can see, our client has been busy preparing to formulate a development proposal over the past few months. This is a difficult site, but we wish to assure Members that its redevelopment is a top priority for our clients, and we will be bringing development proposals forward in the near future. As part of the design development proposals, we will be undertaking comprehensive public consultation with the local community and other stakeholders.

Additionally, may we reiterate that our client has only had control of this site since 21st June 2010 and over that period has shown a robust intention to develop the site by holding preliminary meetings with planning officers and appointing an experienced team of consultants. The intention of the e-petition appears to be similar, and therefore may we respectfully suggest that no public benefit would be achieved by compulsorily acquiring the site.

Therefore we ask that you dismiss the petition.