

SMBC4/1

**THE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF SOLIHULL
(SHIRLEY TOWN CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2007**

SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE

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for

SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

1. PURPOSE OF THIS EVIDENCE

1.1 My evidence aims to set the scheme in a wider context and demonstrate how the Council is using its land and compulsory purchase powers to both facilitate the regeneration of Shirley and deliver regional policy and the corporate objectives of the Council.

1.2 My evidence also demonstrates how the Council uses its role as landowner in partnership with the private sector to develop, detail and deliver an economically viable scheme which achieves both commercial and public policy objectives.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) was made under Section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Section 226 (1A) recognises that a local authority must not exercise its power to compulsorily acquire land in their area unless they think the development, redevelopment or improvement is likely to achieve any one or more of the following objects:

- (a) the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of their area;
- (b) the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of their area;
- (c) the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area;

2.2 The Council is confident that the implementation of the scheme will achieve all 3 of the above criteria.

2.3 With regard to the promotion and improvement of the economic well-being of the area, the scheme will raise the profile of Shirley and encourage the level of investment and high street retailer presence that is required to address the recognised weaknesses of the town centre. The scheme will deliver economic

growth, generate employment opportunities and ensure that Shirley is competitive within the regional retail hierarchy.

- 2.4 One of the key economic challenges for the Borough is to '*realise the economic potential of Shirley town centre*'. This challenge is identified in the Council's Economic Development Strategy (Core Document (CD)/H/10), a document which is produced in response to the Council's duty to promote the economic well-being of the area. The implementation of the Heart of Shirley scheme will help to address this key economic challenge.
- 2.5 With regard to the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of the area, benefits will also be secured. The development includes residential apartments including retirement and affordable accommodation, as well as extra care units designed for the elderly. The provision of affordable housing is a key priority for the Borough as a whole and the extra care units and retirement apartments will help to promote people's independence for longer and sustain their quality of life.
- 2.6 The mixed-use nature of the scheme will add vitality to the centre and will ensure that new and existing residents of Shirley have good access to local services, within a well-designed environment and without the need to travel. In addition, the increased activity generated by the development will create a well-used environment that will help to improve safety and security. The design of the scheme will also promote natural surveillance and will thereby help to reduce crime and fear of crime.
- 2.7 With regard to the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of the area, the development will deliver a high quality public realm that creates a sense of place and local identity. The highway works at the Haslucks Green Road / Stratford Road junction will improve traffic flow in the area and enhancements to Shirley Park will be secured. The physical regeneration of the town centre that will develop

through the implementation of the scheme will enhance the overall quality of the local environment.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 The Heart of Shirley scheme represents a plan-led approach to tackling the problems of a town in decline.

3.2 The scheme will provide a high quality, mixed use development which will secure economic growth, stimulate new activity and jobs, provide a mix of new and affordable housing that also meets special needs, as well as a revitalised public realm. The development will also enable other improvements to be secured which together will deliver the regeneration of Shirley town centre.

3.3 The delivery of the Heart of Shirley scheme will make an important contribution to achieving the West Midlands and the Council's corporate agenda. It therefore needs to be taken forward properly and in a locally sensitive manner, but also positively and assertively.

3.4 The implementation of the Heart of Shirley scheme supports and delivers the Council's corporate agenda as outlined in the following policy documents:

- An Economic Development Strategy for Solihull 2008 – 2011 (CD/H/10)
- Community Strategy for Solihull 2003 – 2013 (CD/H/9)
- Council Plan 2007 – 2010 (CD/H/8)
- Solihull Housing Strategy 2004 – 2008 (CD/H/11)

- Solihull Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy 2005 – 2008 (CD/H/7)
- Solihull Green Spaces Strategy (CD/H/4)

- 3.5 The scheme will help to deliver the key corporate objectives contained in the documents listed above and these documents are produced to help ensure that the Council fulfils its duty to promote the economic, social and environmental well being of the area. The scheme therefore supports the requirements of S226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 3.6 The use of compulsory purchase powers will facilitate the regeneration of this important local centre and without the scheme it is considered that Shirley will fail to function as a proper town centre and continue to suffer decline contrary to the Council's wider corporate policy objectives.
- 3.7 The use of compulsory purchase powers to secure implementation of the scheme is wholly in accordance with and delivers the expectations of national, regional and local policy.
- 3.8 The scheme is an example of how the Council is using its land and compulsory purchase powers to implement its policies and I commend the CPO to the Inquiry.

ENDS