

May 2017

As I'm sure you may be aware, RBKC has finally submitted their new development plan to PINS for examination and eventual adoption.

The plan remains emerging and RBKC are still saying they are only giving the emerging policies minimal weight in their decision making. However, as time progresses, they should start giving it more weight in line with national guidance.

The main highlights are;

housing - both amalgamations and affordable housing thresholds.

Retail - reintroducing the ability to bring complementary uses to high streets in certain circumstances.

And Employment zones - relaxation on no residential in these zones.

Two to one amalgamation will be allowed as long as the resulting unit is no greater than 170sqm.

Affordable housing thresholds have been lowered to trigger at 650sqm with a 35% allocation. As well, as soon as the 650sqm is triggered, the 35% applies to the whole development and not just the floorspace over the 650. They are tightening provision on site and this is expected in all circumstances unless you can demonstrate exceptional circumstances and anything less than 35% or offered off site will need a viability assessment.

Protection of retail uses is being relaxed slightly but this is very site specific. The change follows the national shift to bring empty units back into use and is dependent on maintaining a main retail function so different shopping areas have different rules

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and what other uses are currently present will also affect the ability to change from retail.

Employment zones - residential will be allowed in employment zones as long as it is the minimum needed to bring forward a substantial uplift in office/B-use space. Whereas previously residential was not acceptable on principal, it will be okay if a decent uplift in commercial space is also planned.

These are the main changes and, as always, if you have specific sites you'd like us to look at, please send the details through. These policies are yet to be adopted but do show the direction RBKC wish to head in. The examination is penciled in for over the summer with adoption following around October assuming no major issues arise.

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