

# HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

**Joan Walsh**

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Ministry for Housing Communities & Local Government  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

15 June 2021

Dear Sirs

## **Reigate & Banstead Borough Council 'Levelling Up Fund' Bid - Horley Town Centre Regeneration**

We refer to the bid by Reigate & Banstead Borough Council to the Government's 'Levelling Up Fund' to revitalise Horley town centre through an extensive programme of regeneration projects, including major public realm improvements with new outdoor spaces, redevelopment to provide more affordable homes and improved accessibility into the town along with enhanced parking facilities.

The purpose of our letter is to offer the full support of Horley Town Council for this bid to invest in the delivery of such vital redevelopment through contemporary urban planning, to stimulate economic growth and steer towards a more prosperous future for the Horley community.

As a proactive stakeholder, Horley Town Council keeps abreast with funding opportunities and investment programmes aimed to deliver local regeneration projects by working strategically and collaboratively with key partners, businesses and community groups. We have aligned with a strong collective voice, calling for vital investment to drive economic growth and productivity to stimulate employment opportunities through the innovation and enterprise of local businesses and organisations.

Horley Town Council actively consults with other public authorities, agencies and outside bodies on key projects that need to be delivered, to improve the town to benefit residents, local businesses, visitors and the community as a whole. We liaise closely with Reigate & Banstead Borough Council as a key partner in many respects and aim to influence the Local Plan, where it relates to the regeneration of Horley. This facilitates key improvement projects to be identified and for priorities to be set in the short, medium and longer term which are of fundamental importance to maintain the longstanding viability of the town.

Reigate & Banstead Borough Council has embarked on this major capital programme to invigorate Horley town centre as part of a shared vision to improve the town's vitality, long term potential and to meet the needs of a fast-growing population. At the last census in 2011, there were 23,000 people residing within the parish boundary of Horley, of which 19,485 are registered electors (as at 1 April 2021). Several new residential developments have become occupied since the last census. This figure is therefore likely to rise to a significant population increase, with such associated housing growth underpinning economic growth and these statistics further highlight important demographic factors within the local area.

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Horley is the closest town to Gatwick Airport and, as such, many airport workers reside locally and must access the town's infrastructure, including public transport, to commute to and from work. The town centre and surrounding areas further provide a wide range of hotels and guest houses and it is essential to have in place good accessibility for visitors along with interesting, helpful tourist information and clear directional signage to promote what it has to offer. Some of these issues were formerly addressed in the Town Council's vision for Horley to improve the landscape through a range of public realm improvements and exploring potential for the town's assets, such as, redeveloping some of its car parks. Additional projects (such as increased and better signage) have also been incorporated into an overarching action plan which has been developed with input from outside bodies, businesses and community groups with a shared aspiration to improve the economic development of Horley and to maintain its sustainability for future generations. However, all of these objectives can only be achieved through the benefit of substantial funding.

Amongst the projects identified through this regeneration programme are improvements to the pedestrian and national cycle route into the town, including the railway underpass and along the High Street; the installation of 'pay on exit' parking at the Central and Victoria Road car parks; and redevelopment of the High Street car park (located in the heart of Horley town centre) to provide new homes. We are of the view that these improvement measures will undoubtedly enhance the viability and prospects of our town as a pleasant and lucrative place to live, work and sustain a good quality of life. Improved car parking options and more convenient payment methods are also considered a necessity to increase customer footfall, to help existing businesses survive, to attract increased employment opportunities and to create more stability for High Street shops faced with the threat of online retail competition, especially so during the Coronavirus pandemic.

We feel that the ongoing regeneration of Horley town centre is of paramount importance in order to address the ongoing needs of our community, to improve the 'customer experience' and to influence people's general perception of the town in a much more positive way. As such, these proposed improvement measures through the 'Levelling Up Fund' would, if successful, be enormously beneficial and a very constructive way forward to meet our key objectives.

We appreciate having this opportunity to put forward our comments in support of this bid by Reigate & Banstead Borough Council and very much look forward to hearing the outcome in due course.

Yours sincerely



Joan Walsh  
Town Clerk  
**Horley Town Council**