

# BRIDGE CLOSE

# ESTATE BUSINESS PREMISES' UPDATE

MAY 2018

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## Bridge Close update

People representing the owners and occupiers of the affected business properties at Bridge Close were invited to attend a meeting at the Town Hall on 24 April 2018 to hear the latest on the proposed redevelopment of the Bridge Close area and to discuss matters of concern regarding the proposals.

Neil Stubbings from Havering Council explained that the Council's Cabinet agreed to establish a Joint Venture with FBBCR (a partnership between First Base and Savills Investment Management) and that the legal agreements had been signed in April 2018. Colin Cottage from Glenny explained the process that the Joint Venture and the Council will follow, and gave examples of his experience from development schemes elsewhere which had also involved the acquisition of occupied properties.

The Joint Venture is now able to move forward and start negotiations with the owners and occupiers of affected business properties. We have now written to the freeholders and leaseholders of all business premises at Bridge Close to request a one-to-one meeting.

### At the meetings we want to:

- make sure the information we have is up to date
- understand your future intentions and requirements
- explain in detail the process moving forwards, and next steps as they relate to your business or organisation
- provide information on the forms of compensation and support that are available
- talk to you about relocation options. This will include us appointing a firm of surveyors to search for replacement premises based on your requirements and entitlements. You will also be able to undertake your own search.



**Please contact us if you have not received our letter.**

### Our commitments:

- We want to understand the needs and requirements of each business
- We want businesses to continue trading and to find suitable premises
- We will pay for businesses to obtain independent advice where fees are agreed in advance
- We will improve our communication with businesses and residents
- We will meet all of our legal responsibilities.

### Key dates

- **May 2018:** One-to-one meetings with freeholders and leaseholders of business premises commence, followed by continued negotiation and support
- **January 2019:** Submit planning application
- **July 2019:** Planning permission obtained
- **Summer 2019:** Cabinet approves a Compulsory Purchase Order and an application made to the Secretary of State
- **2021:** First phase starts on-site.

For further information or a copy of previous newsletters, please contact us at [bridge.close@havering.gov.uk](mailto:bridge.close@havering.gov.uk)  
 Also keep an eye on improvements to the Bridge Close website, which will include frequent updates.

## FAQs

A list of frequently asked questions has been prepared and published on the website. This includes questions submitted in writing at the meeting on 24 April 2018.

**Q. Will we meet with both freeholders and leaseholders?**

A. Yes we will be meeting with both freeholders and leaseholders. In the first instance we will try and meet with the freeholder before the leaseholder so that we can better understand at an early stage how best to structure agreements with property owners and their tenants.

**Q. How much money is available to buy the business premises?**

A. Although the Council will not be progressing a CPO immediately, any offers made for properties will be in line with payments owners would receive as compulsory purchase compensation. This will include the market value of any property interests acquired, any justifiable disturbance compensation and loss payments. It will also include reasonably incurred professional fees, subject to agreement of those fees in advance. The Joint Venture (JV) will have sufficient funds to acquire all of the properties it needs.

**Q. Who applies for planning permission?**

A. The JV - Bridge Close Regeneration LLP

**Q. Who gives the planning permission?**

A. The Council's Regulatory Services Committee

**Q. Why accept an offer now in advance of any CPO?**

A. As noted previously, any offers made in advance will be in line with the compensation owners would receive in the event of compulsory purchase. However, an agreement prior to a CPO will also provide you with a guarantee of when payments will be made and how much those payments will be. This will give you greater certainty and should make the process much less stressful. If you occupy your property an agreement will give you the comfort that you will receive money to relocate when you need it. Waiting for compulsory purchase will give you far less certainty.

**Q. What if there are no properties available or rent is too high?**

A. The Council and the JV are committing resources to assist with the relocation of businesses to affordable new premises. This will include the appointment of a firm of surveyors who will be charged with identifying alternative premises and paying any fees you reasonably incur in instructing a surveyor or agent to identify a new property on your behalf. It is acknowledged that there may be a shortage of alternative freehold property available and in those circumstances leasehold premises may need to be considered. You will however be compensated for the full value of your current freehold property.

**Q. If we had to move to an alternative property in Rainham, would the transport links be improved?**

A. In the short-term the Council is working with Transport for London to seek to increase the number of buses both in existing routes and create new routes. Longer term the Council is exploring options for tram or rapid transit link.

**Q. You have said you don't want to use a CPO but have talked about following CPO guidance why is this?**

A. The Council is not pursuing a CPO immediately as it wishes to give the JV time to explore whether it can acquire the property interests it needs by agreement. However, if it becomes clear that this will not be possible, the Council may take steps to initiate compulsory purchase procedures in mid-2019. Because of the possible use of a CPO in the future, it is important that both the Council and JV closely follow Government Guidance on the use of CPOs.