

Email: chair@shra.co.uk

M&G Real Estate
10 Fenchurch Avenue
London
EC3M 5AG
United Kingdom

By post and by email to: info@mandg.co.uk

27 February 2020

Dear M&G Real Estate,

Sovereign Retail Park, Eastbourne, East Sussex

We write to you on behalf of the members of our Association and other local residents to express our concern about the degradation of the Sovereign Retail Park.

We are aware that refurbishment of units 1 - 8 of the retail park received planning permission from Eastbourne Borough Council back in 2018 (EBC Planning Application no. 171472), and that applications for change of use and alterations to Units 7 and 8 (the previous cinema) have also been approved.

However, nothing seems to have happened, and the whole retail park is looking run-down and unloved. Externally, the M&G retail units look shabby and uncared for, and the walkways and carpark need resurfacing. The cinema units have remained empty for many months and are beginning to suffer from attacks of graffiti.

Has a date been set for starting the proposed improvements? If so, when? If a full refurbishment is not a viable proposition, will you at least improve the look of the area by carrying out general cleaning of the exterior of the units? In either case, we would welcome a re-think on the improvements that retained the useful canopy that protects shoppers on the walkways from the weather (and seagulls!).

Can you also provide us with an update on the future use of the cinema units? Have new tenants been found?

Our local Borough and County councillors, one of whom is also our Member of Parliament, tell us that they have discussed the future of the retail park with you, so we will copy this letter to them.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



Susan Kerrison
Chair
Sovereign Harbour Residents Association
www.shra.co.uk

From: Hayns, Tim <Tim.Hayns@mandg.com>

Sent: 09 March 2020 15:57

To: chair@shra.co.uk

Subject: Sovereign Retail Park, Eastbourne

Dear Ms Kerrison,

Thank you for your letter of 27th February regarding the above retail park owned by my client Fund, Prudential Assurance Company Limited.

As you correctly say we obtained planning permission in 2018 for a change of use of the cinema and associated refurbishment to the scheme. Unfortunately the conditions relating to use attached to the permission were such that all of the occupiers we were in discussions with to take this space were unable to trade under the consent. We subsequently met with the head of planning, the leader of the Council and the then MP, and separately with the local councillors to discuss our plans for the park and in particular the use conditions attached to the planning permission.

In respect of the cinema site we are at very early stage discussions with potential retail occupiers. However, in the current economic climate retailers willing to take space are limited. The occupiers we had lined up in 2018 are no longer in the market. We are currently considering our options for this space and will be arranging a pre-application meeting with Eastbourne Borough Council in due course. Once we have presented to them I would be happy to meet with the Sovereign Harbour Residents Association to brief you.

Whilst we were looking to the new lettings to fund the scheme refurbishment I am pleased to advise that the first phase of the works are currently being tendered for works to the canopy and the first of the shopfronts. The target is for pre-start and contractor lead in from 18th May with a start on site of 1st June and anticipated completion of phase one in September 2020. We were unable to start the works earlier due to strict closed periods within occupier leases as to when works can be carried out.

Once the tender costs are received Fund authority will be required for the capital expenditure.

As part of the works the former Cineworld unit is to be hoarded and protected to deter vandalism whilst the other facades will be cleaned. Works of repair to the car park and white lining will take place once the winter months are over.

A complete repair of the car park is envisaged as the final phase once contractors have finished on site. You will appreciate, however, that the full scheme refurbishment and repair will be dependent on occupiers being found for the former cinema.

We have also discussed the bus route site with East Sussex County Council, the principle of which we are supportive, and are waiting for their response in respect of various legal issues surrounding this.

I look forward to discussing this with you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Tim

Tim J Hayns

Director

UK Retail & Leisure Team

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