

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS
25th OCTOBER 2018 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**UPDATE REPORT OF DIVISIONAL DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND
BUILDING CONTROL**

Agenda item no	Reference no	Location	Proposal / Title
n/a	PA/16/0334 2 PA/16/0334 3	Former London Chest Hospital, Bonner Road, London, E2 9JX	Planning and listed building consent applications for demolition of all existing buildings on-site (excluding main hospital building and sanitation tower) to redevelop the site to provide 291 residential units (Use Class C3) and 428sqm non-residential institution space (Use Class D1) with the new residential units located within an enlarged main hospital building and within the erection of three new buildings rising to a maximum of 8 storeys with associated works to built heritage, selected removal of TPO trees, plus new tree planting and landscaping works, provision of 9 disabled car parking spaces and other works incidental to the development.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On 20 September 2018, the Strategic Development Committee considered a report in respect of planning and listed building consent applications for the redevelopment of the London Chest Hospital.
- 1.2 The section of the report dealing with Local Representation said that 412 individual written representations were received on the planning and listed building consent applications. 386 of these were letters of objection pertaining to the planning application, 3 were letters of support to the planning application and 23 were letters of objection relating to the listed building consent application.
- 1.3 The report also confirmed the petitions that had been received including on-going on-line petitions, the number of signatures and the issues raised.
- 1.4 The report listed 29 matters on which objections had been raised.
- 1.5 The SDC resolved to grant planning permission and listed building consent, subject to the outcome of the Stage 2 Mayor of London referral and the prior completion of a Section 106 legal agreement.

2. REPRESENTATIONS FROM WARD COUNCILLORS

2.1 Following the meeting a concern has been raised that the report did not distinguish who had made the objections and whether any were from ward Councillors.

2.2 A review of the case file shows that the overall number of objections reported included representations received from Councillor Eve McQuillan for herself and on behalf of Councillors Sirajul Islam, Gabriela Salva Mcallan, Mohammed Ahabab Hossain and Tarik Khan (Bethnal Green and St Peter's Ward councillors).

2.3 The representations from the councillors raised the following issues:

- **The Lack of affordable housing:** The amount of affordable housing has increased from 28% to 30%. However, given the borough's acute housing need, this is not enough. 30% is well below the Mayor of London's target of 50% affordable housing, and well below the level set by the Tower Hamlets Local Plan Policy SP02 which requires 35% - 50%.
- **The height and density of the proposed buildings:** The buildings will still reach 6 and 8 storeys, far higher than the neighbouring buildings which reach 4 storeys at their highest. The revised plans have not reduced the height of the buildings and will cause harm to the existing community.
- **Loss of trees:** The plans propose the removal of 28 trees along St James' Avenue. There will be an environment impact, effect on air quality and losing the trees will dramatically change the character of St James' Avenue. Removal of the Mulberry Tree is likely to risk its survival. The tree is part of the heritage of the area, and is thought to date back to the Tudor period.
- **The impact on the Victoria Park Conservation Area and destruction of heritage:** The high, dense blocks would deprive the landmark listed hospital building of its open landscaped space, which would also affect the open character and setting of Victoria Park Conservation Area.
- Ward Councillors did not object to the site being used for housing in principle and recognised the borough's acute housing need. However, any development on this site must not harm the existing community and must be inclusive.

2.4 An additional representation from Cllr McQuillan raised concern about the lack of consultation on the changes to increase the amount of affordable housing and the viability assessment was not made public.

3. ADVICE

3.1 All of the planning issues raised by the ward Councillors were included in the 20 September report and dealt with in the assessment of the application. The applicant's viability report is a public document on the planning register.

3.2 Whilst there is no prescribed format for the structure of reports to planning committees, it has been custom and practice in Tower Hamlets to note the issues raised by councillors, separately to those raised by residents or members of the public. Due to an oversight, this did not happen in this case. The committee report was published five clear days before the meeting in accordance with the constitution and it is regrettable that this oversight by officers had not been spotted by the ward councillors before the meeting.

3.3 This report has been prepared to ensure that the objections and representations made by the councillors on behalf of their communities, becomes a matter of public record.

3.4 As no new material considerations or further planning issues have been raised in the omitted representations, this does not affect the decision made on the application.

4. RECOMMENDATION

That the Strategic Development Committee notes the content of this report, confirms that there is no requirement to revisit the resolution of the SD Committee on 20 September 2018 and this is recorded appended to the minutes.