

Committee: Development	Date: 24 th August 2011	Classification: Unrestricted	Agenda Item Number:
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Report of: Director of Development and Renewal	Title: Town Planning Application
Case Officer: Beth Eite	Ref No: PA/11/01110
	Ward: Bromley by Bow

1. APPLICATION DETAILS

Location:	Brimsdown House, Stanstead House, Newmill House and Stanborough House, Devas Street, London, E3 3LW
Existing Use:	Residential
Proposal:	To remove and de-commission the existing refuse chutes that exist within the four blocks and provide URS's (Underground Refuse Systems) to be installed in their place
Drawing Nos	PL01 rev B, PL07, PL21 rev A, PL90, PL91, PL92, PL93, PL94
Documents:	Design, Access and Impact Statement Appendices
Applicant:	Poplar HARCA and leaseholders
Ownership:	Applicant
Historic Building:	N/A
Conservation Area:	N/A

2. SUMMARY OF MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The local planning authority has considered the particular circumstances of this application against the Council's approved planning policies contained in The Core Strategy 2010, the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Unitary Development Plan, the Council's interim planning guidance (2007), associated supplementary planning guidance, the London Plan and Government Planning Policy Guidance and has found that:

- 2.1 The installation of an underground refuse system is considered to enhance the character and appearance of the estate and the quality of the local environment by reducing the level of visible refuse and recycling around the estate and within the buildings in accordance with policies DEV1 and DEV56 of the Unitary Development Plan 1998, policy DEV2 and DEV15 of the Interim Planning Guidance 2007 and policy SP10 of the Core Strategy 2010.

- 2.2 The installation of an underground refuse system is not considered to have any significant detrimental impact upon the amenities of the existing occupants as assistance would be provided to vulnerable residents and the majority of the residents who would need to carry their refuse to the URS would be within the guidelines set out in the British Standard 5906:2005 and planning standard 2 “residential waste refuse and recycling provision” within the Interim Planning Guidance 2007.
- 2.3 The development is not considered to have any detrimental impact upon pedestrian or highways safety in accordance with policy T16 of the Unitary Development Plan 1998, policy SP09 of the Core Strategy 2010 and policy 6.11 of the London Plan 2011.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the Committee resolve to **GRANT** planning permission subject to conditions.
- 3.2 That the Corporate Director Development & Renewal is delegated power to impose conditions and informatives on the planning permission to secure the following matters:

3.3 Conditions

1. Time Limit – three years
2. Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans
3. Development to be carried out in accordance with ‘appendices’ document.

4. PROPOSAL AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposal

- 4.1 The application seeks permission to install an under ground refuse system (URS) to serve Brimsdown, Stanstead, Newmill and Stanborough House. These are containers for the storage of waste which are located below ground with a receptacle for depositing waste above ground. When they are emptied the whole container is lifted out of the ground and emptied into a specialist collection vehicle. The containers come in a range of sizes (3m³, 4m³ and 5m³).
- 4.2 The proposal includes six general waste URS’s and five recycling URS’s. They would be located in five areas across the estate. These areas would be located as follows:
- 4.3 1 x general waste URS and 1 x recycling URS within the car parking area south of Stanstead House. This is essentially intended to serve the residents of Stanstead House though may also be the most convenient location for the occupants of northern parts of Newmill House and Brimsdown House.
- 4.4 2 x general waste URS’s and 1 x recycling URS located at approximately the mid point in the estate, between Brimsdown House and Newmill House. These would serve the central sections of Brimsdown and Newmill House.
- 4.5 1 x general waste URS and 1 x recycling URS at the southern end of Newmill House, at the junction with Empson Street. This would serve Newmill House.
- 4.6 1 x general waste URS and 1 x recycling URS at the eastern extent of Stanborough House.

This is intended to serve the residents using the eastern stair core of Stanborough House and the residents in the southern part of Brimsdown House.

- 4.7 1 x general waste URS and 1 x recycling URS at the western end of Stanborough House, this would serve the residents who use the western stair core of Stanborough House.

Site and Surroundings

- 4.8 The site forms part of the Coventry Cross Estate which is managed by Poplar HARCA, a registered social landlord. The site encompasses four residential blocks all between four to five storeys in height.
- 4.9 The Estate is bounded to the north by Devas Street, to the south by Empson Street and to the west by the Blackwall Tunnel Approach (A12). The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character. There are some commercial uses along the ground floor of Newmill House, these front onto the A12.
- 4.8 At present refuse is deposited in refuse chutes within each of the buildings. Recycling is provided for by a number of wheelie bins around the site which have no fixed location at present.

Planning History

- 4.10 The following planning decisions are relevant to the application:

PA/10/1281 Refurbishment and upgrade works to Coventry Cross Estate (Phase II) comprising of :

- (a) External works comprising window renewal with UPVC windows, replacement of external rain pipes and guttering, balcony repairs and improvements, re-roofing plus installation of new entrance lobbies to residential blocks;
- (b) Replacement of existing bin chutes with Underground Refuse System (URS);
- (c) Installation of communal satellite dishes (one per house);
- (d) Remodelling of external amenity areas to provide new front gardens, new lighting strategy, communal amenity areas, boundary treatment plus new parking layout;
- (e) Creation of new secure cycle storages;
- (f) External alteration works to shopfront fronting A12.

Withdrawn on 30th September 2010 due to the level of objection from residents regarding the URS system.

PA/10/1747 Refurbishment and upgrade works to Coventry Cross Estate (Phase II) comprising :

- (a) External works comprising window renewal with UPVC windows, replacement of external rain pipes and guttering, balcony repairs and improvements, re-roofing plus installation of new entrance lobbies to existing residential blocks;
- (b) Replacement of existing bin chutes;

- (c) Installation of communal satellite dishes (one per block);
- (d) Remodelling of external amenity areas to provide new front gardens, new lighting strategy, communal amenity areas, boundary treatment plus new parking layout;
- (e) Provision cycle stands; and
- (f) External alteration works to shopfront fronting A12.

Approved by the Council on the 29/11/2010.

5. POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 For details of the status of relevant policies see the front sheet for “Planning Applications for Determination” agenda items. The following policies are relevant to the application:

Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2025 (adopted September 2010)

Policies	SP02 – Urban living for everyone
	SP03 – Creating healthy and liveable neighbourhoods
	SP04 – Creating a green and blue grid
	SP05 – Dealing with waste
	SP10 – Creating distinct and durable places

Unitary Development Plan 1998 (as saved September 2007)

Policies	DEV1	Design requirements
	DEV2	Environmental Requirements
	DEV56	Waste recycling
	T16	Traffic priorities for new development

Interim Planning Guidance for the purposes of Development Control

Policies	DEV1	Amenity
	DEV2	Character and design
	DEV3	Accessible and inclusive design
	DEV15	Waste and recyclables storage

London Plan 2011

5.16	Waste self-sufficiency
6.11	Smoothing traffic flow and tackling congestion
7.2	An inclusive environment

Government Planning Policy Guidance/Statements

PPS 1	Sustainable development and climate change
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Community Plan The following Community Plan objectives relate to the application:

- A better place for living safely
- A better place for living well
- A better place for learning, achievement and leisure
- A better place for excellent public services

6. CONSULTATION RESPONSE

- 6.1 The views of the Directorate of Development & Renewal are expressed in the MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS section below.

6.2 The following were consulted regarding the application:

Waste

6.3 No objection to URS's being installed on this site.

Highways

6.3 No objection.

7. LOCAL REPRESENTATION

7.1 A total of 233 neighbouring properties within the area shown on the map appended to this report were notified about the application and invited to comment. The application has also been publicised on site. The number of representations received from neighbours and local groups in response to notification and publicity of the application were as follows:

No of individual responses: 1
No petitions received 1 (90 signatures)

The following issues in objection were raised in representations that are material to the determination of the application, and they are addressed in the next section of this report:

7.2 It is not acceptable to expect people to carry heavy bags of refuse over long distances. Instead of the removal of the refuse chutes, they should be widened as occurred at Biscott, Broxbourne and Roxford Houses.

(Officer response: Poplar HARCA have agreed to assist vulnerable residents who are not able to carry their refuse to the URS locations. The widening of the bin chutes would not increase the capacity of the containers which is a current problem on the estate. This leads to refuse being left in corridors and outside flats.)

7.3 Some people may have to leave their children in the flats whilst they take their refuse downstairs.

(Officer response: Residents currently have to leave their flats to deposit refuse in the chutes, whilst it would be further to place the refuse in the URS's, it is not considered that this is a reason to refuse this application as the majority of the URS's are within the recommended 30m carrying distance.)

7.4 Carrying the refuse in adverse weather conditions could be dangerous.

(Officer response: Assistance would be provided for vulnerable residents who cannot carry their refuse bags. For the majority of residents they would take their refuse out when they are leaving the site for other purposes and therefore adverse weather conditions should not have a significant effect on the ability to use the URS's.)

7.5 The application would lead to the loss of two parking spaces.

(Officer response: There would be a reduction in one parking space from the scheme of environmental improvements which was granted consent in 2010. Within the estate there are 13 car parking spaces available and 4 people on the waiting list once the current building

works are completed. This leaves 9 spaces unallocated which means that no resident will lose their car parking space as a result of the proposal. The principle of a reduction in parking is in accordance with Council policies and no objection has been raised by the highways section.)

8. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The main planning issues raised by the application that the committee must consider are:

1. The character and appearance of URS's;
2. Impact on the amenities of the residents;
3. Pedestrian and highways safety.

Character and appearance

- 8.2 Across the Borough the storage of waste and recycling is consideration for all new developments, if not screened properly it can be unsightly and detract from the quality of the environment. On the larger housing estates if the management of refuse storage and collection is not diligently undertaken there can be build up of refuse around the estates which again detracts from the quality of people's experience of their surroundings.
- 8.3 The URS system would allow a single collection point for refuse and recycling within this part of the Coventry Cross estate. The storage for the estate's refuse would be kept underground with only the metal column where the waste is deposited in being visible above ground. The columns cover an area of approximately 0.4sqm and are approximately 1.5m in height. These are significantly less visually obtrusive than the current provision.
- 8.4 At present there are a number of recycling bins located around the estate which have no fixed location. There are also chutes within each of the buildings for the collection of refuse. The applicant has explained that these often get blocked up when residents put items in that are too bulky. This results in refuse collecting in the corridors around the chutes which is detrimental to the appearance and quality of the environment and the safety of the residents.
- 8.5 It is also considered that this proposal may encourage more residents to recycle waste as there is little incentive for residents to make a separate trip to the external recycling bins if there is a general waste chute within the building. This is in accordance with the objectives of the waste management hierarchy within policy SP05 of the Core Strategy which aim to increase 'reduce, reuse and recycling' of waste.
- 8.6 The installation of the URS's is considered to enhance the character and appearance of the estate and would be in accordance with policies DEV1 of the UDP and DEV2 of the IPG which seeks to ensure that public and private spaces are designed to the highest quality.

Impact on amenities of the residents

- 8.6 Concerns has been raised by residents of the estate regarding the practicalities of the URS system and the distances that people will be expected to carry their waste and recycling as it would be substantially further than the current arrangement whereby people carry their waste to the chutes which are within the buildings.
- 8.7 The storage of waste is covered by British Standard BS 5906:2005 'Waste management in

buildings'. BS 5906 is a code of practice for methods of storage, collection, segregation for recycling and recovery, and on-site treatment of waste from residential and non-residential buildings and healthcare establishments. BS 5906 applies to new buildings, refurbishments and conversions of residential and non-residential buildings.

- 8.8 This British Standard recommends that residents should not be expected to carry refuse more than 30m from the dwelling. The applicant has produced a diagram to show that in the majority of cases residents would not need to carry the waste further than 30m, most residents would need to carry the refuse between 12m and 30m.
- 8.9 There are however a number of points where the location of the URS would be outside of the 30m from some flats. The main area where this would be is from the northern parts of Brimsdown House and from Stanstead House where the carrying distances are between 32m and 48m.
- 8.10 Poplar HARCA have provided details of a support service they would offer to vulnerable residents who cannot take out their refuse to the URS's. This service would be for elderly residents who live alone with no family or friends, those suffering from a disability and those with long term limiting illness. These residents waste and recycling would be collected from their flats and taken to the URS's on their behalf.
- 8.11 This is considered to be a suitable solution to overcome the increased carrying distance which is proposed as part of this scheme. Therefore only those residents who are physically able to carry their refuse would be expected to do so. It should also be noted that residents are currently expected to carry their recycling outside the building to the various recycling bins. Due to their lack of fixed location this can lead to substantial walking distances, which would be improved with this application with fixed locations for refuse and recycling facilities.
- 8.12 On balance it is considered that the installation of a URS on this site would be acceptable and would not have a significant detrimental impact upon the amenities of the existing residents. The improvement to the visual quality of the environment would also assist in improving the quality of life for the residents of the estate.

Loss of car parking spaces

- 8.13 Concern has also been raised in relation to the loss of two parking spaces. However, the proposed site plan for this application shows 46 parking spaces, this would therefore be a reduction in one space from the scheme which was actually approved in 2010. The location of the most northern two URS's would be located within an area currently taken up by a parking space.
- 8.14 There are currently 13 spare car parking spaces on the estate which have not be allocated to any particular resident. Once the current on-site building works are completed, four of these spaces would be allocated to the residents on the waiting list, leaving an excess of nine spaces.
- 8.15 The further loss of one parking space is supported by the highways department and by policy SP09 which seeks to minimise on-site and off-site car parking provision. The loss of a single car parking space is not considered to be a sufficient reason to refuse the application.

Pedestrian and highway safety.

- 8.16 The vehicle which collects the URS's is larger than a standard refuse vehicle. Their method of collection is also different to a standard collection as the URS vehicle uses a crane to lift the container out of the ground and empty it into the vehicle. The operation requires two members of staff. One to operate the crane and one to prevent pedestrians walking between the vehicle and the URS while it is lifting the container.
- 8.17 Given the safety measures that are put in place it is considered that there would be no significant harm to pedestrian safety as a result of this proposal.
- 8.18 The turning space required for the URS vehicle is larger than that for a standard refuse vehicle and as such auto track diagrams have been requested to demonstrate that the vehicle can move through the site without conflicting with curb or pavement edges or parking spaces. These auto tracks have been reviewed by the highways officer and are considered to be acceptable.
- 8.19 The vehicle would enter the estate from Devas Street, turning right into the eastern entrance of the estate and would exit onto Empson Street, collecting the URS's on its way. The vehicle would then re-enter the site via the western entrance to Stanborough House and collect the two URS's which serve this building, exiting via the eastern access. On each occasion the vehicle would enter and exit the site in a forward gear so as not to cause any disruption to the free flow of traffic, nor would it be detrimental to highway safety.

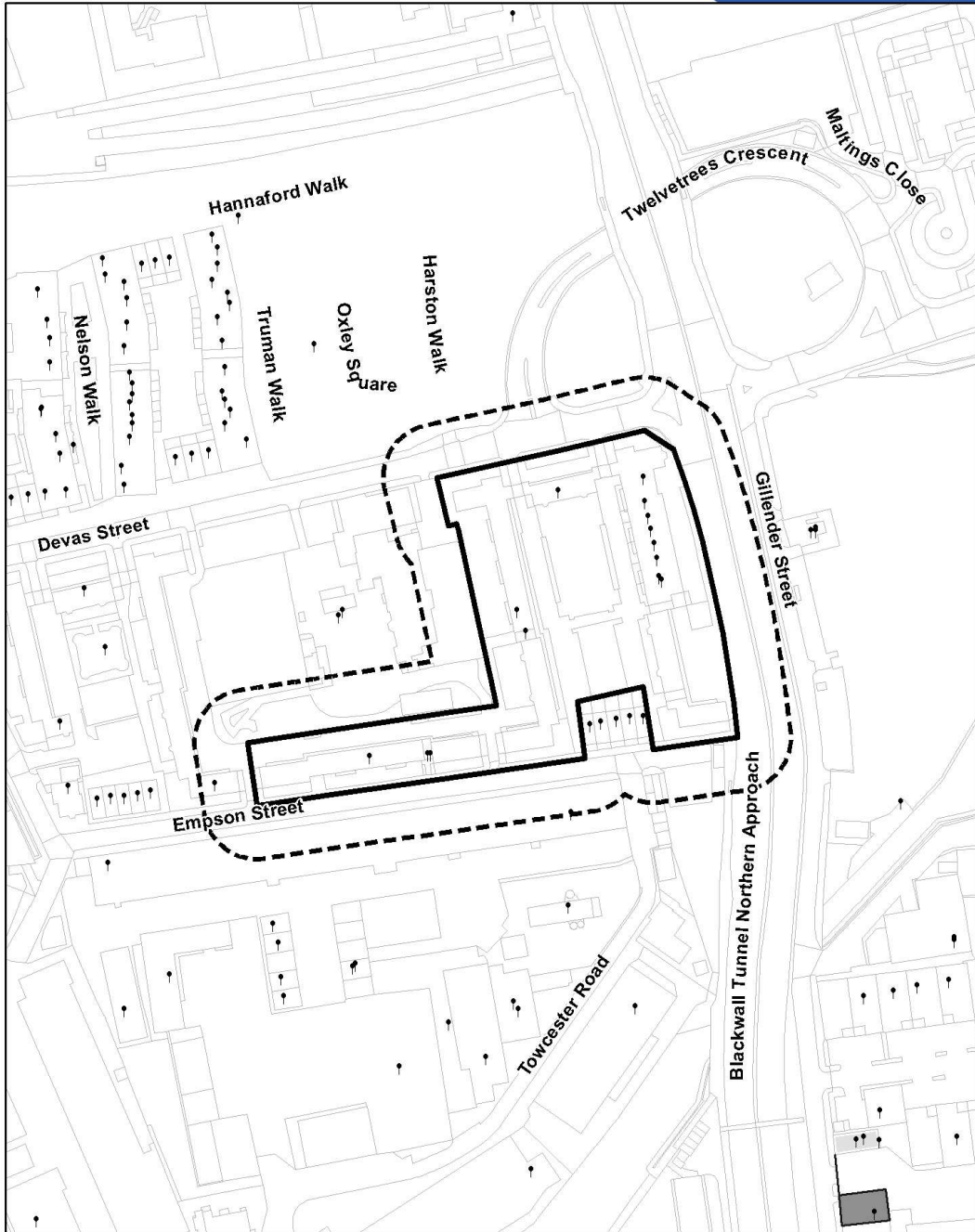
Other Planning Issues

8.20 None

9.0 Conclusions

All other relevant policies and considerations have been taken into account. Planning permission should be granted for the reasons set out in the SUMMARY OF MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS and the details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION at the beginning of this report.

Planning Application Site Map



Planning Application Site Boundary	Locally Listed Buildings	Land Parcel Address
Consultation Area	Statutory Listed Buildings	

0 30 m
1:2,000

This Site Map displays the Planning Application Site Boundary and the neighbouring Occupiers / Owners who were consulted as part of the Planning Application process.
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