

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

HELD AT 7.30 P.M. ON THURSDAY, 1 MARCH 2012

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT,
LONDON, E14 2BG**

Members Present:

Councillor Helal Abbas (Chair)

Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed
Councillor Bill Turner (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Carlo Gibbs
Councillor Judith Gardiner

Councillor Peter Golds

Other Councillors Present:

None.

Officers Present:

Pete Smith	– (Development Control Manager, Development & Renewal)
Simon Ryan	– (Deputy Team Leader, Development and Renewal)
Jane Jin	– (Planning Officer, Development and Renewal)
Megan Nugent	– (Legal Services Team Leader, Planning, Chief Executive's)
Zoe Folley	– (Committee Officer, Democratic Services Chief Executive's)
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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of the Councillor Dr Emma Jones, for whom Councillor Peter Golds was deputising.

Apologies for lateness were received on behalf of Councillor Judith Gardiner.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members declared interests in items on the agenda for the meeting as set out below:-

Councillor	Item(s)	Type of interest	Reason
Helal Abbas	7.2	Personal	Had received many correspondence from interested parties but had not read them.
Khales Uddin Ahmed	7.1 7.2	Personal	Had received many representations from interested parties both for and against the application.
Bill Turner	7.1	Personal	Had received many representations from interested parties regarding the application.
Peter Golds	7.1, 7.2	Personal	Had been approached by and had received representations from interested parties both for and against the application.
	7.2	Personal	Attended an exhibition on the application as an observer.
Carlo Gibbs	7.1	Personal	Had received many correspondence from interested parties.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2012 were agreed and approved as a correct record.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) In the event of changes being made to recommendations by the Committee, the task of formalising the wording of those changes is delegated to the Corporate Director, Development and Renewal along the broad lines indicated at the meeting; and
- 2) In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions/informatives/planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Corporate Director, Development and Renewal is delegated authority to do so, provided always that the Corporate Director does not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision

5. PROCEDURE FOR HEARING OBJECTIONS

The Committee noted the procedure for hearing objections, together with details of persons who had registered for speaking rights at the meeting.

6. DEFERRED ITEMS

Nil items.

7. PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DECISION

7.1 Tower House, 38-40 Trinity Square, London EC3N 4DJ (PA/11/00163)

Update Report Tabled.

Pete Smith (Development Control Manager) introduced the item regarding Tower House, 38-40 Trinity Square, London. He reported that since the Committee meeting on 28th November 2011, where the Committee resolved to refuse the application, further representations had been received. As a result it was necessary that the application be reconsidered to take into account these representations alongside policy developments since that decision.

Mr Smith drew attention to the report and update detailing the representations received. The update also referred to the Localism Act and the new requirement to treat financial consideration as a material planning consideration where necessary.

Mr Simon Ryan (Deputy Team Leader Planning) presented the detailed reported assisted by a power point presentation. He explained the site location, history and details of the application. He explained the outcome of the public consultation and the representations for and against. He explained

the Section 106 packages identified as A and B in the report and need for step free access at the Tower Hill underground station.

He explained the two representations received since the 28th November 2011 meeting. The first concerned the curvature of the platform at Tower Hill underground station. There were worries that this could leave a gap between the platform and trains affecting its accessibility. The second concerned the omission of the draft London Plan SPG 'London World Heritage Sites – Guidance on Settings' from previous reports to the Committee.

It was reported that London Underground Ltd (LUL) had investigated the concerns around the curvature of the platform as detailed in its letter in the Committee papers. It was their view that even with the new trains, manual wheel chair users would be able to manage the gap. Where not possible, staff would provide assistance or a boarding ramp.

Overall, LUL were of the view that the step free works would greatly improve accessibility as the steps were the most significant obstacle to access. The works would also enable a range of other customers to access the stations for example customers with luggage, push chairs and prams etc.

It was also considered that the proposal accorded with the London Plan SPG 'London World Heritage Sites – Guidance on Settings' and the Council's Management Development Framework document.

The scheme would create local employment, respect the area and provide valuable step free access at Tower Hill underground station without any major impacts. It continued to comply with policy. Taking into account all of the evidence and representations, the Officers recommendation remained unchanged that the scheme should be granted.

In response, Members raised a number of concerns and points regarding the following matters.

- Over dominance on the surrounding area, particular the adjacent Georgian buildings.
- Need for a dedicated servicing route.
- The work undertaken to test the platforms accessibility to wheelchair users.
- The size of the gap between the platform and trains especially with the new trains.
- Customer profile statistics for the station.

Overall, it was feared that the curved platform would make it very difficult for wheelchair users to board trains. Assurances were sought that this would not be the case.

Concern was also expressed at the S106. Particular the significant proportion devoted to the step free works given this could be compromised by the curved

platform. Members also questioned the adequacy of the remaining sums to mitigate impact given the size of the scheme.

Members also noted the lack of step free access on the surrounding tube network. It was queried whether such works were a responsibility of LUL to provide at Tower Hill Station as part of its improvement programme. Surprise was also expressed at the non attendance of LUL at the meeting.

In response to questions, Officers clarified the size of the gap between the platform and station both at present and with the new trains. Whilst some level of gap might remain, the significant reduction in steps works would make it possible for wheelchair users to board trains either independently or with assistance. The scheme had been subject to a detailed views and impact assessment. It was considered that the scheme would respect views and preserve the Tower of London World Heritage Site and nearby conservations areas. Historic Palaces were supportive of the scheme and English Heritage had no objections. The scheme complied with the conservation and heritage policy. Members were also reminded of the remit of the application for step free works as opposed to platform works at the station. Alongside improving access, the works should significantly improve the surrounding public realm enhancing the appearance of the area.

On a vote of 0 for and 4 against, with 1 abstention, the Committee resolved that the Officers recommendation to grant planning permission PA/11/00163 at Tower House, 38-40 Trinity Square, London not be accepted.

Accordingly Councillor Bill Turner moved a motion to refuse the application for the reasons set out below seconded by Councillor Khales Uddin Ahmed.

On a vote of 4 for and 0 against, with 1 abstention, the Committee **RESOLVED** –

That planning permission PA/11/00163 be **REFUSED** at Tower House, 38-40 Trinity Square, London EC3N 4DJ for the following reasons:

1. The proposal, in terms of its height, scale, bulk, design and elevational treatment represents an inappropriate form of development and fails to preserve or enhance the character, appearance and setting of the Tower of London World Heritage Site, the Tower Conservation Area and surrounding conservation areas, adjacent listed buildings and the adjacent Scheduled Ancient Monument. As such, the proposal fails to accord with Planning Policy Statement 5 (2010), policies 7.6, 7.7, 7.8, 7.9 and 7.10 of the London Plan (2011), policies SP10 and SP12 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010), saved policy DEV1 of the Unitary Development Plan (1998), policies DEV2, CON1, CON2 and CFR18 of the Interim Planning Guidance (2007), which seek to protect the character, appearance and setting of heritage assets. The proposal also fails to accord with the aims and objectives of

Tower of London World Heritage Site Management Plan (Historic Royal Palaces, 2007)

2. The proposal will have a detrimental impact upon protected views as detailed within the London Plan London Views Management Framework Revised Supplementary Planning Guidance (July 2010) and would fail to maintain local or long distance views in accordance policies 7.11 and 7.12 of the London Plan (2011) and policy SP10 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010) which seek to ensure large scale buildings are appropriately located and of a high design standard, whilst also seeking to protect and enhance regional and locally important views
3. The proposal will provide inadequate arrangements for site servicing and coach drop off which will result in unacceptable vehicular and pedestrian conflict within the immediate locality to the detriment of highway safety, contrary to policy 6.7 of the London Plan (2011), policy SP09 of the Core Strategy Local Development Framework (2010), saved policies T16 and T19 of the Council's Unitary Development Plan (1998) and policy DEV17 of the Council's Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007)

7.2 Poplar Business Park, 10 Prestons Road, London E14 9RL (PA/11/03375)

Update Report Tabled.

Councillor Judith Gardiner entered the meeting at 8:05 pm for the consideration of this item.

Pete Smith (Development Control Manager) introduced the item Poplar Business Park, 10 Prestons Road, London E14 9RL (PA/11/03375).

The Chair then invited registered speakers to speak.

Ms Terry O'Connor presented her concerns. She advised that she lived in Teviot Street. She was initially in objection but now considered that the scheme was a positive initiative. She ran a local asbestos business aimed at women and felt that the proposals could assist this. The scheme would benefit the local economy and would create jobs.

Mr Ian Dubber spoke in support of the application. He outlined the merits of the scheme including the affordable housing offer and the number of new jobs proposed. In response to Members, he estimated that the scheme would create more than 125 new jobs so between 400-410 in total. As part of the Section 106 Agreement there was a condition that 20% of the construction force be local. However, generally speaking around 70% of the overall workforce on site would be local people based on experience of managing similar sites.

Jane Jin (Planning Officer) presented the detailed application. She described the site location and the results of the public consultation. She also addressed in detail the key material issues. She explained the proposed layout and the workspaces. It was estimated that around 425 jobs on site would be created by the development. She also outlined the residential plans. The housing mix accorded with policy. The affordable housing was subject to a viability assessment. This showed that the scheme offered the maximum number that could be provided with an adequate S106 to mitigate impact. She also explained the child play and amenity spaces, the massing height and design, the day light assessment, the parking plans and the overall lack of major amenity impact. Overall the proposals were acceptable on the key material grounds and should be approved.

In response, the Committee raised a number of questions on the following issues:

- The methods used to test viability.
- Number of new jobs to be created by the scheme.
- The safety of the child play spaces and the roof top terraces given the closure of similar facilities elsewhere.
- Whether the child play spaces included areas for all age categories.
- The parking available to the affordable family sized units.
- The capacity of local services to accommodate the development. The impact on services elsewhere.
- The proximity of the scheme to London City Airport and the measures to detract large species of birds.
- The cumulative impact of the scheme given the number of new developments in the area.
- Adequacy of the affordable housing. Particularly the lack of social housing as set out in policy SP02 of the Councils Core Strategy.

In response, Officers addressed each point raised by Members.

Regarding the affordable housing, it was reported that the offer included the new Affordable Rent provision, issued after policy SP02. The offer was subject to robust viability testing that was independently reviewed. This showed that any figure higher than that proposed could place at risk viability and the provision of a satisfactory mitigation package.

Given this and the affordability of the rents (as shown by the research), it was considered that the offer was acceptable and complied with policy SP02. The plans would also be subject to review to explore the potential to increase the offer should the economy permit this.

It was anticipated that the proposal would create over 425 jobs directly based on density. Details of the child play spaces would be conditioned to amongst other things, ensure there were safe and accessible. The provision complied with policy. Education Services had considered the contributions and were of

the view they were suitable. Given this and the Council's school building plans, it was considered that there would be sufficient infrastructure to accommodate the development. The cumulative impact of the developments in the area had been carefully considered. Officers had looked in to the nearby new schemes in conjunction to ensure that the overall impact was acceptable and would be beneficial to the area. All units benefited from adequate private and communal space and access to the roof top terraces.

On a vote of 0 for and 4 against, with 2 abstentions, the Committee **RESOLVED** –

That the Officer recommendation to grant planning permission PA/11/03375 at Poplar Business Park, 10 Prestons Road, London E14 9RL be NOT ACCEPTED.

Councillor Bill Turner moved a motion to refuse the application seconded by Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed for the reasons set out below.

On a vote of 4 for and 0 against, with 2 abstentions, the Committee **RESOLVED** –

That planning permission (PA/11/03375) be **REFUSED** at Poplar Business Park, 10 Prestons Road, London E14 9R on the grounds of

- Lack of sufficient affordable housing
- Overdevelopment of the site.
- Impact on local services in terms of limited capacity to accommodate the development.

It was noted that Officers would bring a further report to the Committee setting out the detailed reasons for approval by the Committee.

The meeting ended at 9.40 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Helal Abbas
Strategic Development Committee