160-172a East India Dock Road
Site includes: Poplar Baths, Poplar Fire Station, Balsam House and adjoining areas to the east and south

An interim Planning Statement

October 2007
Summary

160-172 East India Dock Road
Preferred Use for the Site:

Mixed use development comprising community facilities, new fire station, residential development and the potential for ground floor retail or commercial uses.

Key Redevelopment Issues:

1. Redevelopment of existing baths building, fire station and residential block provides opportunity to secure a high quality mixed use development.

2. Development proposals will be required to maintain and enhance listed elements of the baths.

3. There is the opportunity to provide a new residential development, in addition to the redevelopment of Balsam House.

4. Redevelopment provides an opportunity to extend retail and commercial uses of Crisp Street Market across A13, improving the district centre’s legibility.

5. Improved linkages and street scene along A13 so that the development is well integrated into Crisp Street District Centre and local public transport services.

6. Closure of Poplar Baths Street and Lawless Street would provide opportunity to re-designate parking provision, with the potential benefit of increasing area for open space, also linking the current amenity spaces better.

7. The existing pedestrian routes through the site which link Poplar High street to East India Dock Road should be improved.

8. The Council anticipates a high quality of design in any development proposal.

9. Residential density on site is expected at 600-700 habitable rooms per hectare.

10. Proposals should provide a minimum of 35% affordable housing in terms of habitable rooms, with a 80:20 mix social rented:intermediate housing.

11. The Council would support a Car-free development in this location.

12. The Council’s priorities in negotiating planning obligations will include affordable housing, together with other relevant contributions such as highways improvements.

13. The applicant will need to consult with the Council to identify whether an Environmental Impact Assessment will be required.

14. The applicants will be expected to undertake pre-application consultation with the local community.
160 – 172 East India Dock Road Interim Planning Statement

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
   Purpose of the Interim Planning Statement
   Status of the Interim Planning Statement

2. SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA
   Site location and description
   Surrounding Context
   Planning History

3. PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK
   National Policy Guidance
   The London Plan
   Interim Planning Guidance
   Central Area Action Plan
   Supplementary Planning Guidance

4. PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE THE REDEVELOPMENT
   Land Use
   Public and Private Transport
   Density, Massing and Heights
   Affordable Housing
   Public Realm and Accessibility
   Open Space

5. HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRINCIPLES
   Listed Buildings
   Conservation Areas
   Environmental Constraints

6. PLANNING APPLICATION PROCESS
   Consultation
   Form of Submission
   Environmental Impact Assessment
   Planning Obligations

7. CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION
1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Interim Planning Statement

1.1 The purpose of this planning document is to guide the proposed redevelopment of Poplar Baths, Poplar Fire Station, Balsam House, and adjoining areas to the east and south (See Section 2). This document will achieve this by setting out the principles to guide the redevelopment, in line with the Council’s development policies.

1.2 A proposal for the redevelopment of the Poplar Baths site, in isolation, has been prepared by Tower Hamlets Environment Trust, titled New Life for Poplar Baths (September 2007), which sets out a vision for the site.

Status of the Interim Planning Statement

1.3 This document is to be adopted by the Council as an Interim Planning Statement. The intention is for this document to be formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in the future, at an appropriate stage in the production of the new Local Development Framework (LDF) process.

1.4 This document will therefore be subject to consultation, in line with the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement.
2 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

Site location and Description

2.1 The site is located on the south side of East India Dock Road (A13), situated north of the Isle of Dogs. The site is bounded by East India Dock road to the north, All Saints DLR station to the east, Storey House and Woodall Close to the South, and Cottage Street to the west. The proposed site currently occupies approximately 1.1 hectares.

2.2 The site area therefore includes Poplar Baths, the DLR sidings to the east, the garages and ball court at the rear of Lawless Street, Poplar Fire Station and Balsam House to the west of the Baths, as is shown in the map below.

2.3 Poplar Baths was built in the early 1930s as a bathing facility. The building was used as swimming baths right up until its closure in 1985, where it was subsequently used as a training centre until 1988. The site has since been vacant, and has begun to deteriorate providing a key incentive for its redevelopment. It is the historic nature of the building and its ornate interior that gave rise to its Grade-II listing by English Heritage in January 2000. LBTH conservation officers have produced a character statement for the listed buildings, the details of which are set out in section 7. The site is currently within LBTH ownership.

2.4 Poplar Fire Station was built in 1960s. The fire station, which is currently in use, is currently owned by London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority.

2.5 Balsam House is a residential development, originally forming part of the Fire Station site comprising 14 residential units. As such, the building was previously under ownership by London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, but was recently sold to an unknown developer.

2.6 DLR sidings to the east of Poplar Baths, which are currently in active use, are within DLR ownership.

2.7 The Garages and ball court to the rear of Poplar Baths are associated with the St Mattias Estate, with the ball court currently serving as amenity space. These units along with Lawless Street itself are currently owned by LBTH.
Surrounding Context

2.8 The area surrounding the site is a mix of predominantly 3-4 storey residential terraces off-set by a number of taller residential flats ranging from 7 to 20 storeys, with open spaces (a mixture of public, private and semi-private spaces), and a district retail centre. There is also a DLR line that runs to the east of the site below street level.

2.9 There are two ways to access the site via vehicle: East India Dock Road to the north and Cottage Street to the south. The site benefits from excellent transport links to the City and Canary Wharf due to the...
site’s proximity to the DLR and also the many bus routes that run along East India Dock Road, detailed in section 4. This is reflected in the Public Transport and Accessibility Level (PTAL) rating of 5.

2.10 There are three Conservation Area designations in the vicinity of the proposed redevelopment site, two of which adjoin the site boundary: St Matthias, Poplar; and Lansbury, and the third being All Saints which lies east of the site. These conservation areas contain a number of listed buildings, all of which are in close proximity to the site, detailed in section 5.

2.11 There are pedestrian crossings along East India Dock Road, linking the site to Crisp Street Market, which have considerable scope for improvement.
3. **PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK**

3.1 Section S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The ‘development plan’ is the Tower Hamlets Unitary Development Plan, Adopted in 1998 (as saved September 2007) and the London Plan, the Mayor’s spatial development strategy for London, adopted in 2004.

3.2 The Council has adopted a number of Interim Planning Documents for the Purpose of Development Control, including the Core Strategy and Development Control Document, The Proposals Map, and the City Fringe, Isle of Dogs and Leaside Area Action Plans. A Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) is also being produced and has been through its first consultation stage as the Issues and Options document. This site falls within the central area. The Interim Planning Guidance is a local interpretation of national and regional guidance, including the London Plan, as it reflects community consultation, an up-to-date evidence base and the Council’s objectives as set out in the Community Plan.

3.3 This document, when formally adopted, will form part of the Local Development Scheme. It should be noted that a development brief for this site was prepared in 2003, in draft form, to which this document provides an update.

**National Policy Guidance**

3.4 Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) set out the Government’s national policies on different aspects of land use planning. They need to be taken into account in the preparation of regional and local planning policy, and may also be material to decisions on individual planning applications. The following PPGs / PPSs are considered to be of most relevance (but are not exclusive) in terms of this site:

- **PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, 2005**
- **PPS3: Housing, 2006**
- **PPS6: Planning for Town Centres, 2005**
- **PPG13: Transport, 2001**
- **PPG 15: Planning and the historic environment**

**London Plan**

3.5 Planning applications that do not accord with the proposals in the UDP and which involve more than 2,500 sq m of floorspace in any Use Class (except Class C3), over 30m in height or more than 500 residential units must be referred to the Mayor.

5
3.6 The Mayor has introduced sub-regions as the best way to develop the strategic policies in the London Plan and to provide a focus for their implementation. Tower Hamlets is located within the East London sub-region. There is a commitment to identifying capacity to accommodate new job and housing opportunities and appropriate mixed use development; maximise the number of additional homes, including affordable housing; and ensure that social and community infrastructure is retained, enhanced and expanded where needed.

Interim Planning Guidance

3.7 The relevant Interim Planning Guidance Policies are listed below, in relation to the site.

Social and Community Facilities

3.8 The Council will work with partner organisations to ensure residential and working population growth is supported by adequate, high quality social and community facilities by resisting the loss of social and community facilities unless there are acceptable plans for their full replacement (CP27a).

3.9 In particular, Policy SCF1 seeks to ensure that social and community facility users are not disadvantaged by any reduction in the quality of, and access to facilities and any loss of facilities would therefore need to demonstrate that adequate access will remain to suitable education facilities to serve the local community, as well as any additional demand from new development in the area. For any new facilities, i.e. the replacement for this facility, it will need to be demonstrated that consideration is taken of: a) the likely catchment area of the facility; b) the accessibility of the site; and c) the needs of the area and quality of the proposal. The replacement facilities will therefore need to be demonstrated as part of any consideration of the loss of this site for education purposes.

Housing Density

3.10 With regard to density the Interim Core Strategy builds on the London Plan density matrix which identifies appropriate density ranges in relation to location, setting and the index of public transport accessibility (PTAL) and seeks to promote the highest development densities consistent with public transport accessibility and the character of the local area (CP20, HSG1, Planning Standard 4). For areas in the central part of the Borough, the appropriate density range is defined as 200 to 450 habitable rooms per ha (hr/ha) for locations with PTAL 2 to 3, with the upper level increasing to 700 hr/ha for locations with PTAL 4 to 6.

Affordable Housing

3.11 The Interim Core Strategy established a 50% affordable housing target across the Borough as a whole from all sources (CP22). In terms of specific development proposals Interim Development Control policies
seek 50% affordable housing provision on site capable of providing 10 or more dwellings, with a minimum requirement of 35% (HSG3). The social rented to intermediate ratio split should be 80:20 (CP22).

Housing Mix and type

3.12 The Interim Core Strategy seeks to ensure that housing accommodation in new residential developments includes housing types and sizes to meet local needs, with a particular requirement for family housing (CP21 / HSG2). A table identifying the required housing mix is included under Policy HSG2. In addition, all new residential units are required to meet 'Lifetime Homes’ standards and 10% of new housing is to be specifically designed to wheelchair / mobility standards (HSG9).

Housing Amenity Space

3.13 The Interim Development Control policies require all new housing developments to provide exclusive amenity space in accordance with the standards defined in Table DC2, with developments comprising 10 or more units also required to provide communal amenity space (HSG7).

Retail

3.14 Sustaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of the Borough’s town centres is a key element of the Interim Core Strategy (CP16). Interim Development Control policies seek to ensure retail provision meets the needs of local people and provide strong protection to A1 uses in primary frontages (RT1) whilst promoting and controlling A3, A4 and A5 uses in other appropriate locations within town centres (CP17, RT2, RT5). New retail development is to be focused in existing town centres in accordance with the sequential approach (RT4) whilst new town centre proposals should relate to the scale, role, catchment and character of the centre within the Borough’s retail hierarchy (CP16). The Interim Core Strategy seeks the protection and enhancement of existing street markets (CP18) and particular consideration is given to ensuring that new town centre development is integrated into the centre and fully accessible (CP16, CP46).

Office Space

3.15 The Interim Core Strategy is seeking to promote various types of new workspace suitable for small businesses (CP9), which is supported by the Council’s Small and Medium Size Business Survey.

Transport

3.16 Linking transport and development in order to reduce the need to travel forms part of the Interim Core Strategy (CP41), with objectives of focusing high-density development in areas of high public transport accessibility and improving conditions for walking and cycling (CP42). The Interim Core Strategy seeks to minimise on and off street parking in accordance with the defined maximum parking standards whilst providing minimum standards for disabled and cycle spaces (Dev 19).
A Transport Assessment is required for all planning applications except minor development (DEV17) whilst a Travel Plan will be required for all large developments comprising employment, retail, leisure and services (based on minimum size thresholds) and any other development that the Council’s considers will have significant transport impacts (DEV18).

Tall buildings
3.17 The Council may consider proposals for tall buildings in locations outside the tall building cluster locations identified in this policy if adequate justification can be made for their development. In addition, all proposals for tall buildings must contribute positively to a high quality, attractive environment; respond sensitively to the surrounding local context; not create unacceptable impacts on the surrounding environment, including the surrounding amenity; contribute to the social and economic vitality of the surrounding area; and not create unacceptable impacts on social and physical infrastructure (CP48).

Urban Design
3.18 The Interim Core Strategy requires a high standard of design with all new development, carefully relating in scale and density to its surroundings, contributing positively to the area and ensuring development is both safe and accessible (CP4, CP46, CP47, DEV2). The Interim Core Strategy requires separate Design and Access Statements to be submitted together with a fully documented landscape plan for all new development, excepting minor works (CP46, DEV13).

Public Realm
3.19 The Interim Core Strategy seeks to create better and safer streets in order to improve quality of life within the Borough, supporting improvement to the road network where this improves safety for all users (CP42).

Conservation
3.20 The protection and enhancement of the historic environment of the Borough forms part of the Interim Core Strategy (CP49). Development Control Policy CON2 confirms that new development within or adjacent to Conservation Areas will be assessed against their impact individually and cumulatively on the character, fabric and identity of the area.

3.21 In accordance with national, strategic and local policy guidelines, this Brief seeks to encourage a sympathetic redevelopment of the Poplar Baths site, along with the redevelopment of the Fire Station, the DLR sidings, Balsam House. The Council considers that there is scope for a high density scheme, respecting and enhancing the character of this listed building within the site and he neighbouring Conservation Areas, made more viable by the inclusion of the adjoining site listed above.
Open Space

3.22 The Interim Core Strategy confirms that the Council is committed to address the deficiency of publicly accessible open space in the Borough and Development Control Policy ONS2 seeks to secure new areas of open space within new development proposals.

Sustainable Environment

3.23 The Interim Core Strategy requires all new development to demonstrate achievement of recognised benchmark standards of excellence for Eco- Homes and BREEAM. (DEV5). In addition all new development is required to adopt a resource efficient approach to use of water (DEV5) and construction materials (DEV9) whilst major developments are required to incorporate renewable energy production to provide at least 10% of predicted energy requirements through renewable means (DEV6). All new development is required to make sufficient provision for waste disposal and recycling facilities (DEV15). With regard to environmental protection, the Interim Development Control document contains specific policies relating to noise and air pollution (DEV10, DEV11) and development on potentially contaminated land (DEV22).

Flood Risk

3.24 The site is not within a Flood Risk Area. However, any development within the borough is expected to incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), to reduce the impact on watercourses (DEV8).

Implementation

3.25 The Interim Core Strategy provides the basis for the Council to secure infrastructure and community benefits through Planning Obligations in accordance with appropriate legislation and guidance (IMP1). This is considered of fundamental importance in sustainably accommodating the projected increase in population in the Borough.

Central Area Action Plan

3.26 In the Central Area Action Plan Issues and Option document Poplar Baths is located within the wider Poplar/Crisp Street area of potential change. It comments that this area is in need of regeneration, suffering from poor public realm and has high levels of deprivation.

3.27 The Council seeks to coordinate this redevelopment site with surrounding developments which are coming forward.
Supplementary Planning Guidance

3.28 In addition the following SPG Notes are relevant to any redevelopment within the site boundary:

- Landscape Requirements
- Sound insulation
- Shopfront design
- Residential Space
- Designing out Crime (Parts 1 and 2)
4. Principles to Guide the Redevelopment

4.1 On the basis of the planning policies and conservation issues associated with the site and surrounding area, the following planning principles are appropriate to guide the redevelopment of the development site.

Land Use

Community Uses

4.2 Poplar Baths is allocated for recreation/leisure uses in the adopted UDP 1998 (proposal site 57). Providing and increasing the range of sports and leisure facilities is a strategic objective of the Adopted UDP 1998. The Interim Core Strategy seeks to ensure that there is no reduction in provision of community facilities.

4.3 The site is in very close proximity to All Saints DLR station and opposite Crisp Street District Shopping Centre (and the Idea Store); this location adds weight to the rational for development with a strong civic/community function on the site. Therefore, if there is to be a loss of community uses as a result of the redevelopment, this will be supported only where it can be demonstrated that there is a lack of demand for such a service or that the service is being relocated elsewhere in the borough, in an appropriate location (SCF1, CP27).

4.4 In particular, the Interim Core Strategy and Development Control Document, Policy SCF1, seeks to ensure that social and community facility users are not disadvantaged by any reduction in the quality of, and access to facilities and any loss of facilities would therefore need to demonstrate that adequate access will remain to suitable facilities to serve the local community, as well as any additional demand from new development in the area. For any new facilities, i.e. the replacement for this facility, it will need to be demonstrated that consideration is taken of: a) the likely catchment area of the facility; b) the accessibility of the site; and c) the needs of the area and quality of the proposal. The replacement facilities will therefore need to be demonstrated as part of any consideration of the loss of this site for education purposes.

4.5 From a heritage perspective, English Heritage are in favour of the Poplar Baths Building being reinstated to its original use, as part of the restoration of this listed building, but are aware that there may be feasibility implications of such, as is commented in Section 5.

Fire Station

4.6 Due to the strategic nature of this emergency service provision, together with its location within the Borough, the Council would request that any redevelopment proposals make suitable arrangements for an up-to-date Fire Station complex to meet the needs of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority.
Residential

4.7 Given the site’s context, the nature of the surrounding land uses and the borough’s Housing Needs Study, the inclusion of residential uses at this site would be appropriate. There is also general policy support for including residential uses in the Interim Core Strategy and London Plan.

4.8 However, the site is easily accessible by public transport, and is close to the shopping facilities and services of Crisp Street Market which does suggest potential for densities at the upper end of the acceptable range (CP20, and 4B.3 of the London Plan). However, further detail on the scale, height and bulk of any development, as well as the proportion of site area taken up by non-residential uses would need to be outlined before a more definitive planning position on this aspect of the scheme can be provided.

Retail

4.9 As the site is adjacent to Crisp Street district centre and that the site fronts East India Dock Road, the Council would support ground floor retail uses on the site, where this would enhance the retail offer of the centre.

Office

4.10 Affordable workspaces in B1 use class would be acceptable on the site, and are promoted in the Interim core Strategy (CP9). However more information would be needed to determine how these workspaces would be affordable and the longer term consequences of these remaining affordable. The Council's Small and Medium Business Survey sets out the business needs of the Borough. Any proposals for workspace would need to have taken regard of the report’s findings.

4.11 In Summary, the planning context for Poplar Baths would not preclude some form of enabling development appropriate to the site and context which facilitates the refurbishment of the listed building.

Public and Private Transport

4.12 The site has a high level of access to public transport, which is reflected in its Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 5. The nearest DLR station is All Saints, approximately 30 metres away, which serves Stratford to Lewisham (via Canary Wharf line). There are also a number of bus routes that run along East India Dock Road: D6, D7, D8, 15,115 and N15 (Night bus). All these routes provide a regular services.

4.13 Therefore, the Council will seek to minimise car parking and would support a car-free development in this location to promote sustainable transport options for all types of development. The level of any proposed car parking should be determined through a detailed transport assessment. The parking standards in the Interim Core
Strategy and Development Control DPD allows for maximum parking of 0.5 off-street spaces per residential unit coupled with a ‘car free agreement’.

4.14 All development, including car-free and low parking developments will need to have adequate servicing access and make provision for disabled parking. In the case of the latter, a minimum of 2 spaces are required for all type of uses or 10% of the total parking where parking is provided on site. Car-free developments should include one space if it can be safely provided or must demonstrate where a person with a disability can park to access the development with ease. Any proposals at the site will need to be supported by a Transport Assessment.

4.15 Local Tower Hamlets cycle network is designated along Woodstock terrace and Kerbey Street. Further to the south of the site, Poplar High Street is also designated as part of London Cycle Network Plus. It is therefore important that the redevelopment of this site makes provision for cycle parking and that access to the cycle network is made, albeit secondary to pedestrian walk ways in terms of public realm.

Density, Massing and Heights

4.16 For any residential development proposed at this site, the following policy consideration should be used to demonstrate the appropriate density. The site is located within the Central Area Action Plan and has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 5, as referred to above. For the purposes of determining housing density, this sub-area is considered to be urban in character. The acceptable density would therefore be in the range of 400-700 habitable rooms, in accordance with the emerging Core Strategy and Development Control Document. However, there are a number of other considerations, such as local context and character, and the quality of the designs, including (HSG1):

- Proximity to the existing residential blocks;
- Provisions of open space;
- Impact on the provision of services and infrastructure (including cumulative impacts);
- Access to a town centre; and
- Good design principles.

4.17 It should be noted that if there is to be the retention of community facilities at the ground level, this may affect the acceptable residential density of any proposal.

4.18 There is a requirement for communal amenity space and private amenity space set out in the Interim Core Strategy and Development Control DPD (HSG7), which should be provided to the standards set out in Table DC2.
Affordable Housing

4.19 There is a specific requirement for affordable housing within developments that propose 10 or more units, although the provision of affordable housing is encouraged on all sites proposing new housing. The Interim Core Strategy and Development Control document encourages 50% of units to be affordable, but requires at least 35% to be affordable. This provision should be on-site (CP22).

4.20 Requirements with respect to the mix of unit sizes and the tenure for residential developments of 10 units or more are set out in policy HSG2. Where proposals include an amount of affordable housing that is above 50% of the total housing, the Council would consider proposals that differ from the 80:20 split set out in policy HSG4.

Public Realm and Accessibility

4.21 There are a number opportunities, from an urban design perspective, to improve the streetscape throughout the redevelopment of this site (CP42). These key areas are the land which fronts East India Dock Road to the north of the site, Poplar Bath Street, the land to the rear of Poplar Baths, and the land to the south of Balsam House.

4.22 As the monument to the north of the site is listed, and a prominent feature of the site, it is important to maintain and enhance this feature, which provides a significant amount of visual amenity for the immediate vicinity (DEV14). This part of the site also provides a significant access point for the site, at present, with key linkages to Crisp Street, All Saints DLR and to public transport routes along East India Dock Road, which provides an opportunity to be improved (CP42).

4.23 The Council's Head of Transportation and Highways has raised no objection to the closure of Poplar Bath Street and the possibility of creating an extension of Cottage Street to East India Dock Road. The map below illustrates the current north-south vehicle access routes in the local area. However, the extension would need to be treated as an emergency access only, which would just allow walking and cycling and fire engine access. Altering the current road system across the site and within the surrounding area would offer a number of benefits for improving permeability within the local area (CP42).

4.24 There is an opportunity to improve the linkages to the existing spaces to the south of the site. It may be necessary to address the current parking layout in order to aid these linkages in a more effective manner.

4.25 In terms of access, it is important to establish both the desire lines through and around the site, and designate a hierarchy of access routes that reflects this appropriately.
Current Vehicle access routes

Open Space

4.26 The Council’s Open Space Strategy, which forms part of the evidence base for the Interim Core Strategy, identifies that there is an under-provision of publicly accessible open space in the borough. Therefore, any loss of open space would be resisted and for most major developments such as this it would be expected that additional open space be provided.

4.27 This site does not currently include any public open space, and is immediately adjoining a cluster of open space linked primarily to Storey House and Abbot House. As a minimum therefore any new development should meet the standards set out above for communal and private amenity space, and improve the quality and relationship to the existing open space. However, it will need to be satisfactorily demonstrated that any new open space cannot be accommodated on this site.
5. HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRINCIPLES

5.1 As the site is complex, there are a number of constraints that need to be taken into account when planning to redevelop the site.

Listed Buildings

5.2 In 1988 the Poplar Baths building was considered for “spot listing” by the secretary of state but was refused. It was subsequently Grade II listed in January 2000 (TQ 3780 788/25/10128). There is a presumption against the demolition of the building and requirement for retention of any special architectural and/or historic features of merit.

5.3 English Heritage has commented on a feasibility scheme put forward by Tower Hamlets Environment Trust, Swan Housing Association and Poplar baths steering group.

5.4 The key threat to their comments centred on not supporting the proposed demolition of the eastern section of the listed building, which contains the second class pool, the Boiler House and offices fronting East India Dock Road. Any enabling development must be fully justified financially, as a means of ensuring an acceptable restoration of the listed structure. Further investigation into the condition of the existing structure would be necessary at this stage if the Budget Cost Estimate prepared by Bernard Williams Associates is to be fully assessed. A comprehensive assessment of any scheme should also include the costing of alternative options with regard to the refurbishment of the retained parts of the pool.

5.5 If any enabling development is to be considered as part of a regeneration scheme, it must form a coherent addition to the main mass of the listed building. Poplar Baths has the angular, blocky form typical of the period in which it was constructed. The various proposals set out in the scheme indicate an architectural approach that would be severely detrimental to the special architectural and historic interest of that part of the building which is retained.

5.6 The significance of the various parts of the listed structures within the Poplar Baths building have been detailed by a report commissioned by the Council, prepared by KM Heritage (July 2007). In broad terms, the most important parts of the building are the main pool and its enclosure, the entrance lobby and the external elevations (and of those, the elevations to East India Dock Road and Poplar Bath Street are most important). In particular, the elements of the building which are of special interest are:

- The Plan form
- The form of the bath roofs
- The roof forms, and
- The public areas at the front of the large pool.
5.7 A conservation management plan has been prepared by Architectural History Practice (July 2007), which identifies the opportunities for change.

5.8 The Council’s Conservation Officer inspected the site on Thursday 6th July 2006 and conducted an initial conservation appraisal, the main conclusion of which is set out below. It should be noted that the appraisal was prepared without the benefit of detailed floor plans and an assessment of the basement was not undertaken. This appraisal is for the benefit of this evaluation exercise only and should not be construed as being a full or sufficient appraisal that would be required to be submitted to support a planning application. It is recommended that a more detailed appraisal would be required as part of any submission of a planning application. The following appraisal is provided as an initial, informal, assessment only.

5.9 The statue of Richard Green by Edward Wynon (1856), located in the forecourt of the building and facing East India Dock Road is Grade II listed. It is considered to be outstanding and advice is that it should remain in its current position with some replacement of the side parts necessary.

5.10 Through the main metal bath entrance doors, through to the art Deco entry areas, the other side of these doors, including the staircases of the upper levels with their fine pale blue tiled wall cladding, and the fine double and single doors off these spaces, there is another set of doors to arrive in the main (former first class swimming bath) bath area. This was considered “a sumptuous experience” and the assessment of the main building first class pool area is that:

5.11 “…The space is grand, magnificently lit and enclosed by the series of glorious concrete arches which remind one of Perret and other great explorers of reinforced concrete before, and after the first world war. This space is one of the finest spaces in Tower Hamlets, and arguably in east London. It is complete, and included within its enclosure are all the secondary circulation and support spaces that lie within the basic rectangular form.”

5.12 Advice is therefore that the main bath building should be retained in its entirety, and adapted as appropriate, to the any new use.

5.13 The second class bath buildings (the eastern block) were not considered of the same calibre, either externally or internally. In principle advice is that most of this building could be demolished, with the exceptions of a number of important features detailed below:

- The chimney - It was advised that should be retained and incorporated into design proposals and possibly used as a ‘marker for the new development’.
• The boiler room - The boiler room is characterised by a wonderful conjunction of large simple volume tanks and the intricate woven network of pipes and valves that run between them. The Conservation Officer highlighted “A nearby pump house which has been used as a restaurant successfully, with tables set amongst the machinery, one cannot quite relinquish the challenge of finding a similar or other appropriate use for this part of the building”.

• Other fittings - There are a number of doors and smaller fittings that might be set aside for re-use in the new building.

Conservation Areas

5.14 There are three Conservation Area designations in the vicinity of the proposed redevelopment site, two of which adjoin the site boundary: St Matthias, Poplar; and Lansbury, and the third being All Saints which lies east of the site (See Appendix A).

5.15 St Matthias is an area that is characterised by a Grade II* Church, built in the 1650s, set in a churchyard, both of which lie within Poplar Recreation Ground. The area also includes a number of Grade-II listed buildings and a number of late 19th Century residential streets.

5.16 Lansbury is a 1950s estate characterised by the market square (Crisp Street) Belgrove primary school, St Philip Howard secondary school, St Mary’s and St Joseph Church. In addition to this are houses and flats which are grouped into closes and squares of differing sizes.

5.17 All Saints is an area that is characterised by a 1820s Grade-II* listed church, grounds and rectory, which also includes a small group of early 19th century residential streets and listed buildings to the south. As mentioned earlier, the site lies outside of the All Saints Conservation Area to the east but clearly any development proposals would need to ensure that there is no detrimental impact on the setting of the conservation area. Any proposals would need to respond appropriately to the setting of nearby listed buildings, which include the Grade II listed All Saints Church and Newby Place Health Centre.

Environmental Constraints

5.18 There are a number of environmental constraints that will affect the redevelopment of this site. These include:

• Detailed requirements for Fire Station to meet the needs of London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority;
• Presence of asbestos, identified by a Type II Asbestos Study (September 2007), which details the implications for the redevelopment.
• Impact of tall buildings on the microclimate and aerial reception in
  the immediate vicinity of the site;
• Proximity of the site to two Sites of Importance for Nature
  Conservation (SINC), THL06 and THL21;
• Site lying within an Air Quality Management Area; and
• Site lying within the Council’s Parking Permit Mini Zone D1.

5.19 All the factors above will influence the sustainable development value
of the development
6. PLANNING APPLICATION PROCESS

Consultation

6.1 The Council are anticipating that a single planning application will be submitted for the redevelopment of this site, in a joint venture between Tower Hamlets, London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and DLR.

6.2 Prior to the submission of planning, listed building and conservation area applications to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets the applicant should hold early discussions with the Major Project Development and Strategic Applications, conservation and traffic and transportation sections of the Council. Early discussions with the GLA and English Heritage are also recommended.

Form of Submission

6.3 Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how their development proposals comply with the objectives contained within this Brief. In particular, applicants will need to demonstrate that their proposals:

- Address the Council’s policies on conservation and heritage, housing, open space, transportation and built environment;
- Have regard to the London Plan, as well as Interim Core Strategy, in particular the Central Area Action Plan;
- Achieve national planning policy objectives;
- Respect the listed nature of the Poplar Baths site and the character and appearance of the surrounding Conservation Areas; and
- Are in line with principles of good urban design.

6.4 Over and above the documents listed in the summary of the key redevelopment issues, at the front of this Brief, planning, listed building and conservation area applications for a redevelopment scheme will need to be supported by the following:

- Planning statement
- A character appraisal of the historic site, in justifying any development proposals on site
- Travel Plan
- Transport Assessment
- Design and Access Statement
- Tall Buildings Assessment
- Air Quality Assessment
- Noise and Vibration Assessment
- Landscape Plan
- Energy efficiency and recycling Statement
- Code of Construction Practice
Environmental Impact Assessment

6.5 Through an initial assessment, it is anticipated that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be required for this site, purely by virtue of its size, notwithstanding other key components.

6.6 For an EIA to be required the proposals must constitute “EIA development” as defined at Part I (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (As amended) The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2006. In this respect, proposals could be considered as Schedule 2 development, category 10 of which refers to urban development projects that exceed an area of 0.5 hectares.

Planning Obligations

6.7 Given the development proposals for this site it is likely that Planning Obligations are required to ensure an acceptable development, should the other key issues raised above be satisfactorily addressed. The Interim Core Strategy sets out the priorities for such obligations, provided either on or off site or through contributions (IMP1). These are as follows (This is not an exclusive list, and would need to be subject to detailed discussion and would be relevant to the development proposed):

a) Open space
b) Public realm improvements, through highways improvements, and improvements to pedestrian and cycle routes, in particular the link to Crisp street market and All Saints DLR Station.
c) Public transport and Sustainable transport initiatives: improvements to All Saints DLR station and bus frequency.
d) Affordable housing
e) Employment space and employment and training initiatives
f) Education and health contributions
g) Renovation of public art
h) Social and community facilities
7. CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

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Appendix A: Maps showing Conservation Areas in relation to Development Site

All Saints Conservation Area
St Matthias Conservation Area