

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE**

HELD AT 5.30 P.M. ON THURSDAY, 4 MARCH 2010

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE
CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG**

Members Present:

Councillor Shafiqul Haque (Chair)

Councillor Shahed Ali
Councillor Alibor Choudhury
Councillor Stephanie Eaton
Councillor Marc Francis (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Rania Khan
Councillor Shiria Khatun

Councillor Peter Golds

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor Abdal Ullah

Officers Present:

Jerry Bell	– (Strategic Applications Manager Development and Renewal))
Megan Crowe	– (Legal Services Team Leader, Planning)
Aman Dalvi	– (Corporate Director, Development & Renewal)
Isabella Freeman	– (Assistant Chief Executive [Legal Services])
Stephen Irvine	– (Development Control Manager, Development and Renewal)
Ila Robertson	– (Senior Planner)
Devon Rollo	– (Strategic Applications Planning Officer)
Owen Whalley	– (Service Head Major Projects, Development & Renewal)
Chris Worby	– (Service Head, Housing Regeneration, Development & Renewal)
Alan Ingram	– (Democratic Services)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rupert Eckhardt, for whom Councillor Peter Golds deputised, and Councillor Dulal Uddin.

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
Stephanie Eaton	6.1, 6.2	Personal	Correspondence received from concerned parties.
Shafiqul Haque	6.1, 6.2	Personal	Correspondence received from concerned parties.
Shiria Khatun	6.1, 6.2	Personal	Correspondence and phone calls received from concerned parties.
Rania Khan	6.1, 6.2	Personal	Correspondence received from concerned parties.
Alibor Choudhury	6.1, 6.2	Personal	Correspondence received from concerned parties and Ward Councillor for both applications.
Marc Francis	6.1, 6.2	Personal	Correspondence received from concerned parties
Peter Golds	6.1, 6.2	Personal	Correspondence received from concerned parties
Shahed Ali	6.1, 6.2	Personal	Correspondence received from concerned parties

At the request of the Chair, Mr A. Ingram, Democratic Services Officer, read out the following statement on behalf of Councillor Ahmed Hussain:-

“I refer to the statement that I made at Strategic Development Committee on the 15th December 2009 that the Labour members were whipped. The application we were discussing was controversial and as such I had a great deal to say in somewhat restricted times.

I completely withdraw my suggestion that Labour members were whipped. This claim is untrue.

I accept that in making the statement I have breached the Code of Member Conduct by not treating my fellow councillors with respect and behaving in a manner that may bring the council into disrepute.

I wish to unreservedly apologise to the Labour Members of the Strategic Development Committee for what I said at the Strategic Development Committee.

I would ask leave of the Chair of the Strategic Development Committee that this apology is read out by the clerk of the committee at the appropriate time at the next committee meeting in order to make this apology public.”

Councillor Ahmed Hussain’s statement was **noted**.

3. 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.

4. PROCEDURE FOR HEARING OBJECTIONS

The Committee noted the procedure for hearing objections and those who had registered to speak at the meeting.

5. DEFERRED ITEMS

There were no deferred items for consideration.

6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DECISION

6.1 Ocean Estate and LIFRA Hall Site, London, (PA/09/02584)

NOTE: Councillor Shahed Ali entered the meeting at 5.45 p.m., prior to commencement of consideration of this agenda item.

Mr Owen Whalley, Service Head Major Projects, introduced the report concerning the regeneration of the Ocean Estate and LIFRA site, London, including five development areas.

The Chair referred to speakers who had been registered prior to the meeting in accordance with the Council's Constitution and invited them to address the Committee.

Mr Tom Ridge, a local resident speaking in objection to the application, indicated that he was a former teacher and, as a local historian and gave details of the buildings erected in Harford Street in 1845 as the Tower Hamlets division of the Schools Board. The buildings were not listed but no other Borough had a group of similar buildings and these should be preserved and continue to be used for educational purposes, to avoid them being demolished and the premises manager being relocated elsewhere. The decision of Tower Hamlets Schools to sell off the buildings for housing was unacceptable in the area of the largest and fastest growing school lists. There was no justification for the loss of the school and the Headteacher of Ben Jonson School had suggested alternative uses for the site, for a parents' centre and facility for the visually impaired, together with allotments. He expressed the view that Feeder Site 4 should be excluded from the plans and properly developed as part of the school estate.

Mr Shahanur Khan, a local resident speaking in objection to the application, stated that he was representing the views of the Ocean Estate Campaign to safeguard residents' rights. The proposed development would change the physical environment of the estate with a 10 storey building height. There would be adverse effects with the addition of a large number of people to the estate population and householders' sunlight would be restricted. He was a school governor and was concerned that the proposals would also place great pressure on local schools. A recent survey had indicated that there were already 3,000 patients on the Stepney Health Centre list and many more would have to be accommodated under the proposals.

He continued that problems would arise from parking and extra vehicular traffic. Car-free developments did not work and more vehicles would be inevitable. Children's play would consequently be affected and more facilities were needed for mothers and children. Residents' views would be obstructed and their privacy would be compromised. More community facilities should be provided.

Mr Geoff Pearce, Group Director of East Thames Housing Group, speaking for the application, stated that the housing association managed properties in East London and Essex only, including some 2,000 homes in Tower Hamlets. Work on the current proposals had been ongoing for 18 months and there had been several attempts over the last 10 years to have the Ocean Estate redeveloped. It was intended that residents would remain tenants and some 1,200 homes on the estate would be refurbished, with over £40m being spent. The funding was now all in place, including £41m Government grant for affordable housing. 819 new build homes were planned, 396 of which would

be affordable housing and 761 homes refurbished to Decent Homes standards. The association was under an obligation to give all displaced residents the right to return and all new homes would have a garden or generous balcony, would be of a higher standard than the London Mayor's requirements and would exceed current efficiency standards, resulting in much lower running costs. 10% of homes would be wheelchair accessible. There would be a new community centre in the light of objections relating to the LIFRA Hall and the new facility would be only yards from the present site. The centre would be much improved and form a community hub. Rental income from shops on Ben Jonson Road would be re-invested into the community and 85 Harford Street would be sensitively refurbished and converted.

Ms Brenda Daly, Chair of the Ocean Tenants' Association, spoke in favour of the application and commented that she had seen the original estate built and it should now be knocked down and refurbished. She made a plea for the residents to now have a nice place to live and bring up children. Ocean Estate had received no improvement works for years and a decision to provide improvements for people's lives was now in Councillors' hands.

Mr Whalley then gave a detailed presentation of the application, as detailed in the previously circulated report, with particular reference to the layout of the development: the scale, height and massing of the buildings in the context of the surrounding environment; affordable housing provision; and vehicular and pedestrian access to the site. He added that 25 further letters of representation and five further provisions had been received since the report had been prepared. Mr Whalley indicated that amendments to the original report recommendations were included in the supplemental report tabled at the meeting.

Members then put questions that were answered by Officers, relating to daylight/sunlight issues; car parking facilities in the context of proposals for car-free developments; proposals for the future of Ben Jonson Road shopkeepers; the nature and extent of public consultation; the anticipated child yield of the development and children's play space policies; effects of the development for the micro-environment; educational considerations including the effects on Ben Jonson School; access of current LIFRA Hall users to the proposed new community facility; the Essian Street former glassworks site and the effects of the development on the existing Conservation Area. Mr Whalley stressed that the report related to outline planning permission and matters of detail raised on the matters of parking provision, the future of shopkeepers and children's services could be addressed at a future meeting. Members expressed some dissatisfaction with the report and the Chair indicated that Officers had noted their concerns but a vote was now needed.

Councillor Alibor Choudhury proposed an amendment to add conditions to the legal agreement which, on being put to the vote was declared carried six for and two against. The terms of the resolution are shown in resolution (2) below. On a vote of six for and two against on the substantive motion, it was –

RESOLVED

(1) That outline planning permission be **GRANTED** as set out hereunder for a total of 819 residential dwellings (Class C3) and up to 1300 sq.m of built floorspace for flexible non residential uses (Classes A1, A2, A3 & D1) at the Ocean Estate and LIFRA Hall site, London, including the five following development sites:

- Land bound by Shandy Street, White Horse Lane, Trafalgar Gardens, Masters Street and Duckett Street, Ocean Estate, London (Site E)
- Land bound by Dongola Road, Duckett Street, Ben Jonson Road and Harford Street, Ocean Estate, London (Site F)
- Land at Essian Street, Ocean Estate, London (Feeder Site 2)
- LIFRA Hall site at the junction with Ben Jonson Road and Carr Street, London (Feeder Site 3)
- Land at 85 Harford Street, Ocean Estate, London (Feeder Site 4)

Such planning permission to be as shown on the plans and subject to the prior completion of a legal agreement and to the conditions and informatives set out in the report (as amended by the supplemental report tabled at the meeting), comprising:

- Site E – The demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment, involving the erection of buildings up to 9 storeys in height, to provide for up to 462 residential dwellings (Class C3) with associated car parking, central heating plant, private and communal amenity spaces, alterations to the existing highway network and landscaping works in connection with the regeneration of the Ocean Estate.
- Site F – The demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment, involving the erection of buildings up to 7 storeys, to provide for up to 240 residential dwellings (Class C3) and up to 1300 sq.m of built floorspace for flexible non-residential uses (Classes A1, A2, A3 and D1) with associated car parking, central heating plant, private and communal amenity spaces, alterations to the existing highway networks and landscaping works in connection with the regeneration of the Ocean Estate.
- Feeder Site 2 – The demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment, involving the erection of a building up to 7 storeys, to provide for up to 24 residential dwellings (Class C3), with associated

car parking, private and communal amenity spaces and landscaping works in connection with the regeneration of the Ocean Estate.

- Feeder Site 3 – The demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment, involving the erection of buildings up to 10 storeys, to provide for up to 70 residential dwellings (Class C3), with associated car parking, private and communal amenity spaces and landscaping works in connection with the regeneration of the Ocean Estate.
- Feeder Site 4 – The demolition of two existing buildings and the conversion of one building for the redevelopment, involving the erection of buildings up to 3 storeys, to provide for up to 23 residential dwellings (Class C3), with associated car parking, private and communal amenity areas and landscaping works in connection with the regeneration of the Ocean Estate.

(2) That the following conditions be added to the legal agreement:

- Officers will work to ensure that the reprovision of community services at the new centre on Harford Street is achieved within a reasonable timeframe so as to avoid CPO action and takes into account the service providers' requirements in terms of tenure, affordability and space.
- Officers will immediately work to support directly affected businesses through a proper consultation with options that include relocation, compensation and the right to return.

(3) That power be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control to impose the conditions and informatives.

(4) That, if by 21st of March 2010 the legal agreement has not been completed to the satisfaction of the Chief Legal Officer, power be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control to refuse planning permission.

At 7.00 p.m. the meeting adjourned to allow members of the public to vacate the meeting room. The proceedings reconvened at 7.10 p.m.

6.2 Land Bound by Shandy Street, White Horse Lane, Trafalgar Gardens, Masters Street and Duckett Street, Ocean Estate, London (Site E) (PA/09/02585)

The Chair noted that Councillor Abjol Miah was present and indicated that he could deputise for Councillor Dulal Uddin, should he so wish.

Mr Owen Whalley, Service Head Major Projects, introduced the report concerning proposed full planning permission for Sites E and F regarding the regeneration of the Ocean Estate, London, as detailed in the report previously circulated.

Mr Shahanur Khan, a local resident, spoke in objection and stated that the proposals would significantly change the structure of the environment and could worsen overcrowding by increasing the local population. This created further concerns for education, health services and provision for children. The proposed car-free areas would not work and air pollution would increase. As a school governor, he expressed further concerns that education provision in the area was already over-subscribed and the anticipated increase in the number of children in the area was very much underestimated. He raised further concerns in connection with the future of current users of the LIFRA Hall and felt that social housing provision would be inadequate. Mr Khan further pointed out the large number of objections that had been raised regarding the application.

Mr Shopon Miah, a local resident, spoke in objection to the proposals, supporting the comments of the previous speaker and also raising concerns about increased CO2 emissions; likely overcrowding; parking problems and reduction in children's play space; compromised privacy for residents; the inability of local health services to cope with increased population levels and a general negative effect on the quality of life for residents.

Mr Geoff Pearce, Group Director of East Thames Housing Group, welcomed the amendment relating to the future of shopkeepers and LIFRA Hall users as agreed in the previous agenda item. He added that it had always been intended that the present retailers and users would have the opportunity to return after the scheme was implemented. With regard to the needs of families on the Ocean Estate, there were cases of severe overcrowding at present and the 131 new family homes that would be provided would address this. The scheme when delivered would deliver real transformational change for residents.

Ms Brenda Day confirmed that she did not wish to speak further on the application.

Mr Whalley referred to the detailed discussion that had taken place during consideration of the previous agenda item, which also related to the current application and stated that the architectural quality of the development for Sites E and F was high and would improve residents' quality of life.

Members then put queries regarding the matter of increased population density; public transport issues and the possible continuation of additional bus service frequencies after the initial three year agreement; the actual number of residential units proposed for both the sites; how the impact of the Shandy Street, White House Lane and Dongola Road elevations would be mitigated.

Members expressed further concerns and dissatisfaction regarding the figures quoted in the report relating to anticipated additional numbers of children and school places; the actual numbers of dwellings to be provided

and the nature of tenure. Mr Whalley apologised for the fact that confusion had arisen with regard to these elements of the report

The Chair expressed the view that Officers should be able to answer questions fully and indicated that a vote was now necessary. Accordingly, on a vote of five for and three against, it was –

RESOLVED

(1) That full planning permission be **GRANTED** as set out hereunder for the following sites:

- Land bound by Shandy Street, White Horse Lane, Trafalgar Gardens, Masters Street and Duckett Street, Ocean Estate, London (Site E),
- Land bound by Dongola Road, Duckett Street, Ben Jonson Road and Harford Street, Ocean Estate, London (Site F).

Such planning permission to be as shown on the plans and subject to the prior completion of a legal agreement and to the conditions and informatives set out in the report (as amended by the supplemental report tabled at the meeting), comprising:

Site E – The demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment, involving the erection of buildings up to 9 storeys, to provide for 462 residential dwellings (Class C3) with associated car parking, central heating plant, private and communal amenity spaces, alterations to the existing highway network and landscaping works in connection with the regeneration of the Ocean Estate.

Site F – The demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment, involving the erection of buildings up to 7 storeys, to provide for 240 residential dwellings (Class C3) and 1300 sq.m of built floorspace for flexible non-residential uses (Classes A1, A2, A3 and D1), with associated car parking, central heating plant, private and communal amenity spaces, alterations to the existing highway network and landscaping works in connection with the regeneration of the Ocean Estate.

(2) That power be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control to impose the conditions and informatives.

(3) That, if by 21st of March 2010 the legal agreement has not been completed to the satisfaction of the Chief Legal Officer, power be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control to refuse the planning permission.

The meeting ended at 7.42 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Shafiqul Haque
Strategic Development Committee