

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 18 AUGUST 2021

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

Members Present:

Councillor Abdul Mukit MBE (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Sabina Akhtar
Councillor David Edgar
Councillor Rabina Khan
Councillor Tarik Khan

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor Rajib Ahmed * online
Councillor Andrew Wood*online

Apologies:

Councillor Kahar Chowdhury
Councillor Val Whitehead

Officers Present:

Jerry Bell	– (Area Planning Manager (East), Planning Services, Place)
Paul Buckenham	– (Development Manager, Planning Services, Place)
Sally Fraser	– (Team Leader (East) Planning Services, Place)
Siddhartha Jha	– (Principal Planning Lawyer, Governance, Legal Services)
Nelupa Malik	– (Principal Planner (East Area Team) , Place)
Zoe Folley	– (Democratic Services Officer, Committees, Governance)

Councillor Abdul Mukit MBE (Chair)

1. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

None were reported.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

1. That the minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Development Committee held on 21st July 2021 be agreed as a correct record

3. RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROCEDURE FOR HEARING OBJECTIONS AND MEETING GUIDANCE

To RESOLVE 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 Place 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 Place is delegated authority to do so, provided always that the Corporate Director does not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision.
- 3) To NOTE the procedure for hearing objections at meetings of the Strategic Development Committee.

4. DEFERRED ITEMS

There were none

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DECISION

5.1 2 Trafalgar Way, London, E14 5SP (PA/20/01402)

Update report was tabled

Paul Buckenham introduced the application for the redevelopment of the site to provide a new mixed use building (including student accommodation units and associated uses, residential units, office, shops/cafes and a restaurant/takeaway) with three elements of 46, 36 and 28 storeys and other associated works.

The update report corrected factual issues and clarified details of the public realm works.

Sally Fraser introduced the report, advising of the character of the site, the surrounding area and the key features of the scheme.

The Committee noted the following issues:

- The planning history, in particular the amendments to the previously approved application, in 2015 to remove the on site affordable housing and to increase the affordable housing contribution which was granted permission. This was in view of the site's unsuitability for affordable housing. No further progress had been made with this.
- Key features of the scheme – including the layout, proposed uses, design and images of the site from the surrounding area.
- Consultation. 35 representations had been received in objection. The reasons for the objections were noted, around the proposed use, amenity impacts, the design, highways/infrastructure, environment issues amongst other issues.
- The land use was in line with policy - given the provision of good quality purpose built student accommodation. The London Plan supported the provision of such accommodation. The site also had excellent transport links
- The proposed housing. It would contribute to the delivery of 748 homes across the borough, helping to meet housing targets. It was considered that in viability terms this represented the most that could be provided.
- Good quality amenity and child play space would also be provided and open space contributions.
- Other aspects of the scheme included: the delivery of employment work space – including affordable work space. Details of which were noted.
- The issues around the height. It was considered that the proposals would be proportionate to the location. It met all four of the exception criteria for assessing the acceptability of a tall building outside the Tall Building Zone. The reasons for this was noted, as detailed in the report.
- The impact on heritage assets would be less than substantial and the likely overall planning benefits of the proposals would outweigh this.
- The amenity impacts – particularly the sunlight and daylight impacts. The vast majority of nearby windows would experience a negligible impact. However, it was noted that some properties (Boardwalk Place, Wharfside Point) would experience minor to moderate impacts. However, given the urban context and the circumstances (that it mostly affected secondary windows, the existing restrictions on sunlight/daylight to these properties, the separation distances) the proposal would have an acceptable impact on neighbouring residential amenity. Overall given the public benefits of the scheme and the nature of the impacts this was found to be acceptable.
- That scheme also sought to provide significant improvements to the public realm and the highway. This included: the proposed regeneration of the underpass, the new subway entrance and associated infrastructure.
- That biodiversity enhancements were welcomed
- Financial contributions had been secured including for the off – site affordable housing.
- The scheme would be liable for both the Mayor of London's and the Borough's community infrastructure levy. In addition, it would provide a

necessary and reasonable planning obligation to local employment and training

- On balance, given the benefits of the proposals, officers were recommending that it was granted planning permission.

The Chair invited the registered speakers to address the meeting

Oliver Campbell addressed the committee raising objections to the application

- He disagreed that the previously agreed tower building should be treated as a material planning issue given that there was no prospect of it coming forward, due to the viability issues. This should be disregarded as a material planning issue.
- It would be too tall for the area given it was outside the Tall Buildings Cluster. It conflicted with the local plan policies, including the South Quay Master Plan in relation to the height of buildings, particularly the approach to building clusters and the stepping down policy from Canary Wharf.
- It would impact on neighbouring amenity.

Councillor Andrew Wood spoke in support of the scheme, highlighting the following:

- This was an unsuitable location for family sized housing and so he opposed the provision of a residential led development on this site. This was for a number of reasons.
- He supported the provision of purpose built student housing given the need for this and lack of purpose built student housing in the Borough. He also supported the link with the UCL given the sites good transport links to the campuses.
- The proposals should also have little impact on infrastructure and traffic, compared to a residential development.
- He disagreed that this would be too tall for the area, given the nature of the surrounding area.

The applicant's agent, Anthony Mellalieu then spoke in support of the application, highlighting the following:

- Applicant's track record in similar developments.
- The development sought to provide high quality purpose built student accommodation and support the University in a suitable location.
- It would deliver a number of economic benefits, bring trade to the area and would provide financial contributions. He also highlighted the proposals in respect of the affordable work space and the environmental benefits.
- The applicant had looked carefully at the sunlight and daylight impacts. The findings of the assessment showed that the development would have minor impacts on neighbouring properties. This had been independently assessed.

- The developer would start construction in first quarter of the year.

The Committee asked a number of questions of officers around the following issues:

- The exceptional circumstances allowing the provision of a full contribution for off site affordable housing. Officers underlined the site's unsuitability for family sized housing due to the site constraints. It was considered that this justified the deviation from policy, and the provision of the off site contributions for housing, to be targeted to the capital programme, which focused on increasing family housing.
- Compliance with the 50% policy target in respect of affordable housing and an off site contribution. It was confirmed that the Council's Viability Team had considered the scheme and the contribution. It was considered that the most that could be provided had been secured. It was also considered that the provision of a contribution equal to 35% affordable housing should carry substantial weight along with the other benefits of the development
- The sunlight and daylight issues. Officers drew attention to the assessment in the report. Almost 3000 windows were tested. Most would experience a negligible impact (where there was no discernible loss as a result of the development). It was noted that a small number failed the VSC tests and that the properties benefited from other sources of light.
- Height of the development/ issues around compliance with policy/relationship with the Tall Buildings Zone. Officers confirmed that the proposals complied with all four of the tests for buildings outside the tall building zone. It was clarified the tall building, referred to by the objector, could be built out as it had been granted a lawful certificate and was a material consideration. However, it was at the discretion of the Committee how much weight they should give to this. Officers also noted the development's potential to act as a gateway development to Canary Wharf. Consequently due to these reasons, Officers considered the height of the building to be acceptable in this location.
- The targets for purpose built student housing for the Borough. There was no upper limit on this (in the London and Local Plan).
- The need for additional purpose built student accommodation in the Borough.
- The community benefits of the scheme. It was noted in addition to the contributions for affordable housing, the benefits included the provision of employment and affordable workspace, (at a sizeable discount), economic benefits for the area, the reinstatement of a restaurant use and significant public realm improvements, amongst other things.
- Quality of the affordable student housing. Reassurances were provided there would no difference between the quality of the private and the affordable units.
- Employment for opportunities for local graduates. Officers drew attention to the obligations in relation to access to employment. The non financial contributions included obligations regarding: construction

phase employment skills training and end-user phase employment skills training. The Council had an Employment Team and the applicant will be expected to engage with them (as set out in the s106) to ensure these obligations were fulfilled.

On a unanimous vote in favour the Committee **RESOLVED:**

1. That planning permission is **GRANTED** at 2 Trafalgar Way, London, E14 5SP for the following development
 - Redevelopment of the site to provide a new mixed use building including student accommodation units and associated uses (Sui Generis), residential units (Class C3), office (Class B1), shops/cafes (Class A1/A3) and a restaurant/takeaway (Class A3/A5) arranged over a 4 storey podium with three taller elements of 46, 36 and 28 storeys (with roof-top plant and basements), alongside parking, landscaping, public realm and other associated works. (PA/20/01402)
2. Subject to the prior completion of a legal agreement to secure the planning obligations set out in the Committee report
3. That the Corporate Director of Place is delegated the power to impose conditions and informatives to address the matters set out in the Committee report.

6. OTHER PLANNING ISSUES - PRE - APPLICATION PRESENTATION

6.1 Pre - Application Presentation: Aberfeldy Estate, Abbott Road, Land to the north of East India Dock Road (A13), London, (E14.PF/20/00108)

The Committee considered the presentation in accordance with the pre - application presentation protocol. Alongside the developer's team, Councillors Rajib Ahmed and Andrew Wood spoke on the proposals.

The Committee raised a number of issues around:

- Connectivity, bus services, infrastructure, transport, and engagement with TfL in helping to deal with relevant issues.
- The housing mix – particularly in relation to policy, the existing provision on site and the demolition. The management of occupants returning to the development.
- Environmental and biodiversity issues.
- Building safety and fire safety issues
- Links to Council's policy on tall buildings.

RESOLVED:

1. The Committee noted the contents of the report and pre-application presentation

The meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.

Chair,
Strategic Development Committee