

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

HELD AT 5.30 P.M. ON THURSDAY, 4 AUGUST 2011

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

Members Present:

Councillor Helal Abbas (Chair)

Councillor Bill Turner
Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed
Councillor Carlo Gibbs
Councillor Judith Gardiner

Councillor Peter Golds

Other Councillors Present:

Officers Present:

Owen Whalley	– (Service Head Planning and Building Control, Development & Renewal)
Pete Smith	– (Development Control Manager, Development and Renewal)
Devon Rollo	– (Strategic Applications Planning Officer)
Megan Nugent	– (Legal Services Team Leader, Planning, Chief Executive's)
Elaine Bailey	– (Strategic Applications Planner)
Zoe Folley	– (Committee Officer, Democratic Services Chief Executive's)
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1. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

It was proposed by Councillor Carlo Gibbs, seconded by Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed and **RESOLVED**

That Councillor Bill Turner be elected Vice-Chair of the Strategic Development Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2011/2012.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Dr Emma Jones for whom Councillor Peter Golds was deputising.

3. 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	9.1	Personal	Had received representations from interested parties.
	9.2	Personal	Ward Councillor. Member of the previous Committee where application was considered (Strategic Development Committee meeting 12 th May 2011)
Bill Turner	9.1	Personal	Had received representations from interested parties.

4. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting were agreed and approved as a correct record.

5. 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

6. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE PROCEDURAL MATTERS

6.1 Strategic Development Committee Terms of Reference, Quorum, Membership and Dates of Meetings

Zoe Folley (Committee Officer) presented the report.

RESOLVED

That the Terms of Reference, Quorum, Membership and dates of meetings of the Strategic Development Committee for the Municipal Year 2011/2012 be noted as set out in the report.

7. PROCEDURE FOR HEARING OBJECTIONS

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

8. DEFERRED ITEMS

Nil items.

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DECISION

9.1 PA/10/01458 - Redundant Railway Viaduct North of Pooley House, Westfield Way, London

Owen Whalley (Service Head, Planning and Building Control) introduced the application and the tabled update regarding Redundant Railway Viaduct North of Pooley House, Westfield Way, London.

The Chair then invited persons registered to speak to address the Committee.

Taz Khalitue addressed the Committee as an objector to the application. He stated that he was a local resident. He expressed concern at overcrowding in area given the number of existing student housing and nearby new developments. The site was derelict and could be converted into a green belt site. It was a nice natural environment with good light. Under the scheme, the pathway would be darker and there would be noise disturbance. Residents had signed a petition opposing the scheme which he could show the Committee if necessary. The site should be used as greenery.

In reply to questions from Members, he considered that the information sent out as part of the consultation was inadequate. It just stated that the scheme was going ahead with no information on the impact.

Steve Taylor addressed the Committee in support. He was speaking as a Town Planner for Network Rail. He referred to the London Plan which specified that there was a need for student housing in this area. Addressing this shortage would reduce pressure on other types of housing in the area. The site was derelict. In terms of the key considerations, i.e. daylight, noise levels etc, the plans complied with policy. Access to the site was restricted to the campus only. There was a lot of green space in the area already. The petition referred to outdated plans.

In response to the presentation, the Committee put a number of questions to Mr Taylor around the following matters:

- The Transport Assessment. Questions were raised over its accuracy given the number of units. Clarification was also sought at expected pedestrian trips especially during peak hours.
- Possibility that the most of the students could attend external colleges For example the London Metropolitan University/other colleagues in the Borough. If so it was likely that the number of journeys would increase.
- Consultation undertaken with ward Councillors.
- The absence of a preferred developer at this stage still to be appointed.
- The request to fund junction tables at nearby streets declined by the applicant.

Mr Taylor addressed the questions. It was anticipated that the majority of the students would be from Queen Mary University (QMU). So it was considered that the majority of trips to the campuses would be made by walking. Therefore the transport assessment, expecting low transport trips, was accurate. Moreover the site had a good public transport accessibility rating and could accommodate people wishing to travel. There would also be a car free agreement. By virtue of its location and the restricted access, the site was only really suitable for student housing. The request for junction works was disproportionate given the scheme would generate few car trips. The development would fit in well with the area judging by the response from local people. Residents from adjacent streets were supportive of the scheme. The Applicant was currently in the process of selecting a preferred developer. Whilst they hadn't consulted Ward Councillors, they had consulted those affected in the area.

Devon Rollo (Strategic Applications Planning Officer) presented the application assisted by a point presentation of the application.

Mr Rollo described the site and surrounding area including the nearby railway viaduct. He explained the details of the scheme. He emphasised the suitability of the site for student accommodation due to, amongst other matters, its

proximity to the university campus. It also had good transport links. The scheme complied with policy and was considered acceptable in terms of size, design, bulk, noise, daylight levels. The application included a Management Plan to carefully manage any noise disturbance. Obligations had been secured to mitigate the impact.

Members then put questions/comments to Officers around the following matters:

- Desirability of more student housing in the area.
- The suitability of the site for residential housing.
- Access via Longnor Road.
- The emergency access/fire safety plans given it was a confined site.
- Disabled access.
- The S106 calculation.
- Noise implications.
- The provision for cycles.
- Possibility that many of the occupiers could attend other universities in the Borough. If so this could substantially increase transport use.
- Possibility that the rooms may be used as holiday lets. For example during the Olympics Games significantly increasing transport journeys.
- The accuracy of the transport assessment given the above points.

Mr Rollo addressed each question. He emphasised the unsuitability of the site for general housing. This was due to a number of factors including its proximity to the university, noise from the railway viaduct, access and security restrictions. Any housing on this site would be fenced off at certain times. Other limitations were lack of outdoor living space, lack of access via Longnor Road. However it was felt that the development would remove pressure on residential housing.

It was confirmed that the main access route would be from Bradwell Street.

In relation to the S106 assessment, it was required that it be relevant to the development and reflect the needs of the area. There was a need for open space in this area. Hence the request for this in the obligations.

It was also intended that the vast majority of occupiers would attend QMU and would walk to the campus. Therefore there would be little additional traffic. As a result confidence was expressed in the travel assessment given this latter point, research into similar schemes and the car free plans. Highways Services had considered the assessment and were satisfied that it was accurate. Officers also described the emergency access route accepted as satisfactory.

In relation to the cycle stands, the provision was policy compliant. The rise in number was due to the planned use of two tier cycle stands.

On a vote of 1 for 3 against with 1 abstention, the Committee **RESOLVED**

That the Officer recommendation to grant planning permission for Redundant Railway Viaduct North of Pooley House, Westfield Way, London (PA/10/01458) be **NOT ACCEPTED**

The Committee indicated that they were minded to refuse the planning application because of Members' concerns over:

- Over concentration of student housing in the area. Need for a more balanced mix of housing in the area (i.e. family sized housing).
- Impact on the area in terms of the potential for late night disturbance.
- Accuracy of the transport assessment
- Adequacy of the emergency access/fire safety plans and disabled access.
- Impact on the ecology of area.
- Overdevelopment of the site in terms of bulk and scale of the development.

In accordance with Development Procedural Rules, the application was **DEFERRED** to enable Officers to prepare a supplementary report to a future meeting of the Committee setting out proposed detailed reasons for refusal and the implications of the decision.

9.2 PA/10/02764 & PA/10/02765 - Land bounded by Norton Folgate, Fleur De Lis Street, Blossom Street, Folgate Street, Norton Folgate, London

Owen Whalley (Service Head, Planning and Building Control) introduced the application regarding Land bounded by Norton Folgate, Fleur De Lis Street, Blossom Street, Folgate Street, Norton Folgate, London.

Elaine Bailey (Strategic Applications Planning Officer) presented the application assisted by a power point presentation. She explained the reasons for the previous refusal agreed at the 12th May 2011 Committee meeting. The Application had since been revised to overcome these concerns. The scheme complied with policy. The previous reasons for refusal could not be supported on policy grounds.

A key change was the omission of the residential units above the public house. Ms Bailey also explained the location which included the Scheduled Ancient Monument. English Heritage had considered the impact on this. Overall it was felt that there would be no adverse impacts.

Ms Bailey explained in detail the plans for Norton Folgate, Shoreditch High Street and Blossom Street. She clarified the improvements on the previous

2007 application. She also drew attention to the increased S106 agreement requiring, amongst other things, contributions to Enterprise and Employment , including the Council's Skillsmatch programme and the Public Realm. The plans would stimulate employment and economic growth in the local area. The plans would also improve permeability of the site creating a new public space.

Ms Bailey explained the outcome of the consultation of 29th June 2011 advertised in local newspapers, sites notices and letters to residents. In response 2 representations were received.

Overall the scheme complied with policy. Therefore it was recommended that the scheme be granted in accordance with the Officer's report.

In response to the presentation, Members put a number of questions to Officers around the following issues.

- Local employment. Members sought assurances that the scheme would generate sufficient local jobs. They wished to ascertain how the concerns raised at the last meeting regarding this would be overcome. It was also necessary to increase the number of locally owned businesses in the area. It was hoped that the scheme would facilitate this. It was also discussed that any substantial changes to the S106 agreement should be brought to the Committees attention.
- The decision to remove the residential units. It was questioned whether the units could be located elsewhere as part of the plans rather than completely removed given the need for residential housing in the Borough.
- Closing the gates to Blossom Street. Members noted the problems in closing public spaces due to emergency access. They sought assurances over the feasibility of these plans.

Ms Bailey addressed each question. She explained the options regarding the residential units in view the objections to locating them above the public house. Consideration was given to whether they could be located elsewhere under the scheme. However it was felt that such alternative locations were more suited to commercial use due to their location. Furthermore it was also likely that valuable buildings, (recently subject to conservation work with English Heritage) may need to be demolished should they be used for residential units. Consequently, given the lack of viable alternatives, it was decided that the best option was to remove the units from the scheme.

The office units were suitable for both small and medium sized business. As well as creating local jobs, there would also be 'knock on effects' from the development for the Borough with increased spending locally as a result of the scheme and associated activity.

Officers had extensively investigated the closure of the gates with the Applicant. Confidence was expressed in the plans to close and secure the square at the times specified. This would be conditioned.

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

1. That planning permission and Conservation Area Consent be **GRANTED** for
 - **PA/10/02764** Redevelopment of the former Nicholls and Clarke site and adjoining depot site, for commercially led mixed use purposes, comprising buildings between 4 and 9 storeys in height measuring 48.40m AOD (plus plant), to provide approximately 18,775sqm of B1 (Office); approximately 1,816sqm of A1 (Retail) and A3 (Restaurant) and approximately 710sqm of A4 (Public House), together with the recreation of a new public space (Blossom Place); provision of new access to Blossom Place; highway works and public realm improvements to Shoreditch High Street and Blossom Street and provision of managed off-street servicing and parking facilities.
 - **PA/10/02765** Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of No. 13 and No. 20 Norton Folgate, No. 2-9 Shoreditch High Street, No.16-17 and No.10 Blossom Street; partial demolition, refurbishment and conservation repair of 16-19 Norton Folgate, 5 -11a Folgate Street and 12-15 Blossom Street; and reconstruction (including façade retention) of 14-15 Norton Folgate to enable the redevelopment of the former Nicholls and Clarke site and adjoining depot site for commercially led mixed use purposes in association with planning application ref: PA/10/02764).
2. That such planning permission be subject to
 - A Any direction by The Mayor;
 - B The prior completion of a legal agreement to secure the planning obligations set out in the circulated report.
3. That the Corporate Director Development & Renewal is delegated authority to negotiate the legal agreement indicated above.
4. That the Corporate Director Development & Renewal is delegated authority to issue the planning permission and Conservation area consent and impose conditions and informatives to secure the matters set out in the circulated report.
5. That, if within 6 weeks of the receipt by LBTH of the Mayor of London's Stage II report the legal agreement has not been completed, the Corporate Director Development & Renewal is delegated the power to refuse planning permission

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

Item **Withdrawn**.

The meeting ended at 7.25 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Helal Abbas
Strategic Development Committee