

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.37 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 28 AUGUST 2024

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, WHITECHAPEL

Members Present:

Councillor Amin Rahman (Chair)

Councillor Iqbal Hossain (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Saied Ahmed

Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury

Councillor Kamrul Hussain

Councillor Shahaveer Shubo Hussain

Councillor Suluk Ahmed

Councillor Ahmodur Khan

Councillor Mufeedah Bustin

Other Councillors Present:

Apologies:

Councillor Asma Begum

Officers Present:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Paul Buckenham | – (Head of Development Management, Planning and Building Control_ |
| Jerry Bell | – (Area Planning Manager (East), Planning and Building Control) |
| Gareth Gwynne | – (Area Planning Manager (West), Planning and Building Control) |
| Kirsty Gilmer | – (West Area Team Leader, Planning and Building Control) |

Jane Jin	– (Team Leader, Planning and Building Control)
Nelupa Malik	– (Principal Planner (East Area Team))
Astrid Patil	– Planning Lawyer
Emily Humphreys	– Consultant In Public Health
Shahi Mofozil	– (Access to Employment (Skillsmatch), Economic Development)
Justina Bridgeman	– Democratic Services Officer (Committee)

1. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests, however Councillor Saied Ahmed and Councillor Kamrul Hussain recused themselves from both planning applications submitted for consideration. Councillor Suluk Ahmed and Councillor Ahmodur Khan substituted after item 4.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

The Committee **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 16 July 2024 were approved and signed as a correct record of proceedings.

Chairs Update

- The Chair advised the Committee that the meeting was being held during the pre-election period and party political content must not be discussed.
- The Committee was informed that due to an administrative error, the agenda incorrectly included nine Members of the Committee. Following the decision on 17 July 2024, there are currently only eight Members. Councillor James King was removed from the Committee and there is one vacant position pending a nomination from an ungrouped Member. A supplementary agenda highlighted the changes; however this did not impact the meeting.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROCEDURE FOR HEARING OBJECTIONS AND MEETING GUIDANCE

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 of Housing and Regeneration 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 of Housing and Regeneration 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 for the Strategic Development Committee.

4. DEFERRED ITEMS

4.1 PA/22/00731: 4-5 Harbour Exchange Square

Update report noted.

Paul Buckenham introduced the application to grant planning permission for the demolition of existing building and erection of a mixed-use residential led building containing 450 residential units (Class C3) and new podium level to accommodate flexible retail, community, creative, and amenity uses (Class E and F2) as well as basement level blue-badge parking, new public realm and landscaping, and all associated works..

Jane Jin provided a presentation to accompany the application.

It was noted that this application was initially considered by the Strategic Development Committee on 16 July 2024. The application was deferred for a site visit, so that Members could better understand the likely construction impacts arising from the proposed development. The site visit took place on 22 August 2024.

Only members physically present at the 16 July meeting were permitted to vote on this application.

Further to the presentation, the Committee asked questions to Officers regarding the following issues;

- Confirmed that planning conditions will manage the construction impacts to traffic.

- Clarified that the application complies with the development plan, disruption to residents will occur if the application is granted and maximising the family-sized units will not mitigate this.

Following the points raised by Officers, the Committee debated the application and noted the following:

- Concerns with the lack of family-sized units proposed.
- Concerns with the construction impacts to traffic if the scheme was to be granted.

Councillor Saied Ahmed requested a deferment of the vote to determine if the scheme can incorporate more family-sized units. This was seconded by Councillor Kamrul Hussain.

On a vote of 4 in favour, 1 against and 0 abstentions the Committee **RESOLVED**:

1. That the consideration of the application at 4 & 5 Harbour Exchange Square, London E14 9TQ be **DEFERRED**, to establish if the scheme can incorporate more family-sized units.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DECISION

5.1 PA/23/02375: Former Westferry Printworks, 235 Westferry Road, London

Update report noted.

Paul Buckenham introduced the application to grant planning permission for a comprehensive and phased mixed-use redevelopment comprising 1,358 residential units (Class C3), Secondary School (Class F), commercial, business and services (Class E(a)-E(g)(i)), community uses (Class F), car and cycle basement parking, associated landscaping, new public realm and all other necessary enabling works.

Nelupa Malik provided a presentation to accompany the application, which highlighted the proposal's site and surroundings. The proposal will provide 1,358 residential units, which equates to 35% affordable housing units, including a 46% of the affordable rent tenure as family housing. It will also include a 1,200 pupil capacity secondary school and a separate sports facility. There will be 12 building plots within the scheme and the construction program will take approximately 6-8 years, which will begin in 2024 if planning permission is granted.

The Committee was given background information on the extant planning permission, granted in 2016 by the Mayor of London (ref: PA/15/02216). This was to provide 722 residential units in total of which 140 will be affordable housing units, and 210 family-sized units. The affordable units equated to

20%, split between affordable and intermediate properties. A mixture of retail uses, a secondary school and community uses were also proposed within the scheme.

In 2018 a revised application was submitted to provide 1,524 residential units and adopted the consented scheme. However, an appeal against a non-determination of the application was submitted in 2019 and granted by the Secretary of State in 2020, following a public inquiry that same year. The appeal was challenged by the Council via a judicial review and planning permission was quashed and a public inquiry reopened in May 2021. The appeal was dismissed in November 2021.

The scheme was revised again and presented to the Committee as a pre-application on 18 October 2023. At that time questions were asked but no votes were taken.

The Chair invited Andrew Wood, to speak in objection to the application. Mr Wood highlighted the following concerns:

- Planning permission was granted in 2016 for the secondary school and sports block, with a S106 agreement stating it had to be built by 2022. This did not occur and the developer has now proposed that if planning permission is not granted, the school will not be constructed.
- Requested that either a further condition be implemented to ensure the secondary school lease is signed prior to granting the application. Or defer a decision until October 2024 to permit officers to legally ensure the lease is signed and construction of the school can commence.

The Chair then invited Ruth Bravery, to speak in objection to the application. Ms Bravery highlighted the following concerns:

- The new proposal is 166 units less than the previously rejected proposal and only 10% smaller. The revised scheme proposes 636 units more than the consented scheme, is 88% larger and has altered significantly from the consented scheme. The application should be deferred so officers can reassess the density of the proposal.
- Officers have assessed the infrastructure for the site, but not the impact for all other developments in the wider area.
- A new water main will have to be installed as Thames Water has stated the site cannot be occupied without one. Electricity will also need to be accessed from beneath the Thames to a new substation, causing further disruption.

The Chair then invited Annie Clements from Carney Sweeney, on behalf of owner of Greenwich View Place, to speak in objection to the application. Ms Clements highlighted the following concerns:

- The proposal will have negative transport impacts on Mill Harbour and Marsh Wall during the construction phase.
- The use of Millharbour for construction, access and operational servicing will cause disruption, as the road is too narrow. If the application is granted, a condition should be implemented that states access is via Westferry Road and not Millharbour. Both TfL and Council's transport officers have observed this.
- The proposed site's substation will negatively impact the neighbouring site, who have design aspirations to construct a defined movement network within the conjoined open space.

The Chair then invited, Richard Martin, Director of Westferry Developments and Jonathan Marginson from DP9, to speak in favour of the application. Both Mr Martin and Mr Marginson highlighted the following benefits:

- The two inspectors reports have enabled a tailored design and the scheme has undergone substantial consultations including; a pre application with Members, quality review panels, design workshops, discussions with community development panels, presentations at two neighbourhood forums, a three day public consultation, and numerous other stakeholders discussions including the Health and Safety Executive and the London Fire Brigade.
- The proposed scheme will create 1,358 high quality homes. 379 of these will be affordable homes, which equates to 35% by habitable room, 46% of the affordable homes will be three and four bedroom units, to meet the growing demand for housing across the borough and improves on the previous scheme.
- The scheme will also create a 1,200 pupil secondary school, a community centre, a police hub, a creche, retail and amenity space and over two hectares of public open space in which over 450 new trees will be planted.
- The scheme will create thousands of jobs during the construction phase and after. Ongoing work with council employment officers will ensure that local residents have access to jobs and offer 135 local apprenticeships. The S106 agreement will contribute towards improvements to Cross Harbour, DLR, improved bus services, and cycle highway provision.

Further to the presentation, the Committee asked questions to objectors, the applicant and officers regarding the following issues;

- Noted that a letter from the Department for Education (DfE) confirms that the agreement policy is in agreed form. If the planning application is granted, the signing of that agreement for lease with the DfE would

likely take place before the S106 agreement is signed, although the confirmed date when the DfE sign cannot be provided.

- The 2016 S106 agreement had provisions to include a school operator to be identified, funding, and evidence that the school could be delivered by a specific date. Those conditions were not met, so the S106 was nullified. For this revised application, a school provider has now been sourced, the DfE have confirmed funding and the school is part of the scheme.
- Confirmed that the S106 agreement has a clause included to ensure that the secondary school lease is signed before planning permission is granted. The school's long stop date for completion is 1st September 2027.
- Noted that the sports ground is also part of the secondary school lease. A S106 Communities Strategy agreement for the use of the sports ground and the MUGA outside of school hours would be secured if planning was granted.
- Explained that Thames Water usually requests a condition requiring that specific amounts of units be supplied. Approximately 99 units can be provided until an infrastructure plan is submitted and approved by Thames Water. Infrastructure impacts across the Isle of Dogs will be reviewed. Thames Water's statutory requirement to deliver one bar of pressure at street level has been tested on site and adheres to requirements. Water pressure concerns typically occur in older high-rise buildings and is not likely to affect this scheme.
- Confirmed that 'Your Shout' consultancy were hired to gather resident feedback on the scheme by the applicant. 968 letters of support were received.
- Clarified that the applicant worked with the nearby school and provided health and safety classes for children. The school were also notified of construction times. Heavy traffic will not impact school pick up and drop off times and the applicant are complying with the Council's code of construction practise.
- Explained that the affordable housing units will be in separate blocks. Some communal areas will be allocated towards the market units and others such as the gym will be provided to all residents via a pay to use service as a S106 Amenities Strategy. All open areas will have public access.
- Confirmed that the community centre will be provided rent free to an operator. In regards to the massing, block T5 has been removed from the revised scheme and replaced with a 15 storey building and T4 has been reduced in height.

- Acknowledged there will be minor adverse daylight / sunlight impacts to properties along Starboard Way and Omega Close due to the density of properties, although the wider benefits of the proposal, such as the 35% affordable housing, family housing and public open space outweigh these issues. Right to Light considerations do not apply.
- Explained that all 379 affordable housing units will be delivered throughout each phase, with 100 units for phase one, then 96 units for phase two. Phase three will deliver 128 units and phase 4 55 units. The S106 agreement requires the provision of the delivery of affordable housing prior to the 50% of private homes being occupied within each phase.
- Confirmed that negotiations are currently underway regarding CIL payments, in terms of how the funds will be allocated to maintenance of the park and Community Centre.

On a vote of 6 in favour, 1 against and 0 abstentions, the Committee **RESOLVED**:

1. That the consideration of the application at the former Westferry Printworks, 235 Westferry Road, London be **GRANTED**.
2. Subject any direction by the Mayor of London, Section 106 agreement including obligations and conditions and informatives set out in the committee report.

The Committee **Adjourned** for a short while, then **Reconvened**.

5.2 PA/21/02707: Whitechapel Road Development Site, Whitechapel Road, London E1 2BB

Update report noted.

Paul Buckenham introduced the application to grant planning permission with obligations for the redevelopment of site involving erection of five buildings and retention of one building for provision of up to 69,033 sqm (GIA) of Class E(g) space for flexible life science purpose uses; and provision of up to 6,363 sqm (GIA) flexible Class E supporting uses and Class F1 and Class F2 supporting uses (gallery/ exhibition/ community uses); up to 2,820 sqm (GIA) F1(a) for research and development and teaching activities in the life science sector; with associated landscaping; public realm and highway works; re-provision of existing on-street car parking; and erection of a single pavilion building comprising up to 759 sqm (GIA) Class E(b) café use with ancillary storage, and Sui Generis use (public toilets) set within a new landscaped open square.

The development is to involve erection of a building up to 4 storeys on Plot A (including top storey plant); and erection of two buildings (on Plots B1 and B3) of 4 storeys rising to 8 storeys respectively (the latter including top storey plant) including the demolition of former Outpatient's Building Annexe and part demolition/part retention of main former Outpatient's Building; and on Plot B2 the retention of the Ambrose King building.

The development is to also involve the erection of a 7 storey building (including top storey plant) on Plot C (45.9m AOD); and erection of 15 storey building (including 2 top storeys of plant) on Plot D1 (78.7m AOD).

Robin Bennett provided a presentation to accompany the application and highlighted the site and surrounding areas. The proposal for a life sciences development and its definition was outlined as a facility for research, development, discovery and innovation connected with the study of the structure and behaviour of living organisms or life process for human health purposes. This will include several plots from A to D from Whitechapel Rd, New Road and Newgate Street and partly falls within the former London Hospital Conservation Area,

It was noted that there were two rounds of public consultations, in 2022 and 2023. There were 5 letters of objection and two petitions received in regards to the scale of the proposal, amenity, construction impacts, heritage, waste, architecture, landscaping and highway concerns. Historic England also expressed opposition to the extension of the Outpatient's building and noted it will cause harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area. There were also 35 written representations in support of the proposal.

Mr. Bennett outlined the public benefits of the proposal which will maximise the health outcomes for residents and offer employment and training opportunities during and after construction. The scheme is also estimated to generate up to 4,180 jobs, and the affordable workspace will provide 10% of qualifying floor space for 25 years, with 65% of affordable workspace to accommodate at least 40% wet lab at 20% discount on market rates. Other benefits included 35% of qualifying floorspace that will be provided as affordable entry level office space at a 50% discount on market rates, and after 25 years the affordable workspace will be provided at 10% discount for another 10 years.

Other benefits proposed included a multi-purpose on-site space within the scheme for community use, provision of an on-site community lab and a new research and teaching facility for Queen Mary University Hospital, London (QMUL). An education and outreach programme and provision of new and enhanced public realm.

Following the presentation, the Chair invited Tom Bruce, a resident to speak in objection to the application. Mr Bruce highlighted the following concerns:

- This proposal indicates that coloured bitmac will be used to repave Mount Terrace, although York stone was proposed but not used when

The Royal London Hospital was redeveloped. If the application is granted, a condition should be implemented that states the preferred paving of York stone is used and takes place when Turner Street resurfacing is completed.

- The scheme has adverse daylight / sunlight impacts to basement properties by the proposal of planters positioned directly over the basement light wells. If the height of the buildings cannot be lowered, the planters positioning should be reevaluated.
- The proposals include constructing a bench at the East End of Mount Terrace, where antisocial behaviour is commonly observed and will exacerbate the situation. The alleyway between plot B1 and B2 should be secured so ASB activity can no longer occur there.
- The proposal denies residents right of access to both ends of Mount Terrace, despite The Royal Hospital confirming residents have this right. The sign on the gate states 'Keep Clear for Fire Access' and residents were given keys by the Hospital.

The Chair next invited Edwin Mingard, a resident, to speak in objection to the application. Mr Mingard highlighted the following concerns;

- The scheme has adverse daylight / sunlight impacts to Gwynne House residents who will directly face Block C on the proposed development and is below the recommended BRE guidelines. This block should be stepped back from the south and begin at around two stories on the Newark Street side, to mitigate the loss of light for neighbouring residents.
- The construction phase of the development, if granted will cause negative impacts for the neighbouring residents, causing further distress.

The Chair then invited Adrian Powell from NHS Property Services to speak in favour of the application. He was accompanied by Sir Mark Caulfield, Vice Principal for Health, Queen Mary's Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, and Jonathan Marginson, Planning Consultant for DP9 Limited, who highlighted the following benefits;

- The proposal is in line with the local plan and extensive engagement has been conducted to ensure the application meets the needs of Whitechapel residents.
- There have been 35 letters in support of the proposal, which will create thousands of new jobs during the construction phase and after.
- The scheme offers affordable workspace that will enable young residents to utilise the lab facilities, skills and training opportunities.

- The proposal will create new square green spaces for local residents, a new NHS academic facility and attract investment to Tower Hamlets with the life science industry, which is in partnership with QMUL and Barts Health.
- The proposed site will invest, test and utilise new treatments for the benefit of residents and the wider area. Currently, research has discovered a treatment for a strain of hepatitis C and revealed that certain medicines should not be administered after heart attacks, as 57% of Bangladeshi and Pakistani residents do not respond. An alternative has now been developed.

Further to the presentation and registered speakers, the Committee asked questions to the officers and applicants regarding the following issues;

- Explained that the proposals do not include using York stone paving on Mount Terrace, although consideration by the applicant will be given to discussing this as well as relocating the planters over the basement the light wells.
- Clarified that the applicant does not control the right of access for residents on Turner Street and the access point on Mount Terrace will remain in residents' control. In that area, consideration will be given to preventing anti-social behaviour, which is due to the vacant properties. If the scheme is granted, this will no longer be an issue.
- Explained that the bench displayed in the plans will not necessarily be installed in the landscaping design phase. If the proposal is approved. residents' concerns will be taken into account regarding the anti-social behaviour currently occurring there.
- Clarified the difference between the first daylight / sunlight assessment and the second. The first, which is a Vertical Sky Component (VSC) assessment, measures the amount of daylight arriving at a window and the proportion of sky space available. The second, a No-Sky Line (NSL) assessment, measures the amount of light that is present in the room.
- Confirmed that the proposal includes a green space to the east of Saint Philip's Church.
- Clarified that the land use for this proposal is consistent with policy and a housing development is ongoing to the west of the site.

Following the points raised by officers, the Committee debated the application and noted the following:

- Concerns with the lack of local economic contribution the proposal will provide.
- Concerns with the lack of housing provision the proposal will provide.
- Concerns with the adverse daylight / sunlight impacts the scheme will cause to nearby residents.

Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury requested a deferment of the vote for a site visit due to the scale of the scheme and to re-evaluate the contribution of the proposed development. This was seconded by Councillor Suluk Ahmed.

On a vote of 5 in favour, 2 against and 0 abstentions, the Committee **RESOLVED**:

1. That the consideration of the application at Whitechapel Road Development Site, Whitechapel Road, London E1 2BB be **DEFERRED** for a site visit.

The meeting ended at 10.38 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Amin Rahman

Strategic Development Committee