

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.35 P.M. ON MONDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2024

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, WHITECHAPEL

Members Present:

Councillor Iqbal Hossain - (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Amin Rahman

Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury

Councillor Kamrul Hussain

Councillor Asma Begum

Councillor Shahaveer Shubo Hussain

Councillor Kabir Hussain

Apologies:

Councillor Jahed Choudhury

Officers Present:

Paul Buckenham – (Head of Development Management, Planning and Building Control)

Ian Austin – (Principal Lawyer for Planning)

Jerry Bell – (Area Planning Manager (East), Planning and Building Control)

Sally Fraser – Team Leader (East)

Aleksandra Milentijevic – (Principal Planning Officer, Planning Services)

Nicholas Jehan – (Planning Officer, Development Management – West Area)

Conor Guilfoyle – (Senior Planning Officer, Planning and Building Control)

Farhana Zia – (Democratic Services Officer,
Committees)

1. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

The following Members received emails from residents regarding the submitted applications: Councillor Iqbal Hossain, Councillor Asma Begum, Councillor Amin Rahman and Councillor Kamrul Hussain.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

The minutes of the Strategic Development Committee meeting held on 13 November 2024 will be submitted on 09 December 2024.

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 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 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/24/00243/A1: 7 Brannan Street, London

Vice-Chair Councillor Iqbal Hossain declared that he is unable to vote on this deferred application and as such a Chair was required. Councillor Kamrul Hussain moved to nominate Councillor Amin Rahman and Councillor Suluk Ahmed seconded.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Councillor Kamrul Hussain moved and Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury seconded to vote in favour of Councillor Amin Rahman as Chair. Upon a vote of 2 in favour, none against and two abstentions,

It was therefore **RESOLVED**;

1. Councillor Amin Rahman was appointed the Chair of the Strategic Development Committee for the deferred item 4.1.

Update Report noted.

Paul Buckenham introduced the application for a redevelopment of the site to provide purpose built student accommodation with associated amenity space and Class E(a)(b) floorspace within a building of up to 46 storeys with basement; together with plant, car and cycle parking facilities, associated servicing, access and landscaping and all associated ancillary works and structures.

Nicholas Jehan provided a brief presentation to accompany the application. The proposal will provide 912 student bedrooms within a 46 Storey tower block with two levels of basement community spaces in the centre. There will be a mix of student bedrooms, studio properties and cluster rooms, as well as dedicated kitchens, post room and study spaces. The scheme will offer 35% student accommodation. Approval was granted to construct a similar size building; however this is shorter than the initial structure.

It was noted that this application was initially considered by the Strategic Development Committee on 13 November 2024. At the time concerns were raised in relation to anti-social behaviour (ASB) and on-site security. The application was deferred for a site visit which took place on 21 November 2024. Councillor Asma Islam, who voted against the deferral, requested the minutes reflect that a site visit was offered prior to the meeting which Members declined.

Mr Jehan informed the Committee that a Student Management Plan will be secured by condition if the application is granted. This includes 24/7 on-site security, an ASB escalation procedure, which if breached can result in eviction, an Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreement, including obligations to ASB and a complaints procedure for neighbouring residents.

Details of obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) were outlined which included standard employment obligations, 25 construction apprenticeships, a carbon offset contribution of £343, 867. The borough CIL will be chargeable on this scheme.

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

- Clarified that contributions to the local school are not included in the application, as it will not be impacted by the construction.

- Explained that the existing approval was given on the plot within the outline application and designated for housing. The applicant has delivered 3,300 homes above the minimum requirement of 1,700. The current application is considered acceptable as an alternative use for the plot.
- Confirmed that a Student Management Plan deals with any ASB issues that may arise and is secured as a condition on the scheme. The building has been designed to mitigate noise and any concerns and are separated from other buildings.
- Noted that the London Plan considers student accommodation as meeting the housing target. The contribution of this scheme exceeds it the number of homes that could be delivered under the existing outline planning application.
- Explained that this plot is within a wider development and there is a policy requirement to provide student accommodation within the tenure mix. If the application is granted, a separate Section 96A non-material amendment on the North Quay application will be submitted to move a quantum of floor space to the Wood Wharf development.
- Confirmed that if the application is refused, the applicant is under no obligation to secure CIL funding if they re-submit the application at a later date.

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

- Concerns around anti-social activity.
- Concerns around noise and disturbance to neighbouring residents.
- Concerns the inappropriate location for student accommodation.

Only Members physically present at the meeting held on 13 November were permitted to vote.

Upon a vote of 3 in favour, 4 against with no abstentions, the Officers recommendations as set out in the main report to grant full planning permission were not accepted.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**;

That the planning application at 7 Brannan Street, London be **REFUSED** for reasons relating to:

- Anti-social activity.

- Noise and disturbance.
- Inappropriate location for student accommodation.

The meeting was **adjourned** briefly then **reconvened**.

4.2 PA//22/01749: Blackwall Way Yard Jetty, Blackwall Way, London

Vice-Chair Councillor Iqbal Hossain resumed his position as Chair for the remainder of the meeting. Councillor Asma Begum could not vote on this application since she was not present when it was initially heard on 09 October 2024.

Update Report noted.

Paul Buckenham introduced the application to grant permission for amendments to planning permission Ref: PA/21/00288, Dated 14/07/2022: Amendment(s) sought: Amendment to the wording of Condition 22 – Operational Requirements.

Aleksandra Milentijevic provided a presentation to accompany the application. It was noted that this application was initially considered by the Strategic Development Committee on 09 October 2024. The application was deferred for further information to clarify the impact on residents in terms of air quality and noise. Members were informed that consideration was given to the wording of the condition by Officers and the applicant and summarised the following amendments:

- Maximum parameters, rather than averages in relation to NOX or the number of vessels throughout the day.
- Clarification on technical details.
- No vessel movements between 1am and 5am.
- Exclusion of river cruise vessels.
- Air quality and noise monitoring devices installed by the applicant and maintained for three years.

Clarification on air quality was given to Members, as Ms Milentijevic noted that Part A of the condition states that all vessels stopping at the jetty must have maximum emissions of Tier II vessel type. Part B states that the maximum daily movements to and from the jetty must not exceed 212 movements, which is approximately 106 boat stops daily.

Part C and D now limits the vessel movements to and from the jetty. Between 23:00hrs to 01:00hrs and 05:00hrs to 06:00hrs, no more than 12 vessel movements per hour can be made to and from the jetty. This equates to boat stops per hour. No vessel movements can take place from 01:00hrs to

05:00hr, rather than the initial proposal of 24hr usage. Part E has also been included and states that the jetty will be solely used for passenger service boats and excludes all private boat hire or river cruise vessels.

The Chair informed the Committee that although the Council's Constitution does not usually permit public speaking for deferred applications, this application was deemed as a substantive item, pursuant to Part D, section 54, Rule 11.2. This was due to substantive changes made to the wording of the proposed condition since the previous meeting.

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

- No consultation has been permitted for residents and replies to discuss the matter with the residents association did not receive a response.
- The new amendment allows three times more vessel movement to and from the jetty and increase the nighttime noise from the movements.
- This amendment to Condition 22 now discriminates against residents by using older combustion engines on vessels, rather than newer emission free engines, which are less noisy than the earlier models.
- Requested that the condition be amended again to state that electric model vessels be used to reduce the noise and increase the air quality in the late evening, night time and early hours of the morning.

The Chair next invited Ralph Hardwick, on behalf of Michelle Lovric, to speak in objection to the application. Mr Hardwick highlighted the following concerns:

- Condition 22 is not air quality neutral and Tier II allows four times more NOX pollution than Tier III. This should be imposed.
- The information provided to the Officers is incorrect, although there are three hybrid vessels, these are not being used.

The Chair next invited Alex Portlock of Hadley Property Group alongside Jonathan Roynon of Buro Happold and Mark Knibbs of Avison Young to address the Committee in support of the application. They highlighted the following benefits:

- The wording has been amended and a new planning obligation has been implemented to ensure that noise and air quality conditions are consistent with the parameters set.
- Nighttime Uber Boat vessel movements have been removed from the initial amendment, which now prohibits movements to and from the jetty between 01:00hrs and 05:00hrs. Independent air quality and noise

specialists and Tower Hamlets Environmental Officers have all approve all detailed assessments.

- This existing Uber Boat service already passes Blackwall Yard Jetty and has done so for over ten years. This proposal will enable a new sustainable transport link within the borough.

The Chair next invited Kalum Choudhury, resident of Virginia Quays to address the Committee in support of the application, Mr Choudhury highlighted the following benefits:

- Residents have been consulted by the Applicant and are in favour of the development. Virginia Quays is the closest to the jetty.
- The Hadley Group has engaged with residents at Virginia Quays regularly and are happy for Uber Boats to move to and from the jetty.

Following questions from the Committee, Officers, the applicant and objectors;

- Confirmed that the consultations complied with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. It was noted that consultations for modified applications are not necessary on a statutory basis, when consultations have already been conducted. This however was undertaken by Tower Hamlets within their 14 day notification period for the second and third consultation.
- Explained that air quality positive and neutral policy requirements would not be applicable in this application. The Building Emissions benchmark is not relevant, nor is the Transport Emissions benchmark, as this relates to private vehicles and not public transport.
- Clarified that the Nitrogen Oxide present is well below the legal limit of 40 micro grams.
- Objectors affirmed that the nighttime amendment is not sufficient for the restrictions on vessel movement. Resident requests to engage were not responded to by the applicant. The application does not include vessels at Blackwall travelling to start the service at Putney and the noise it will create. Further assessment of the noise is required.
- The applicant clarified that the initial condition did not permit vessel flexibility for delays to the timetable, thus the increased number of movements during the night.
- Confirmed that Uber Boats is an existing service and any adverse impacts on air quality from these vessels moving to and from the jetty would be less than 1% of background pollution levels.

- Noted that there are currently three hybrid vessels on the river, with plans to introduce more. The transition process will enable older model vessels to be phased out by 2040.
- Explained that a planning obligation will be secured for the applicant to install and maintain a monitoring station for a minimum of three years. After that time, the devices can then be removed by the applicant. Condition 22 ensures that the applicant will remain responsible for all monitoring information for the lifetime of the development.

Only Members physically present at the meeting held on 09 October were permitted to vote.

Upon a unanimous vote of 6 in favour, the Officers recommendations as set out in the main report and deferral report were accepted.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**;

That the Section 73 application for amendments to the existing planning permission at Blackwall Way Yard Jetty be **GRANTED** subject to:

- Condition 22, as set out in the Committee deferral report.
- A deed of variation securing a planning obligation for air quality and monitoring devices.
- The conditions and informatives set out in the Committee report.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DECISION

5.1 PA/23/02037: Poplar Gas Holder Site (PHASES 2 And 3), Leven Road, London, E14

Update Report noted.

Paul Buckenham introduced the application to grant permission for a hybrid planning application (part full/part outline) comprising:

- In Full, Phase 2, for residential and residential ancillary (Class C3) arranged in three blocks (A&B, C&D and E&F), Commercial space (Class E), together with access, car and cycle parking, plant rooms, associated landscaping and new public realm, and private open space.
- In Outline, Phase 3, with all matters reserved except access for a comprehensive mixed-use development comprising the following uses:
 - Residential (Class C3);
 - Commercial, Business and Service (Class E);
 - Public and private open space including riverside walk;

- Internal public pedestrian, cycle and vehicle circulation routes; and
- Storage, car and cycle parking.

Conor Guilfoyle provided a presentation to accompany the application, which included the site and surroundings. Details were given on the planning application approved in 2019 and lies within the London Plan opportunity area. Permission has been granted for 2,800 homes and phase 1 relates to a detailed planning application which will be completed by 2025. Phases 2, 3 and 4 are outline applications.

Mr Guilfoyle then discussed the current application which sought to amend phases 2 and 3 by added 100 more affordable homes to the scheme, encompassing the new fire safety regulations with two staircases, and improving the overall design of the scheme. Members were then informed of the site phasing, The proposal is subject to two applications, part 2, the current full phase and part 3, part outlined phase (PA/23/02037). The second one (PA/23/02038) is a Section 73 application to amend the 2019 permit, which will be dealt with under delegated powers to supersede the initial application.

The Committee were notified of the differences between schemes, namely; more family-sized affordable rent tenure homes, taller buildings with less bulk at lower levels and a reduced building footprints. Other differences included a better functional design and increased daylight / sunlight, dual aspect dwellings, greater privacy for residents and higher quality public realm and open spaces and has stricter infrastructure compliance with better carbon reduction targets.

Details of the January 2024 consultation were noted. 2,780 letters were sent out to nearby residents, and site notices were erected and a press notice published. A second consultation took place in July 2024 due to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) which requires a second consultation. Only one objection to the proposal was received and noted the lack of affordable housing due to the 'habitable room' measure used in the calculations. Mr Guilfoyle stated that the habitable rooms calculations are a planning policy requirement. The objection also noted that the private tenure homes that could be rented out would cause a transient population without rent controls. Also the studio units proposed do not provide adequate living space, the loss of light to neighbouring properties would cause adverse effects and the developer did not adequately consult neighbouring residents.

Mr Guilfoyle noted that rent control on private dwellings is not a matter for the planning department. The size of the dwellings meets the minimum space standards. The amount of daylight measured is compliant and all consultations undertaken complied with policy. The Committee then heard details of the housing mix and tenure, which proposed 989 units for detailed phase 2, with 223 of those units as 35% affordable housing, 212 social rent units, including 134 family-sized 3 to 4 bedrooms, which is above the policy target of 19% affordable rent family homes. The social rent units would be provided earlier if the proposal were to be granted, as part of phase 2.

In total the overall family social rent homes consented were 161, the proposed scheme has 266. The overall affordable housing consented was 760, the proposed amount is 816. Members heard details of highways and parking and the financial planning obligation, which included:

- £491, 304,000 towards construction phase and employment skills training.
- £33, 884,40 for end user skills training.
- 1,567,500 for carbon emission off-setting.
- £221,112 towards connectivity contribution.
- £150,000 for travel contribution to TfL.
- £99,712 towards development co-ordination and integration fee.
- Monitoring fee for financial contribution for all Section 106 planning applications.

Details of the public benefits were noted, which included the above policy-target provision for family-sized affordable housing. Mr Guilfoyle recommended the Committee to grant planning permission, subject to conditions and the Section 106 agreement for this application.

The Chair then invited Paul Murphy, resident, to speak in objection to the application. Mr Murphy highlighted the following concerns:

- The insufficient level of affordable housing proposed. The number of homes calculated is 23.6%, less than the figure for a neighbouring estate Aberfeldy, which was 28%. This needs to be significantly increased. The number of rooms noted is not the same as the number of homes.
- The 'private rooms' quoted in the proposal is vague and does not denote its use.
- The amount of tall buildings proposed is too large for the site.
- A lack of consultation was offered by the developer.

The Chair next invited Richard Pritchard of Carney Sweeney to address the Committee in support of the application, Mr Pritchard highlighted the following benefits:

- There are economic and community benefits to the proposal.
- Only 1 objection has been made to the scheme.
- The proposal will provide 35% affordable housing provision by habitable room to the area, which is policy compliant. Phase 2 will provide 989 high quality homes, of which 223 will be affordable homes. 96% of those will be for larger social rent family-sized homes.

- All homes will exceed the minimum standard for homes. The scheme will optimise the use of the site and does not adversely impact neighbouring properties.
- 2,780 letters were issued to neighbouring residents regarding the proposal, site notices were posted and three public consultations were conducted.
- The proposal will ensure high quality homes, publicly accessible areas and transport links are available for the borough.

Following questions from the Committee, Officers, the objector and the applicant;

- Confirmed that the whole scheme would offer, 35% affordable housing, comprising and would be a mixture of social rent and intermediate units.
- Clarified that phase 2 comprises six buildings, each of those phases will take approximately three years to complete.
- Noted that the Permit Transfer Scheme PTS is a Council policy and not planning one. Car club membership is secured in the proposals conditions.
- Explained that following consultations with TfL, a connectivity contribution has been included for Canning Town Station totalling £150,000.

Upon a unanimous vote in favour, the Officers recommendations as set out in the main report were accepted.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**;

That planning permission for development at Poplar Gas Holder site be **GRANTED**, subject to the recommended planning obligations and conditions, listed in the mail and the update report.

The meeting ended at 9.12 p.m.

Vice-Chair Councillor Iqbal Hossain

Strategic Development Committee