

<b>Committee:</b> Strategic Development	<b>Date:</b> 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2008	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted	<b>Agenda Item No:</b> 7.2
<b>Report of:</b> Corporate Director of Development and Renewal		<b>Title:</b> Planning Application for Decision	
<b>Case Officer:</b> Laura Webster		<b>Ref No:</b> PA/07/02054	
		<b>Ward(s):</b> Bethnal Green South	

## 1. APPLICATION DETAILS

<b>Location:</b>	Greenheath Business Centre, 31 Three Colts Lane, London
<b>Existing Use:</b>	Business Centre (B1 light industrial uses, B8 storage uses and offices)
<b>Proposal:</b>	Demolition of some of the existing commercial buildings. Erection of a side and roof extension plus atrium to the existing Greenheath Business Centre in connection with its use as class B1 business space (10,275sqm). The erection of new 9 and 16 storey buildings in connection with the use of the premises as 101 units (253 beds) of student accommodation and 572sqm of commercial floorspace (Class B1)
<b>Drawing Nos:</b>	Stock Woolstencroft Drawing nos. PL200 Rev A, PL210 Rev A, PL211 Rev A, PL212 Rev A, PL213 Rev C, PL214 Rev A, PL215 Rev A, PL216 Rev A, PL217 Rev A, PL218 Rev A, PL219 Rev A, PL220 Rev C, PL221 Rev C, PL222 Rev A, PL233 Rev A, PL224 Rev A, PL225 Rev A, PL226 Rev A, PL227 Rev A, PL228 Rev A, PL230 Rev A, PL231 Rev A, PL232 Rev A, PL233 Rev A, PL240 Rev A, PL241 Rev A, PL242 Rev A, PL260 Rev A, PL244, PL242, PL243, PL240, PL241.  FSP Drawing nos. 495 L (--) 104 Rev P1, 495 L (--) 105 Rev P1, 495 L (--) 106 Rev P1, 495 L (--) 107 Rev P2, 495 L (--) 103 Rev P1, 495 L (--) 102 Rev P1, 495 L (0-) 01 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 02 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 03 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 04 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 05 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 06 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 07 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 08 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 11 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 12 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 13 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 14 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 15 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 16 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 17 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 18 Rev P0, 495 L (0-) 19 Rev P0, 495 L (--) 100 rev P3, 495 L (--) 101 rev P3, 495 L (--) 108 rev P2, 495 L (--) 201 rev P2, 495 L (--) 202 rev P2, 495 L (--) 300 rev P3, 495 L (--) 301 rev P3, 495 L (--) 302 rev P3, and 495 L (--) 303 rev P3.
<b>Applicant:</b>	Workspace Group Plc and Unite Group Plc
<b>Owners:</b>	Workspace Group Plc and Unite Group Plc
<b>Historic Building:</b>	N/A
<b>Conservation Area:</b>	N/A

## 2. SUMMARY OF MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 The Local Planning Authority has considered the particular circumstances of this application against the Council's approved planning policies contained in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Unitary Development Plan, associated supplementary planning guidance, the

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### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 (Section 97) LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN THE DRAFTING OF THIS REPORT

Brief Description of background papers:	Tick if copy supplied for register	Name and telephone no. of holder:
Application, plans, adopted UDP. draft LDF and London Plan		Eileen McGrath 020 7364 5321

London Plan and Government Planning Policy Guidance and has found that:

1. The proposal is in line with the Mayor and Council's policy, as well as government guidance which seek to maximise the development potential of sites. As such, the development complies with policy 4B.3 of the London Plan and HSG1 of the Council's Interim Planning Guidance (2007) which seek to ensure this.
2. The proposed student accommodation is considered acceptable in principle as it will fulfil a proven need for student accommodation and is situated in a suitable location. As such, the proposed use is in line with policies 3A.22 in the London Plan, policy HSG14 in the UDP 1998 and policy CP24 in the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007) which seek to ensure provision of specialist housing is met.
3. The extended business use is considered acceptable in principle and would contribute to employment and job creation and is situated in a suitable and accessible location. As such, the proposed use is in line with policies 3B.4 in the London Plan, policies EMP1, EMP3, EMP7 and EMP8 in the UDP 1998 and policies CP7, CP9, CP11 and EE2 in the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007) which seek to promote and enhance sites of employment use.
4. The density of the scheme would not result in the overdevelopment of the site and any of the problems that are typically associated with overdevelopment. As such, the scheme is in line with policies DEV1 and DEV2 of the Council's Unitary Development Plan 1998 and policies CP5, DEV1 and DEV2 of Council's Interim Planning Guidance (2007), which seek to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation.
5. The proposal would enhance the existing site creating a better environment with activity within the site contributing to the regeneration of the area. As such, the proposal is in line with policy 4C.20 in the London Plan, policy DEV1 in the UDP 1998 and policy DEV2 and DEV3 in the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007) which seek to ensure a high quality environment.
6. The height, scale, bulk and design of the buildings are considered to be acceptable within the context of the area in accordance with policies 4B.1, 4B.5, 4B.8 and 4B.9 of the London Plan, policies DEV and DEV2 of the UDP 1998 and policies DEV1, DEV2, DEV3 and DEV27 of the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007) which seek to ensure buildings are a high quality design and suitably located.
7. The safety and security of the scheme is acceptable in accordance with policy DEV1 of the Council's Unitary Development Plan 1998 and policy DEV4 of the Council's Interim Planning Guidance (2007), which requires all developments to consider the safety and security of development, without compromising the achievement of good design and inclusive environments.
8. The proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on the residential amenity of nearby properties in terms of loss of light, increased overlooking, increased sense of enclosure or noise. As such, the proposal is in line with policies 4A.14 and 4B.9 in the London Plan, policies DEV2 and DEV50 in the UDP 1998 and policies DEV1 and DEV10 in the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007) which seek to protect the amenity of residents.
9. Sustainability matters, including energy, are acceptable and in line with London Plan policy 4A.7 to 4A.10 and 4B.6, and policies DEV 5 to DEV9 of the Council's Interim Planning Guidance (2007), which seek to promote sustainable development practices.
10. Transport matters, including parking, access and servicing, are acceptable and in line with London Plan policy 3C.22, policies T16 and T19 of the Council's Unitary Development Plan 1998 and policies DEV18 and DEV19 of the Council's Interim Planning Guidance (2007), which seek to ensure developments minimise parking and promote sustainable transport option.

### 3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 That the Committee resolve to **GRANT** planning permission subject to:

A. The prior completion of a **legal agreement**, to the satisfaction of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services), to secure the following:

- a) Contributions to Bethnal Green gardens: **£50,000**.
- b) Preparation of a Green Travel Plan.
- c) Car Free Agreement.
- d) Contribution to Highways of **£50,000** towards highways works
- e) Contribution towards employment **£10,847**

3.2 That the Head of Development Decisions be delegated authority impose conditions and informatives on the planning permission to secure the following:

#### Conditions

- 1) Time limit for Full Planning Permission.
  - 2) Details of the elevational treatment including samples of materials for external fascia of buildings.
  - 3) Details of the ground floor public realm (paving and ground floor public realm improvements).
  - 4) Details of window specification for student accommodation
  - 5) Landscape Management Plan required.
  - 6) Student housing Management Plan required.
  - 7) Secured by Design Statement for windows and doors required.
  - 8) Submission of full details of the proposed lighting and CCTV scheme.
  - 9) Full particulars of the refuse/ recycling storage required.
  - 10) Submission of an Investigation and remediation measures for land contamination.
  - 11) Submission of a Noise and Vibration Survey to ensure minimal impact during construction to surrounding properties and to protect future residents from surrounding industrial impacts.
  - 12) Submission of further vibration surveys to protect future occupiers
  - 13) 10% Disabled Access for student accommodation
  - 14) Renewable Energy Measures (at least 20%) reduction in carbon dioxide emissions.
  - 15) Provision of a minimum of 157 cycle spaces.
  - 16) 278 (Highways) agreement required.
  - 17) Hours of construction limits (0800 – 1800, Mon-Fri, 0800 – 1300 Sat).
  - 18) Power/hammer driven piling/breaking (10am – 4pm Monday – Friday).
  - 19) Code of Construction Practice, including a Construction Traffic Management Assessment required.
  - 20) Details required for on site drainage works.
  - 21) Details of surface water source control measures required.
  - 22) Details of finished floor levels required.
  - 23) Details of parking, access, loading/unloading and manoeuvring
  - 24) Details of energy technologies
- Any other condition(s) considered necessary by the Head of Development Decisions.

#### Informatives

- 1) Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 2) With regard to (Decontamination), contact Council's Environmental Health Department.
- 3) Code of Construction Practice, discuss this with Council's Environmental Health Department.
- 4) Consult with the Council's Highways Development Department regarding any alterations

to the public highway.

- 5) Site notice specifying the details of the contractor required
- 6) Standard of fitness for human habitation means of fire escape and relevant Building Regulations.
- 7) The developer should be directed to 'Design for Biodiversity', a publication jointly produced by the LDA, Greater London Authority and English Nature which illustrates how ecologically sensitive designs and features can be integrated into new development.
- 8) Thames Water requests that the Applicant should incorporate within their proposal, protection to the property by installing for example, a non-return valve or other suitable device to avoid the risk of backflow at a later date, on the assumption that the sewerage network may surcharge to ground level during storm conditions.
- 9) It is the responsibility of a developer to make proper provision for drainage to ground, water courses or a suitable sewer. In respect of surface water it is recommended that the applicant should ensure that storm flows are attenuated or regulated into the receiving public network through on or off site storage. When it is proposed to connect to a combined public sewer, the site drainage should be separate and combined at the final manhole nearest the boundary. Connections are not permitted for the removal of Ground Water. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required. They can be contacted on 0845 850 2777. Reason - To ensure that the surface water discharge from the site shall not be detrimental to the existing sewerage system.
- 10) There are public sewers crossing this site, and no building works will be permitted within 3 metres of the sewers without Thames Water's approval. Should a building over / diversion application form, or other information relating to Thames Waters assets be required, the applicant should be advised to contact Thames Water Developer Services on 0845 850 2777.
- 11) Thames Water would recommend that petrol / oil interceptors be fitted in all car parking/washing/repair facilities. Failure to enforce the effective use of petrol / oil interceptors could result in oil-polluted discharges entering local watercourses.
- 12) Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approx 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it leaves Thames Waters pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.

3.3 That, if by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2008 the legal agreement has not been completed to the satisfaction of the Chief Legal Officer, the Head of Development Decisions be delegated authority to refuse planning permission.

## **4. PROPOSAL AND LOCATION DETAILS**

### **Proposal**

4.1 It is proposed to demolish the existing single storey commercial warehouse buildings on the south eastern corner of site and redevelop for a mixed use scheme to provide two buildings of 16 and 9 storeys in height comprising 101 units (253 bedspaces) of student accommodation with business units at ground floor level. The redevelopment includes extension and refurbishment of the existing Greenheath business centre including a side extension, two additional floors at roof level and an atrium. The development would comprise the following features:

- The extension and extensive refurbishment of the existing Greenheath Business Centre which will include a side extension, an additional two storeys at roof level, extension to the water tower and rooftop atrium to the existing building. An extensive refurbishment programme is proposed for the rest of the commercial space within the existing business centre. This would provide 84 business units with an associated reception area, café, communal areas, car parking and landscaping.

- The remainder of the existing commercial buildings on the site would be demolished and redeveloped to create one 16 storey building and one 9 storey building. They would provide 101 units (253 bedspaces) of student accommodation with associated single storey substation building, amenity areas and landscaping. Commercial units to the ground and first floor, communal common rooms and a roof terrace for residents to the top floor are also proposed. Block A would be situated to the north of the site and is 9 storeys in height. Block B is situated to the south of the site and would be 16 storeys high.
- A total 101 units, equating to 253 student bedspaces, ranging in size and including 32 self contained studios is proposed. Each student bedroom includes en-suite facilities and, with the exception of self contained studios, shared kitchen and living rooms shared by a maximum of 4 bedrooms. A common room and roof terrace for all residents would be provided on the top floors. A laundrette for resident use would be provided on the ground floor.
- The provision of a total of 84 B1 class units totalling 10,847.5sqm of commercial floorspace, would be provided. Active frontages at ground floor level throughout the site are also created.
- Amenity space is provided for residents of the student accommodation via roof terraces. For the rest of the site, the amenity space will be at ground floor level.
- Given the accessible location of the site and good accessibility to public transport, no car parking is proposed for student accommodation. A total of 10 spaces, including 2 disabled spaces would be provided within the site. A total of 102 cycle parking spaces would be provided within one of the railway arches and at the northern boundary of the site.
- Unite would be responsible for the tenant management of the student accommodation. The provision of residential coordinators at a ratio of approximately 1 per 75 residents would be the first level of social management for anti social behaviour or unacceptable noise nuisance. The second level may be the accommodation manager or lastly, in extreme cases interventions from the institutions. Management functions would include maintenance, and service provision and to ensure the health and safety of residents and users. The site would benefit from 24 hour presence with a manned reception during daytime hours and security at other times.

4.2 The application was received by LBTH 10<sup>th</sup> August 2007. The application has since been amended and a full re-consultation was carried out 7<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

4.3 The description of the proposal prior to the amendments was;

'Redevelopment of the site to provide two buildings of 14 and 8 storeys comprising 77 units (232 beds) of student accommodation with business units at ground floor level. Extension and refurbishments of existing business centre including two additional floors and an atrium'.

The amendments altered the description and therefore full re-consultation was carried out. Whilst reconfiguration of the proposed student accommodation did increase the number of bedspaces, and the number of proposed storeys has changed, the height has not been significantly altered. Block A has been reduced in its overall height by 2.5m by the amendments and block B has remained largely unchanged in terms of height.

4.4 In summary, the amendments to the proposed student blocks reduced the floor to floor height, reconfigured the layout of the buildings and refined the roof profiles. At ground floor

level, alterations to the public realm were made to reduce car parking and increase the useable amenity space. Amendments to the existing Greenheath Business Centre included minor internal reconfiguration, amendments to the entrances, alterations to the external finish and amended design for the proposed atrium and water tower extension. The overall height to the Greenheath Business Centre was not increased by the amendments.

## **Site and Surroundings**

### **4.5 The Site**

The application site has an area of 0.49 hectares and comprises of land bounded by Three Colts Lane to the south, Witan Street to the east, Sunlight Square to the north and Corfield Street to the west. A railway viaduct curves along the south eastern corner boundary of the site.

4.6 Access to the site is gained off Three Colts Lane to the south and Witan Street to the north west corner. The area is identified in the interim planning guidance as a development site. A designation for the type of the development envisaged for this location has not been established as the preparation of the Central Area Action plan is still being undertaken.

4.7 The site currently consists of 2 storey commercial buildings to the southern half of the site and the existing 5 (rising to 7 in part) storey building. The existing buildings comprise of commercial floorspace of approximately 9052sqm and are currently let for mixed Class B purposes.

4.8 The site is situated to the south of Bethnal Green and to the west of Cambridge Heath Road. The site is located approximately 200 metres away from Bethnal Green main line railway station. Bethnal Green underground station is located to the north approximately 300 metres away. A variety of bus services operate on nearby Cambridge Heath Road and Bethnal Green Road. The site has an excellent public transport accessibility level (PTAL) of 6a.

### **4.9 Surrounding Area**

The surrounding area is a mix of commercial and residential uses. The site is dominated by the railway to the south east corner. Beyond the railway line to the south east there are light industrial and commercial buildings predominantly 2 storey in height.

4.10 Directly to the north of the site is Sunlight Square, which is a residential development ranging three to five storeys in height. Also to the north, a development of flats 5 storeys in height is situated within Witan Street. To the west of the site is a five storey residential development, which is situated along Corfield Street.

4.11 Emerging development in the area includes proposals for built form from 6 to 11 storeys in height. Recent development approvals in the area include:

- 249-253 Cambridge Heath Road, to the north of the site for mixed uses including student accommodation (305 student rooms) in a 7–11 storey built form. (PA/06/01652).
- 13-19 Herald Street (Built on the Rock Bibleway Church), also to the north of the site for the erection of part one and part two storey extension at roof level, erection of a 25 metre cross from within the building at the western end (with a maximum of 15.7 metres shown above roof level), provision of a roof terrace at second floor level, including renovation and alterations to the existing building. (PA/05/01225).
- Erection of a part 5 part 6 storey building comprising basement plus ground & 6 storeys to provide ground floor commercial uses with 203 student residences above (PA/07/00297) at site bounded by 41-65 Three Colts Lane and 14-20 Glass Street.

## Planning History

4.12 The following planning decisions are relevant to the application:

PA/04/1050 Outline Application for the demolition of existing industrial units and redevelopment of the site with a mixed use scheme comprising 3754sqm of commercial floorspace and 132 residential units, with associated landscaping and parking. Application withdrawn 2004

PA/03/01117 Use of part of the site as a motor cycle training, equipment and servicing centre. Permission granted 2003.

## 5. POLICY FRAMEWORK

5.1 For details of the status of relevant policies see the front sheet for "Planning Applications for Decision" agenda items. The following policies are relevant to the application:

### Unitary Development Plan 1998 (as saved September 2007)

Policies:	DEV1	General design requirements
	DEV2	Environmental requirements
	DEV3	Mixed use developments
	DEV4	Planning obligations
	DEV12	Landscaping
	DEV 50	Noise
	DEV51	Contaminated land
	DEV55	Litter and Waste
	DEV56	Waste Recycling
	EMP1	Employment growth
	EMP3	Redevelopment of office floor space
	EMP7	Enhancing the work environment
	EMP8	Small businesses
	HSG14	Special needs accommodation
	HSG15	Development affecting residential amenity
	HSG16	Amenity space
	T16	Traffic priorities
	T21	Improvement of pedestrian routes

### Interim Planning Guidance for the purposes of Development Control

Proposals:	C23	Unspecified use- awaiting Central Area AAP
Core Strategies:	CP1	Creating Sustainable Communities
	CP2	Equal Opportunity
	CP3	Sustainable Environment
	CP4	Good Design
	CP5	Supporting Infrastructure
	CP7	Job Creation and Growth
	CP9	Employment space for small businesses
	CP11	Sites in employment use
	CP24	Special needs and Specialist housing
	CP38	Energy Efficiency
	CP41	Integrating development with transport
	CP46	Accessible and Inclusive Environments
	CP47	Community Safety
	CP48	Tall Buildings
	IMP1	Planning Obligations
Policies:	DEV1	Amenity
	DEV2	Character and design
	DEV3	Accessibility and inclusive design

DEV4	Safety and security
DEV5	Sustainable design
DEV6	Energy efficiency
DEV10	Disturbance from noise pollution
DEV11	Air Pollution and Air Quality
DEV12	Management of demolition and construction
DEV13	Landscaping
DEV15	Waste and Recyclables storage
DEV17	Transport assessments
DEV18	Travel Plans
DEV19	Parking for motor vehicles
DEV20	Capacity of utility infrastructure
DEV22	Contaminated Land
DEV27	Tall Buildings
EE2	Redevelopment/change of use of employment sites

### **Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London (London Plan)**

Policies	3A.22	Higher and Further education
	3A.10	Special needs and specialist housing
	3A.4	Housing choice
	3B.4	Mixed Use Development
	3C.1	Integrating Transport and Development
	3C.2	Matching Development to Transport Capacity
	3C.22	Parking
	4A.7	Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
	4A.8	Energy Assessment
	4A.9	Providing for Renewable Energy
	4A.10	Supporting the provision of renewable energy
	4A.14	Reducing Noise
	4B.1	Design Principles for a compact city
	4B.2	Promoting world class architecture and design
	4B.3	Maximising the potential of sites
	4B.4	Enhancing the Quality of the Public realm
	4B.5	Creating an inclusive environment
	4B.6	Sustainable Design and construction
	4B.7	Respect Local context and communities
	4B.8	Tall Buildings
	4B.9	Large scale buildings, design and impact
	4C.20	Design
	4C.21	Design Statement
	5C.1	The Strategic Priorities for East London
	5C.2	Opportunity Areas in East London

### **Government Planning Policy Guidance/Statements**

PPS1	Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG13	Transport
PPS22	Renewable Energy
PPS24	Planning and Noise

### **Community Plan** The following Community Plan objectives relate to the application:

- A better place for living safely
- A better place for living well
- A better place for creating and sharing prosperity
- A better place for learning, achievement and leisure
- A better place for excellent public services



## 6. CONSULTATION RESPONSE

- 6.1 The views of officers within the Directorate of Development and Renewal are expressed in the MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS section below.

The following were consulted regarding the application:

### **London Borough of Tower Hamlets - Environmental Health**

#### 6.2 Air Quality

Air Quality assessment is satisfactory. No objections, subject to dust depositional monitoring during the demolition and construction phase. The details of this can be agreed in the Environmental Management Plan or Code of Construction Practice.

(OFFICER COMMENT: This matter will be addressed by planning condition).

#### Noise and Vibration

- Concern was raised regarding the night time internal noise to some student rooms and confirmation of window glazing specification should be sought.
- There are no proposals for mitigating noise from building services plant equipment.
- The vibration should be monitored at the closest point to the railway (i.e. at the junction of Three Colts lane and Violet Street).
- The building layout to be designed such that habitable rooms do not face the railway line.

(OFFICER COMMENT: The plant and services for the building would be contained within the building and not externally located. It is therefore considered that noise mitigation measures for the plant equipment are not necessary. Window details for the student rooms, to ensure the windows are a standard that would mitigate external noise, will be addressed by planning condition. Designing the building so that no habitable rooms face the railway is not considered feasible).

#### Contaminated Land

No response received to date.

#### Daylight/Sunlight

Daylight and sunlight report dated 31<sup>st</sup> July 2007 has been reviewed. The daylight assessment is acceptable in terms of VSC and ADF. The sunlight assessment fails in some areas and there would be losses between existing sunlight hours and proposed sunlight hours to 79-84 Sunlight Square and 1-17 Sunlight Square. Subsequently, more information was requested, to consider these failures further.

The revised daylight and sunlight report dated 18<sup>th</sup> October 2007 has been reviewed. Concern regarding the impact of the scheme within itself and sunlight losses for winter to 79-84 Sunlight Square were raised.

(OFFICER COMMENT: Additional Daylight and Sunlight information dated 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2007 and 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2008 has been received. No further comment from Environmental Health has been received to date).

### **London Borough of Tower Hamlets - Highways**

- 6.3 The applicant should provide cycle parking, in accordance with current policy standard which is 1 cycle space per 2 students and 1 cycle space per 250sqm of GEA for the business units including shower facilities. Total cycle spaces required are 156. This can be conditioned.

A Section 278 will need to be entered into for any improvements and repairs to the public highway adjacent to the site.

(OFFICER COMMENT: Cycle parking and the section 278 agreement will be addressed by planning condition).

The proposal should be subject to a S.106 car free agreement.

S.106 contribution towards highways works to improve visibility of Three Colts Lane site entrance, appropriate signage to emphasize low bridge restriction on Three Colts Lane and other linkages improvements on Witan Street. **£50,000** contribution required.

#### **London Borough of Tower Hamlets - Access Officer**

6.4 No response received to date.

#### **London Borough of Tower Hamlets - Education Development**

6.5 No comment.

#### **London Borough of Tower Hamlets - Building Control**

6.6 No response received to date.

#### **London Borough of Tower Hamlets - Cleansing**

6.7 Suitable bin stores for the scale of the development are required. It would be the responsibility of the centre management to arrange a commercial waste collection contract with suitable frequency of collection to match the volumes of waste produced.

(OFFICER COMMENT: This matter will be addressed by planning condition).

#### **London Borough of Tower Hamlets - Ecology**

6.8 Opportunities should be taken however to promote biodiversity through inclusion of features such as flower beds with nectar-rich plants, bird boxes and bat bricks.

The developer should be directed to 'Design for Biodiversity', a publication jointly produced by the LDA, Greater London Authority and English Nature which illustrates how ecologically sensitive designs and features can be integrated into new development.

#### **London Borough of Tower Hamlets - Crime Prevention**

6.9 Open access through the site may create a pedestrian cut through. Only authorised visitors and residents should be allowed access and a secure boundary with access control and 24 hour security/concierge and CCTV. It would be relatively easy to secure the individual buildings, but the landscaping offers numerous areas that are not overlooked, multi-layered routes, and extensive seating opportunities, all of which could create anti-social behaviour/criminal damage possibilities.

Because its student accommodation, I would hope that the developers would seek Secured by Design, but we should ask for the minimum SBD standards for doors (Pas 23/24) and windows (BS7950) plus laminated glass to everything on the ground floor and accessible from the ground floor.

(OFFICER COMMENT: The issues raised are discussed in more detail within the design section of this report).

## **London Borough of Tower Hamlets - Energy**

### 6.10 Comments received 28<sup>th</sup> December 2007

- To maximise the potential of the energy efficiency measures and renewable energy provisions, these should be designed in to the buildings rather than adding these on when the building has already been designed.
- Satisfied that the provision of a Combined Heat and Power plant (CHP), and a central energy centre is being considered.
- The submission of the preliminary SBEM calculations for both buildings is appreciated. As the carbon footprint of the development has now been established, the design should now seek to incorporate renewable energy provisions to meet the 10% renewable energy requirement, and should also seek to incorporate the energy services measures
- The proposed energy efficiency measures appear satisfactory.
- The final energy strategy and renewable energy provisions for this particular development is yet to be submitted, and the information provided so far is not an acceptable energy strategy for this particular development.
- Nevertheless, I am confident that a suitable final energy strategy will be submitted by the applicant. It was not clear if the applicant was informing the Local Authority on the progression of the work completed so far or if they were seeking planning approval with condition. If latter is the case, then I can agree a conditional approval if also agreed by the planning officer and the GLA.

(OFFICER COMMENT: It is considered the outstanding energy issues can be addressed by planning condition).

## **Transport for London (Statutory Consultee)**

### 6.11 TfL recommends the following conditions are met if the planning application is approved:

- Cycle parking provision is consistent with the TfL Cycle Parking Standards, as referred to in the London Plan (Annex 4, Para 37). Attached below.
- A legal agreement must be entered between the applicant and London Borough of Tower Hamlets to ensure that the proposed student accommodation be 'car free' and that a robust Travel Plan is produced and implemented.

Following re-consultation further comments were received 4<sup>th</sup> January 2008 and are detailed below.

It is not expected that the proposal will result in an unacceptable impact to the TLRN or SRN. However, they noted that:

- The cycle parking provision should be consistent with the TfL Cycle Parking Standards, as referred to in the London Plan (Annex 4, Para 37).
- A Delivery and Servicing Plan (DSP) should be provided to minimise the impact of service and refuse vehicles on the road network.
- A statement of intent should be supplied detailing how sustainable travel to and from the proposed development will be promoted and implemented.
- The parking ratio exceeds the recommend level with the London Plan. Parking levels should be adjusted to conform to current standards of 1 space per 600 sqm.

## Other comments

- The proposed development is not expected to generate significant public transport trips based on the information in the TA. TfL agree with these assumptions.
- No car parking provision is proposed for the student accommodation. TfL support the car-free approach to this development via the section 106 agreement with Tower Hamlets.
- 19 parking spaces are provided for the B1 use within the development. The parking ratio exceeds the recommended level contained in the London Plan. Parking levels should be adjusted to conform to current standards of 1 space per 600 sqm. (OFFICER COMMENT: Parking provision has been amended following these comments and is discussed further within the highway section of this report).
- 2 disabled parking spaces are provided for the B1 use. TfL support the provision parking spaces for disabled users. However, parking spaces should be for the use of both the B1 use and student accommodation.
- No contributions are sought for this development.

## **Greater London Authority (Statutory Consultee)**

- 6.12 The stage 1 report advised that the scheme is acceptable in urban design terms and the layout and massing responds well to a difficult and highly constrained site. The contemporary design will add variety and interest to the area, The proposed student accommodation would meet an identified need and the improvements to the existing business centre will support the economic growth objective of the London Plan.

The stage 1 report concludes that the principle of the development is supported from a strategic perspective, but there are a number of issues that are not consistent with strategic planning policies. The following issues must be addressed:

- Energy: the provision of separate heating systems for the business centre and student accommodation is not acceptable. A feasibility assessment of the potential for a single combined heat and power unit to jointly serve both the business centre and the student accommodation should be undertaken. If feasible, this should be incorporated prior to the inclusion of complementary renewable energy technologies.
- Inclusive design: there are a number of outstanding issues which need to be addressed in order to ensure that the scheme meets the highest standards of accessibility and inclusion. These include ramp gradients, size and specification of lifts, and number and configuration of wheelchair units.
- Transport: revisions are required to address Transport for London's concerns in respect of car and cycle parking provision, which do not currently accord with the relevant standards. Car parking is in excess of the standard in the London Plan. TfL is not satisfied that refuse vehicles are able to manoeuvre within the site and further analysis is required. A construction management plan is to be agreed.

(OFFICER COMMENT: This stage 1 report was prepared 31<sup>st</sup> October 2007. In response to the concerns raised by the GLA, amendments have been made to the scheme to address these issues).

## **English Heritage Archaeology**

- 6.13 No objection, subject to conditions.

(OFFICER COMMENT: This matter will be addressed by planning condition).



- Creation of a Ghetto or 'seedy' area

#### Amenity

- Lack of daylight and sunlight to surrounding properties and student rooms
- Overlooking and loss of privacy
- Harm views within vicinity
- Would result in increased sense of enclosure for adjacent residents
- Noise and disruption from building works
- Noise from students
- Noise from roof terraces
- Increase in crime and anti social behaviour
- More noise and vibration from railway due to new buildings

#### Employment

- Disruption would harm existing businesses or make business space unaffordable
- Suitable relocation of businesses required for redevelopment
- Loss of employment
- Unemployment within area due to increased population and competition for jobs

#### Highways

- Parking and traffic issues
- Local transport network would be saturated

#### Other

- Unknown uses of business units is a worry
- Increased litter and rubbish would result
- Increased pollution would result
- Harm to telecommunications and TV reception would result
- Housing lower class next to middle class would increase crime
- Where will the students be studying?
- Amendments increase size of development
- Building Regulations, Environmental Health, Fire Safety and energy have not been considered

7.3 The following issues were raised in representations, but they are not material to the determination of the application:

- Effect on property values
- Average income within the area would be lowered
- Students don't pay council tax so less money for the area
- Local convenience stores may not have enough stock for population increase
- Stress and health problems as a result of the proposal

7.4 The following procedural issues were raised in representations, and are addressed below:

- Consultation insufficient. (OFFICER COMMENT: A total of 635 neighbouring properties were notified of the proposal by letter and a 3 site notices were displayed around the site. The application was also advertised in the local press. It is therefore considered that the consultation and consultation period was sufficient in accordance with statutory requirements. The planning consultation letter was written in English. However, it is recognised that there is a high number of residents where English is not their first language. There are translators available within the Council and translation pages available on the Councils website. With regard to the developers' consultation with the public, the developer informed the council that several meetings have been held with local residents).

- Daylight and sunlight survey insufficient and selective. (OFFICER COMMENT: The submitted daylight and sunlight reports are considered to be sufficient for development control purposes. The daylight and sunlight report takes into account the nearest affected residential windows. Once the affect on the nearest affected residential windows has been calculated, it is considered the impact on windows further a field can be appropriately considered. Given the position of the previous planning approvals to the east of the site, it was not required for the daylight and sunlight report to include these as the windows affected by the previous approval would not directly affect the south facing windows affected by this application).
- Noise survey insufficient (OFFICER COMMENT: The submitted report carried out by WSP is considered appropriate for development control purposes. It is considered that any outstanding issues can be addressed by planning condition).
- EIA may be required. (OFFICER COMMENT: A request for Screening Opinion as to whether an Environmental Impact Assessment was required was submitted to the Council. It was determined that no Environmental Impact Assessment was required.

7.5 The following comments were raised in support of the application:

- Will further help diversify the local community
- Regeneration benefits

## 8. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The main planning issues raised by the application that the Committee must consider are:

### Land Use

Acceptability of student housing in this location.

### Employment

Accommodation of employment uses on site. Whether there is a loss of employment resulting from this scheme.

### Design

Design and scale of proposed building.

### Amenity

Impact on the amenity of the surrounding area, including sunlight, daylight, noise and privacy of surrounding properties.

### Sustainability

Energy efficiency and sustainability.

### Highways

Transport and highways implications.

### Land Use

#### Student Housing

- 8.2 Unitary Development Plan saved Policy HSG14 states that the Council will seek to encourage the provision of housing to meet the needs of residents with special housing needs. It goes on to state that: *“Such housing should be appropriately designed and suitably located for groups with special needs...including students”*.
- 8.3 Paragraph 5.29 of saved policy HSG14 of the Unitary Development Plan states that the Council will *“consider student housing in a variety of locations providing there is no loss of permanent housing or adverse environmental effects.”* It also notes that: *“Additional provision*

*could release dwellings elsewhere in the Borough in both the public and the private rented sector”.*

- 8.4 Policy CP24 of the Interim Planning Guidance states that the Council will promote special needs and specialist housing by focusing purpose built student housing ... *in close proximity to the London Metropolitan University at Aldgate.*”
- 8.5 London Plan policy 3A.22 states that the Mayor will ensure that the needs of the education sector are addressed and will support the provision of student accommodation, subject to other policies contained in the London Plan.
- 8.6 The Council’s Interim Planning Guidance notes that student housing should be focused around the Borough’s existing higher educational establishments or within close proximity, being 5 minutes walking distance, from London Metropolitan University. The site is located in close proximity to Bethnal Green Tube Station, and is approximately 15 minutes walk from the London Metropolitan University at Aldgate via Cambridge Heath Road. Bethnal Green Tube Station lies on the Central Line, whilst Aldgate East which is the closest to London Metropolitan University is on the District/Hammersmith and City lines. There is a variety of bus services that travel directly along Cambridge Heath Road providing services from Bethnal Green directly to Aldgate and the London Metropolitan University campus. Bus services include:
- 106 Whitechapel Road – Finsbury Park
  - 254 Aldgate Bus Station – Holloway
- 8.7 From a strategic perspective, there is a shortage of student accommodation across London. The London Plan seeks to support the provision of student accommodation yet provides no indication as to the most appropriate locations for student accommodation. The adopted Unitary Development Plan, whilst supporting student accommodation does not specifically identify any area as appropriate for student housing, and is thus flexible in its approach.
- 8.8 The use of this site for student accommodation may initially be considered inappropriate given the Interim Planning Guidance direction that student housing should be located within 5 minutes walking distance of the London Metropolitan University campus at Aldgate. However, both the London Plan and the Unitary Development Plan indicate that there is strong strategic support for student housing across London as a whole. Given the Interim status of the guidance, in this instance it is difficult to justify a refusal on this basis. Taking into consideration the current policy position, the sites highly accessible location that is located within walking distance or a short bus ride from Aldgate, the use of this site for student housing is supported.
- 8.9 The need for student accommodation is recognised by higher education institutions within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets such as London Metropolitan University and the University of the Arts London, who are seeking to meet the accommodation needs of its students. London Metropolitan University and the University of the Arts London have provided a letters in support of the application. London Metropolitan University are of the view that:

*‘there is a significant shortfall in the provision of University managed accommodation...and the Universities strong preference is for the delivery of additional student housing through referral agreements with specialist providers such as UNITE, with student housing in the form of clusters and studios to meet student requirements’.*

The University of the Arts London share the same view with regard to the student accommodation need.

- 8.10 A report investigating the student accommodation market in London carried out by Savills August 2007 was submitted with the application. This report concludes the following;



- The increase in higher education students has led to an increase in demand for student housing in all areas of London.
- Purpose built student accommodation is the most appropriate solution as it minimises the negative impact of students on local communities and provides the necessary support services.
- Many boroughs in London such as the City of London, City of Westminster, Camden and Kensington and Chelsea are unable to accommodate the large number of students attending universities in these boroughs.
- Students as part of a mixed and balanced community can support the voluntary sector, raise economic profile, create a demand for local businesses and provide critical mass for services to assist in regeneration.
- Purpose built student housing can play a role in the housing market by freeing up market rented housing stock for general use.

8.11 Overall, it is considered there is an identified need for student accommodation and the site is situated in an appropriate location, with good transport links. It therefore accords with the London Plan and Council policy.

When the application is considered in conjunction with the two other recent approvals for student accommodation within the area, there would be a reasonably high number of students within the immediate area. However, it is clear that a lot may already be living in private accommodation within East London. This is proved in the Savills study which estimates 31,938 students are living in the private rented sector. The report goes on to state that London accommodates 47% of its demand in purpose built accommodation, whereas other cities such as Manchester, Birmingham and Sheffield provide purpose built accommodation for between 70-90%. Given the suitable location, it is concluded that student accommodation at this location is acceptable and a refusal would be difficult to sustain on land use grounds.

8.12 London Plan encourages the intensification of brownfield sites and policy 4B.1 seeks to ensure developments maximise the potential of sites. The site currently provides a poor environment and does not contribute positively to the surrounding area. The redevelopment of the site would improve the appearance of the site and help aid regeneration. Evidence contained within the report on the student accommodation market shows that students contribute to economy and would bring activity to the site. The proposal is therefore considered to be an efficient use of brownfield site.

### **Employment**

8.13 A total of 10,847.5m<sup>2</sup> of Class B1 floorspace is proposed. This space is provided within the existing Greenheath Business Centre and the proposed extensions, and at the ground and first floors of the two proposed student accommodation buildings.

8.14 Saved Policy EMP1 of the Unitary Development Plan encourages the redevelopment and upgrading of employment sites already or last in employment use, to produce more employment opportunities for all sectors of the community.

8.15 Policy CP11 of the Council's Interim Planning Guidance states that the Council will seek to protect viable employment sites (not specifically allocated for employment uses) which may form part of a mixed use development. Further, the Council will seek to retain sites for employment:

- Where the site is well-located in relation to the strategic or local highway networks; or rail or water transport;
- Where the site benefits from high public transport accessibility and/or are on the edge of town centres;
- Where there is current or future demand for them as employment uses; and
- Where sites are viable for the existing employment use.

- 8.16 Policy EE2 in the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007) generally resists development resulting in a loss of employment except in certain circumstances.
- 8.17 The existing Class B industrial and commercial buildings located on the site provides approximately 9052sqm of floorspace. The existing buildings are in need of modernisation and are poorly laid out.
- 8.18 The proposal provides for a total of 10,847.5sqm of commercial floorspace which will provide a modern, accessible and attractive small business centre, which will seek to meet the needs of modern day local businesses. The business centre would include a café, meeting areas and flexible performance space. In addition, the proposed student accommodation itself would provide employment opportunities in the day to day running and management of the accommodation. Overall, it is considered that the proposal would result in an increase of commercial floorspace and employment within the site.
- 8.19 Small commercial units for small businesses and flexible floorspace would be provided in accordance with saved policy EMP8 in the Unitary Development Plan 1998 and policy CP9 in the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007) which seek to protect and encourage small and new businesses.
- 8.20 In line with saved policy EMP1 of the Unitary Development Plan, and policy EE2 in the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007), the proposal is not considered to result in a loss of employment and provides good quality replacement employment floorspace, likely to generate an appropriate density of jobs for this location. As such, this proposal is acceptable in employment terms.

## Design

### Site layout

- 8.21 The existing Greenheath Business Centre, in its current condition, makes little contribution to the urban environment. The proposed redevelopment seeks to regenerate the site, providing permeability at ground floor level and a unique design statement for the area.
- 8.22 The existing Greenheath Business Centre is a former factory building constructed in brick with a saw-tooth roof. A large water tower is located at the north east corner of the site. The proposal would open up the main ground floor reception area to a new atrium and voids in the floor which would link this space to the basement below, where the café and performance areas are to be located. A single storey extension with mezzanine would link the existing building and the existing Duke of Wellington public house. The existing Greenheath Centre itself would have an additional two storeys at roof level, providing business space and terraces to the east. The additional storeys would be set back and constructed in materials to make the extension appear as a lightweight glass extension.
- 8.23 The roofs to both the proposed buildings provide amenity space in the form of a roof terrace. Amenity space for all users is provided at ground floor level with defined paved areas and seating areas. This space coupled with the proposed roof space should provide a high standard of amenity for future residents.
- 8.24 In addition, the site is located in close proximity to Bethnal Green Gardens. The applicant intends to contribute **£50,000** via S106 contributions towards ongoing improvements to the gardens.
- 8.25 The proposed boundary treatment of the site would consist of steel gates that would remain open in the day, closing at night to enable controlled entry to the site.

- 8.26 The external landscaping and layout of the site was amended following concerns from the Council's Urban Design Officer and the GLA. Visitor parking to the Business Centre at the Three Colts Lane entrance was omitted to create more amenity space. Benches and low level seating provide better quality amenity space. The landscape plan has structured zones located at major entrances to help define movement and way finding through the site. Block C has been reduced in size and now only houses a sub station to create more amenity space and a seating area.
- 8.27 Comments from the 2007 GLA stage 1 report advises that the glazed extension to the business centre will be a contemporary addition to the traditional industrial architecture of the existing building. Similarly, the contemporary design of the student accommodation block will add variety and interest to the area.
- 8.28 The design is considered appropriate and therefore in accordance with policy DEV2 in the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007) since it would:
- Respect the local character and setting of the site;
  - Reinforce local distinctiveness and contribute to a sense of place;
  - Produces a public realm that is integral to the development;
  - Ensure the public realm is comfortable and useable for pedestrians;
  - Creates visual interest and building articulation;
  - Contributes to the legibility and permeability of the urban environment;
  - Ensure the use of high quality materials and finishes;
- Ensure the development is comfortable and appropriate for the needs of all users.
- 8.29 Overall, it is considered that the design and layout of the scheme as discussed above seeks to provide a high quality response to the constraints of the site. The proposed commercial component will seek to provide an active frontage to the ground floor throughout the site.

#### Height, bulk and massing

- 8.30 Good design is central to all the objectives of the London Plan. Chapter 4B of the London Plan refers to 'Principles and specifics of design for a compact city' and specifies a number of policies aimed at achieving good design. These principles are also reflected in saved policies DEV1 and DEV2 of the UDP 1998 and the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007).
- 8.31 Policy CP4 of the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007) states that LBTH will ensure development creates buildings and spaces of high quality, design and construction that are sustainable, accessible, attractive, safe and well integrated with their surroundings. Policy DEV2 of the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007) reiterates DEV1 of the UDP 1998 and states that developments are required to be of the highest quality design, incorporating the principles of good design.
- 8.32 Comments from the 2007 GLA stage 1 report advises that the layout and massing of the scheme responds well to what is a difficult and highly constrained site.
- 8.33 The general bulk and massing for the proposed student blocks is considered acceptable following further amendments to address Council's concerns. A review of the floor plates of the proposed student blocks resulted in some reduction in width. The more slender profile enhances the relationship between the buildings and the urban context by creating glimpses and views into and out of the site. The submitted townscape analysis illustrates the buildings are not that visible from a wider context, given the tight pattern of the urban fabric in this area.
- 8.34 The height, bulk and massing of the extensions to the existing business centre are considered appropriate and the contemporary additions would provide a contrast to the traditional brick building, yet would not detract from its character.

8.35 The London Plan encourages the development of tall buildings in appropriate locations.

Policy 4B.8 states that tall buildings will be particularly appropriate where:

- They create attractive landmarks enhancing London's character;
- Help to provide a coherent location for economic clusters of related activity;
- Act as a catalyst for regeneration; and
- Where they are acceptable in terms of design and impact on their surroundings.

Policy 4B.9 of the London Plan requires all large-scale buildings, including tall buildings, to be of the highest quality of design.

8.36 CP48 of the emerging LDF permits the Council to consider proposals for tall buildings in locations outside the tall building cluster locations if adequate justification can be made for their development.

8.37 The scheme would be in accordance with policy CP48 in the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007) and would contribute positively by:

- Contributing positively to a high quality, attractive environment;
- Responding sensitively to the surrounding local context;
- Not creating unacceptable impacts on the surrounding environment;
- Contributing to the social and economic vitality of the surrounding area; and
- Not creating an unacceptable impact on social and physical infrastructure.

8.38 The site is not within an identified tall building cluster. The LDF Central Area Action Plan: Issues and options (March 2007) identifies the area subject to this application as a location with potential for increased heights in terms of urban design. Whilst this is draft documentation, it does carry some weight and emerging development within the area and recent planning approvals, have shown an emerging pattern of increased building heights to the east between Cambridge Heath Road and the Viaduct.

8.39 Moreover, the scheme satisfies the criteria for tall buildings set out in DEV27 in the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007) in that it would;

- Achieve high architectural quality and innovation in the design of the building;
- Demonstrate consideration of the appearance of the building as viewed from all angles;
- Not adversely impact on important views and views of strategic importance;
- Provide a positive contribution to the skyline;
- Not adversely impact on Conservation Areas or Listed Buildings;
- Provide high quality accommodation and useable amenity space;
- Achieve a very high standard of safety and security;
- Not harm privacy and amenity of surrounding residents;
- Demonstrate consideration of sustainability;
- Contribute positively to the social and economic vitality of the surrounding area;
- Be located in an area with good public transport access;
- Take into account the transport capacity within the area; and
- Improve permeability with the surrounding street network.

8.40 On balance, in accordance with London Plan guidance on tall buildings, and the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007), the proposal scores merit for its response to the context, evolution of form, distinct character, high quality finishes and the efficient use of a brownfield site that would contribute to the economy and regeneration of the area. The height of the building is considered to be acceptable. In conjunction with the supporting comments raised by the GLA and the Council's Design Department, the bulk and massing of the development is considered to be acceptable. The scheme should be conditioned appropriately to ensure that a high quality detailing of the development is achieved.

## Material and External Appearance

8.41 The proposed student blocks would be a contemporary addition that would add interest to the area, creating a distinctive architectural impression. The proposed materials are considered appropriate. However, to ensure the highest quality finishes are achieved, conditions requiring details of materials will be imposed.

In relation to the existing business centre, the proposed extensions are considered visually appropriate and would not harm the character of the existing building. Proposed materials are considered appropriate, subject to conditions.

8.42 The proposal has been assessed by the Council's Design and Conservation officers who are supportive of the scheme. It is acknowledged that, whilst the proposed scale and massing is greater than the present context, it would sit comfortably in emerging context for the area.

8.43 To this end, the proposal takes into account and respects the local character and setting of the development site, through:

- the provision of a scale and form of development that is appropriate for this area;
- a distinctive architectural impression;
- conditions requiring details of building materials and external finishes;
- the provision of flexible employment space to create activity; and
- the provision of good quality purpose built and fully managed student accommodation.

8.44 Overall, it is considered that the proposal represents a design, massing and scale which achieves a positive response to the sites context, including its relationship with surrounding opportunities and constraints including the railway viaduct. On the basis of the above, the proposal generally satisfies the requirements of both the adopted Unitary Development Plan and Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007) and is considered acceptable.

## Accessibility & Inclusive Design – Safety & Security

8.45 Saved policies DEV1 and DEV2 in the UDP 1998 and policy DEV3 of the Interim Planning Guidance (October 2007) seek to ensure that development incorporates inclusive design principles and can be safely, comfortably and easily accessed and used by as many people as possible. It is considered that the design and layout of public and private spaces within the development are inclusively designed, resulting in improved permeability and connectivity, and a high standard of amenity for future users and residents.

8.46 Comments from the 2007 GLA stage 1 report advise that there are a number of issues outstanding in relation to inclusive design. These include ramp gradients, size and specification of lifts and number of wheelchair accessible units.

8.47 Policy **3A.4 in the London plan** requires 10% of new dwellings to be designed to be wheelchair accessible – this should also extend to student housing. To this end an informative will be added to an approval requiring the scheme comply with the Building Regulations. Wheelchair accessible rooms are situated on every floor of the student accommodation in block B. This equates to 15 accessible rooms which is 14% of the total 101 rooms. On this basis, the scheme is acceptable.

8.48 Further Unitary Development Plan Policies DEV1 and DEV2 and Policy DEV4 of the Interim Planning Guidance seek to ensure that safety and security within development and the surrounding public realm are optimised through good design and the promotion of inclusive environments.

8.49 The redevelopment of this site would increase activity within the area, especially at night where the site is currently under utilised. Policy DEV4 in the Interim Planning Guidance

(October 2007) states:

*'The safety and security of development and the surrounding public realm should be optimised, without compromising the achievement of good design and inclusive environments, by:*

*a) Ensuring building entrances are located and designed to be visible, safe and accessible;*  
*b) Creating opportunities for natural surveillance of the public realm, including streets and open spaces, by:*

- i. Designing development to face the street;*
- ii. Providing windows in development to overlook streets and open spaces;*
- iii. Providing active frontages adjoining the public realm; and*
- iv. Providing an appropriate mix of uses within the development'.*

The proposal is considered to meet the above criteria and would add activity and natural surveillance from the windows throughout the site. At present, the site currently has public access during the day and therefore it is not considered the proposal would exacerbate this situation. It is not considered the proposed seating areas would encourage anti social behaviour as they are all overlooked. The site would be fully managed and has 24 hour security. A condition requiring Secure By Design standards for doors and windows will be attached to any permission.

- 8.50 There is no evidence that the presence of students in an area would cause an increase in crime. It is unlikely that the development would result in adverse behaviour. Moreover, given the full management of the accommodation, it is considered any issues of adverse behaviour as a result of the proposed accommodation can be addressed if they did arise.

### **Amenity**

- 8.51 Saved Policy DEV2 in the UDP 1998 and Policy DEV1 of the Interim Planning Guidance seek to ensure that development where possible protects and enhances the amenity of existing and future residents as well as the amenity of the public realm.
- 8.52 The site is located in an area which has residential uses to the north and west and predominantly commercial uses to the south and east.
- 8.53 The applicant has submitted daylight and sunlight reports, prepared by GVA Grimley, which looks at the daylight and sunlight implications of the development upon itself and on neighbouring properties. The reports take into account both the proposed student blocks.
- 8.54 The following properties that were considered to include habitable rooms were assessed for daylight and sunlight:
- 1-17 Sunlight Square (Witan Street)
  - 79-84 Sunlight Square
  - 353-360 Corfield Street
  - 345-352 Corfield Street

### **Daylight Assessment**

- 8.55 Daylight is normally calculated by two methods - the vertical sky component (VSC) and the average daylight factor (ADF). The latter is considered to be a more detailed and accurate method, since it considers not only the amount of sky visibility on the vertical face of a particular window, but also window and room sizes, plus the rooms use.
- 8.56 British Standard 8206 recommends ADF values for residential accommodation. The recommended daylight factor level for dwellings are:
- 2% for kitchens;

- 1.5% for living rooms; and
- 1% for bedrooms.

8.57 It should be noted that the daylight analysis has been carried out prior to the amendments to the scheme. However, given that the amendments did not increase the bulk, scale and height of the proposal, it is not considered essential to request further analysis given the satisfactory results discussed below.

#### 8.58 79-84 Sunlight Square

The property is a three storey building with residential accommodation at ground, second and third floor levels. Six windows on each floor face south towards the proposed development. The original approved plans for this building (approved under planning reference PA/97/00026) have been reviewed and show that these windows serve bedrooms.

The proposed vertical sky component readings for these windows are below the 27% requirement. However guidelines state that if the VSC is less than 27% or less than 0.8 times its former value the property may be adversely affected. In this case, the first and second floor windows are 0.8 or above and therefore are compliant. The ratio for the ground floor windows is 0.74, just below the 0.8 requirement.

Following the relatively low VSC readings, an ADF calculation was carried out. This calculation indicates ground floor windows would receive a level of daylighting representing 1.5% which is satisfactory for both bedrooms and living rooms.

In light of the above tests, the proposed level of daylight is considered acceptable.

#### 8.59 1-17 Sunlight Square (Witan Street)

This property has four storeys with garages at ground floor and residential above. The majority of the building faces south and the windows to the south west corner facing the development have been tested.

The proposed VSC for the second and third floor windows would exceed the 27% requirement. The proposed VSC reading for the first floor window would be 26.32, just below the 27% requirement and therefore an ADF calculation was completed in relation to this window. Calculations show this window would receive 2.5%, which exceeds the 1.5% requirement for living rooms.

In light of the above tests, the proposed level of daylight is considered acceptable.

#### 8.60 345-352 and 353-360 Corfield Street

The properties are 5 storey residential flats with rear extensions that result in windows to the rear elevation that are significantly set back. It appears the windows serve bedrooms and are therefore required to exceed a ADF calculation of 1%.

After testing it was found that all the windows would exceed the minimum 1% requirement.

As such, the proposed level of daylight is considered acceptable.

#### Sunlighting

8.61 Sunlight is assessed through the calculation method known as the annual probable sunlight hours (APSH). This method of assessment considers the amount of sun available in the summer and winter, for windows within 90 degrees of due south.

8.62 It should be noted that the sunlight analysis has been carried out following amendments to the scheme that made elevational changes to reduce the bulk of the proposed student blocks. The results illustrated some improvements in APSH following the amendments in comparison to the original drawings.

#### 8.63 79-84 Sunlight Square

It is acknowledged that the calculations for the windows within this property would fail in terms of total loss of sunlight (i.e. they result in an over 20% reduction of sunlight). However, in assessing the acceptability of the scheme it is important to consider the current situation and the urban context of the site and whether the proposal would affect residential amenity to an extent that would warrant a refusal on sunlight grounds.

The windows tested within 79-84 Sunlight Square receive relatively little sunlight at present. This is because of the tight urban context of the area surrounding the site. A total of 1486 sunlight hours are available in London assuming there are no obstructions. At present, the average sunlight hours to the rear windows of this property in the summer is 22, which equates to 7.3 hours per month. As a result of the proposed development, the average in summer would be reduced to 21.1 which equates to 7 hours per month.

The window worst affected by loss of sunlight would lose 13 hours over the year, which when considered against the total of 1486 available within London, equates to only 0.8% of the sunlight available in London.

On balance, it is considered the property at present receives a relatively small amount of sunlight because of the urban environment it is located in. When considered in relation to the total loss over the year, it is not considered that the losses would be significant enough to cause unacceptable harm to residential amenity. It is therefore considered that a refusal could not be sustained on sunlight grounds.

#### 8.64 1-17 Sunlight Square (Witan Street)

A total of 12 out of 31 windows would fail with regard to total percentage loss. However, a large number would pass within this property. In relation to those windows that fail, the window worst affected by loss of sunlight would lose 22 hours over the year, which when considered against the total of 1486 sunlight hours available within London, equates to only 1.5% of the sunlight available in London. This loss of just 22 hours sunlight equates to 24 minutes hours per week over the year. Furthermore, none of the windows in question receive significant amounts of sunlight because of its tight urban context.

The windows tested appear to serve bedrooms and living rooms with the living rooms having two windows. It is considered that given the worst affected window would lose 22 hours over the year (24 minutes per week), and the small amount of sunlight received by the windows at present, plus the urban context of the site, that a refusal could not be sustained on these grounds.

#### 8.65 345-352 and 353-360 Corfield Street

It is considered that the rear windows would received very little sunlight due to the positioning of the rear extensions. In any event they would not be affected by the design proposals for Greenheath Business Centre due to its orientation. Therefore, the sunlight calculations were confined to the two properties above.

#### Proposed accommodation

8.66 The submitted report carried out by GVA Grimley calculates that all student bedrooms and living areas would have ADF readings over and above the minimum 1% for bedrooms and



2% for kitchens.

The proposed accommodation is therefore considered to receive sufficient daylight and is therefore acceptable.

#### Overlooking and loss of privacy

- 8.67 Given its design, it is not considered the extension to the existing Greenheath Business Centre would create any additional overlooking to the residents at Corfield Street. No terraces overlooking Corfield Street are proposed.
- 8.68 The proposed student blocks have been designed and orientated to minimise any unacceptable direct overlooking. Windows to the student accommodation are orientated away from existing residential uses to ensure no direct overlooking occurs. Given the orientation, design and distance away from neighbouring residential windows (approximately 25m to the windows of 79-84 Sunlight square), it is not considered the proposal would cause any unacceptable harm to the residential amenity of surrounding properties in terms of overlooking and loss of privacy.

#### Sense of enclosure/outlook

- 8.69 Unlike, sunlight and daylight assessments, this impact cannot be readily assessed in terms of a percentage or measurable loss of quality of light. Rather, it is about how an individual feels about a space. It is consequently far more difficult to quantify and far more subjective. Nevertheless, whilst it is acknowledged that the development may result in an increased sense of enclosure, on balance this proposal is not considered to create an unacceptable impact given the sites city fringe urban context (which the site borders) and the historical character and grain of the area. A reason for refusal based on these grounds is not considered to be sustainable.

#### Noise and vibration

- 8.70 Policy DEV50 of the UDP 1998 states that attenuation measures will be required for development sensitive to noise and vibration pollution.
- 8.71 The site is bounded almost on two sides by the railway viaduct to the south eastern corner of the site. The acoustic integrity of the building therefore needs to be enhanced to exceed building regulation requirements, to ensure a high standard of amenity for future occupants. This will be dealt with by condition.
- 8.72 A noise survey carried out by WSP has been submitted with the application. The report concludes that, whilst the site does fall within a high noise exposure category, due to its proximity to the railway, the provision of sufficient noise mitigation measures into the building façade would mean the buildings would be acceptable for residential use. Conditions will be imposed with regard to noise levels in rooms and can be reduced with appropriate build finishes.
- 8.73 Subject to conditions restricting noise from any new plant equipment proposed on this site, it is not considered that any unacceptable noise impact will be created.
- 8.74 There is no evidence to show that the proposal and the proposed groundworks would increase noise from railway within the area and therefore it is not considered a refusal could be justified on these grounds.
- 8.75 There is no evidence to suggest that the student residents would cause more noise than any other residents. It is not considered the students would cause unacceptable noise disturbance, especially in conjunction with proper management of the site, that would

address any unacceptable anti social behaviour and noise.

- 8.76 Officers understand that the size of the proposed development creates concern about construction noise, debris from the site and traffic. In these circumstances, the Planning Department proposes to include a condition ensuring a stringent construction environmental management plan to this scheme to minimise noise and disturbance to nearby residents caused by construction noise, debris and traffic.

### **Energy Efficiency & Sustainability**

- 8.77 The Council's Interim Planning Guidance contains a number of policies to ensure the environmental sustainability of new development. Policy DEV6 requires major development to incorporate renewable energy production to provide at least 10% of the predicted energy requirements on site. In addition, all new development is required to include a variety of measures to maximise water conservation (Policy DEV7) incorporate sustainable drainage systems (Policy DEV8) and construction materials (Policy DEV9). In addition all new development is required to make sufficient provision for waste disposal and recycling facilities (Policy DEV15).
- 8.78 The applicant has submitted an energy strategy and numerous additional information following comments from the Council's energy officer and the GLA. No further comments from the GLA have been received to date, following the further information. However, any comments will be reported to the Committee.

It is considered that the outstanding energy issues can be addressed through a planning condition.

### **Transport & Highways**

- 8.79 Both the Unitary Development Plan and the Interim Planning Guidance contain a number of policies which encourage the creation of a sustainable transport network which minimises the need for car travel, lorries and supports movements by walking, cycling and public transport.
- 8.80 In accordance with Policy DEV17, the applicant has submitted a transport assessment which demonstrates the impacts of the development upon the local transport network. It concludes that the existing public transport network is capable of absorbing the additional passenger demands generated by the proposed development.
- 8.81 Both Transport for London and London Borough of Tower Hamlets Highways department are generally satisfied with the proposal and have no objections, subject to conditions. Concerns raised with regard to car parking have been addressed and cycle parking will be conditioned. Other concerns raised within the GLA stage 1 report can be addressed under planning condition.
- 8.82 Following amendments, the car parking and cycle parking have been changed. The current proposed provision of 102 cycle parking spaces for the proposed development is still under the required standard. However, it is considered that there is opportunity at the site to provide more spaces and therefore a condition will be attached to any permission requiring further details for additional cycle parking. Car parking has been reduced in line with officer comments. No further comments from Transport for London have been received to date.
- 8.83 The development will promote sustainable transport methods. The development will be 'car free' for the student accommodation. The site has a PTAL of 6a. There are excellent public transport services in the area, including bus, tube and national rail services, which provide direct linkages to London Metropolitan University in Aldgate. Transport for London is satisfied that the proposed development is not expected to generate significant public transport trips

based on the information in the Transport Assessment. Therefore, it is not expected that the proposal will result in an unacceptable impact to the TLRN or SRN. It is therefore concluded the proposal would not cause traffic disruption or disruption to local public transport services.

- 8.84 Appropriate contributions for pedestrian and cycling improvements in the vicinity of the site, and a car free agreement are required and would be included in the Section 106 agreement. A Section 278 agreement will be required by planning condition.

### **Other**

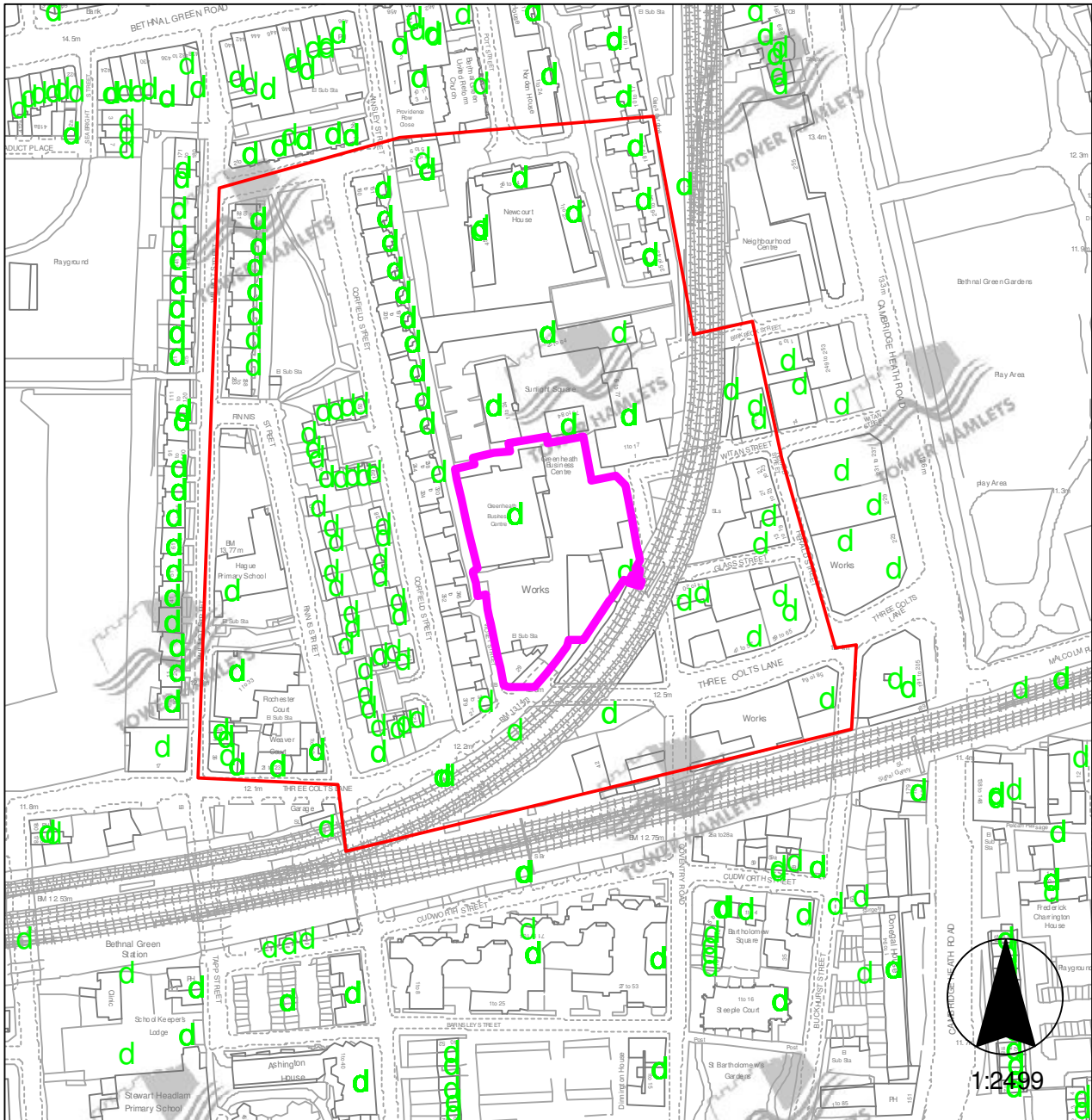
- 8.85 In response to concerns raised in submissions, the following issues not mentioned in previous discussion are considered:

- Increased wind effect – Following a wind environment study submitted by the applicant, it is not expected that the proposal will result in an increase in wind turbulence
- Dust and detritus during construction – The applicant is required to submit a Construction management plan to be assessed by Council Environmental Health Officers.
- Additional noise and disturbance caused by student residents – a management plan will be submitted to for the student component of the development. This will be assessed by Council officers
- Development will further help diversify the local community - noted
- Regeneration benefits - noted

## **9.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.1 All other relevant policies and considerations have been taken into account. Planning permission should be granted for the reasons set out in the SUMMARY OF MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS and the details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION at the beginning of this report.

# Site Map



## Legend

- Planning Application Site Boundary
- Consultation Area
- d Land Parcel Address

This Site Map displays the Planning Application Site Boundary and the neighbouring Occupiers / Owners who were consulted as part of the Planning Application process. The Site Map was reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. London Borough of Tower Hamlets LA086568