

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

HELD AT 7.00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 11 JANUARY 2017

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE
CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG**

Members Present:

Councillor Andrew Cregan
Councillor Suluk Ahmed
Councillor Denise Jones (Substitute for Councillor Marc Francis)
Councillor Andrew Wood (Substitute for Councillor Chris Chapman)
Councillor Danny Hassell (Substitute for Councillor Sabina Akhtar)
Councillor Shafi Ahmed (Substitute for Councillor Shah Alam)

Other Councillors Present:

None

Apologies:

Councillor Marc Francis
Councillor Sabina Akhtar
Councillor John Pierce
Councillor Chris Chapman
Councillor Shah Alam

Officers Present:

Paul Buckenham	(Development Control Manager, Place)
Fleur Francis	(Team Leader - Planning, Directorate Governance)
Beth Eite	(Team Leader, Planning Services, Place)
Nasser Farooq	(Team Leader, Planning Services, Place)
Brett McAllister	(Planning Officer, Place)
Jen Pepper	(Affordable Housing Programme Manager, Place)
Victoria Olonisaye-Collins	(Planning Officer, Place)
Zoe Folley	(Committee Officer, Directorate Governance)

Councillor Andrew Cregan (Chair)

1. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillors Danny Hassell and Denise Jones declared a personal interest in agenda item 5.3, William Brinson Centre, 3-5 Arnold Road, London, E3 4NT (PA/16/02789) as they knew one of the registered speakers and a number of the residents present at the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

The Committee **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 December 2016 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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, Development and Renewal along the broad lines indicated at the meeting; and
- 2) In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions/informatives/planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Corporate Director, Development and Renewal is delegated authority to do so, provided always that the Corporate Director does not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision
- 3) To note the procedure for hearing objections at meetings of the Development Committee and the meeting guidance.

4. DEFERRED ITEMS

None.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DECISION

5.1 19 Senrab Street, London, E1 0QE (PA/16/03188)

Paul Buckenham (Development Control Manager) introduced the application for retrospective planning permission for a rear dormer window (with alterations) to facilitate a loft conversion.

The Chair then invited the registered speaker to address the Committee.

Sarah Skinner (Applicant) spoke in support of the application. She stated that the dormer window could only be partially seen from the public realm (as shown on the applicant's submitted maps). Apart from this, the proposal could only really be viewed from private properties. Furthermore, the existing roof line of Senrab Street had already been disturbed by the presence of other dormer windows on the street that were much larger and more visible. She

also stated that the application had attracted a considerable amount of public support. In response to questions from the Committee, she emphasised these points about the presence of other similar developments on the street and the lack of its visibility from the street scene.

Beth Eite (Planning Services) presented the application, describing the location of the property in the Conservation Area. She drew attention to the history of the development. An application was made in 2015 to retain the dormer window at the rear of the property. This was refused and dismissed at appeal for the reasons set out in the Committee report. This application sought to overcome the reasons for refusal by reducing the width of the dormer. The application had been subject to local consultation generating 2 petitions in support with 37 signatures, 1 representative in support as well as 1 representation in objection. In summary, Officers considered that, despite the changes, the retention of the rear dormer would result in an alteration that was unduly dominant and overbearing to the host building. As a result it would harm the setting of the Albert Gardens Conservation Area. There were no public benefits to outweigh the impact. Consequently, Officers considered that the application should be refused permission.

In response, Members asked questions about the character of the existing roof line and that of the existing roof dormers in the street. It was reported that no approvals for roof dormers had been granted since the areas designation as a Conservation Area. However, it was noted that another property on the same side of the street featured a dormer, but this was a slightly different style of property and the permission involved a minor increase in the size of the dormer. Despite this, it was stressed that each application should be considered on its own merits. In this case, Officers, (guided by the appeal decision), considered that a dormer in this location would be inappropriate.

Members also asked questions about the visibility of the development from the street scape and the benefits of the development. In response, Officers noted that the impact on such views was negligible. Nevertheless, the impact on private views in the Conservation Area was an important consideration, as set out in the appeal decision findings. Given the impact on such views from Dunelm Street, Officers considered that the overall impact on the Conservation Area would be less than substantial. In view of the lack of any public benefits to offset this, Officers considered that the application should be refused permission. In response to further questions about the representations in support it was noted that a number of the signatories lived in Dunelm Street.

On a vote of 0 in favour of the Officer recommendation and 6 against, the Committee did not agree the Officer recommendation to refuse the planning permission.

Accordingly, Councillor Andrew Cregan proposed and Councillor Denise Jones seconded a motion that the planning permission be granted (for the reasons set out below) and on a vote of 6 in favour and 0 against, the Committee **RESOLVED:**

1. That retrospective planning permission be **GRANTED** at 19 Senrab Street, London, E1 0QE for a rear dormer window (with alterations) to facilitate a loft conversion (PA/16/03188)
2. That Officers be delegated authority to impose conditions on the planning permission.

The Committee were minded to grant the planning permission given: the lack of visibility of the development from the street scape; the number of representations in favour of the development and the presence of other dormer windows on Senrab Street.

5.2 (Locksley Estate Site D) Land at Salmon Lane and adjacent to 1-12 Parnham Street, London (PA/16/02295)

Update report tabled.

Paul Buckenham (Development Control Manager) introduced the application for residential development comprising 20 one, two, three and four bedroom flats available for affordable rent. The height of the building ranges from six storeys to nine storeys.

The Chair then invited registered speakers to address the Committee

Alicia Joseph along with Francesco Randon spoke in opposition to the application. The speakers considered that the proposal would result in the loss of publically accessible open space that acted as an informal nature reserve. They also expressed concern about the removal of trees at the site, following the recent clearance of the site that shielded residents from the surrounding environment and noise. Concern was also expressed about the impact of the development on neighbouring amenity due to the separation distances and the consultation process. In response to questions from Members, they expressed concerns about the clearance of the site and lack of consultation on this. They also commented further of the benefits of the green space to residents, potential future uses of the site, and the separation distance to Parnham Street. They felt that the measurement in the report was inaccurate.

John Coker (LBTH Strategic Housing) and John Lineen, (Architect) spoke in support of the application. They drew attention to the need for additional good quality affordable housing in the Borough. They also explained the proposed rent levels for the affordable housing and did not consider that the development would result in an overconcentration of one housing type in the area given the wider profile of the area in terms of housing types. The proposed development would take up about third of the site, and a section of the site would be given over for community gardens. The site had become overgrown. The plans had been carefully designed to preserve amenity. The speakers also provided reassurances about the height of the proposal and the materials in relation to the setting of the surrounding area.

In response to questions by the Committee about the loss of the trees, the speakers reported that no mature trees had been removed and the site carried no protections in this regard anyway. In relation to the clearing of the site, Officers explained that this was not a planning issue and that the completion of such works predated Planning's involvement in the application. Officers advised the Committee to consider the planning merits of this application. They also reported that, from a planning perspective, there was no requirement to maintain the land as open space given the lack of site designations in this regard. The site was Council owned land held for the purposes of providing housing. So there was no guarantee that it would revert back to open space in the future. In response to questions, the speakers explained the proposed biodiversity measures and that the proposed garden would be for the benefit of the new and existing residents. In response to further questions, they considered that the plans would have a negligible effect on the setting of Regents Canal tow path.

Brett McAllister (Planning Services) presented the report, describing the site and the surrounds, and its good transport links. He also explained the proposed layout of the application, its height and appearance. Consultation had been carried out and the results of this were noted including the representation from the Canal and Rivers Trust about the impact on the character of the Regents Canal Conservation Area. Turning to the assessment, it was reported that all of the proposed residential units would be affordable rent units. The existing green space had no specific designation as outlined above and there would be contributions for biodiversity enhancements. The level of amenity and play space exceeded policy (to be shared with 1-2 Parnell Street) and would meet the combined target for both developments. It was also considered that the application had been sensitively designed to protect the setting of the tow path and the regents Canal Conservation Area. There would be appropriate separation distances between the development and surrounding properties. So the plans would not give rise to major issues in terms of residential amenity. In view of this, Officers were recommending the application for approval.

In response to the presentation, Members sought clarity about the status of the green space. Based on the maps (used in the Officers presentation), it was questioned whether the space was meant for use as a community garden. Members also asked questions about the clearing of the site and whether such works had undermined its biodiversity value. They also asked questions about the comments of the Canal and Rivers Trust as set out in the update report. Officers reported that there was no evidence to suggest that the land formally was public open land but it may have in the past provided a small garden for residents of one of the housing blocks. The site carried no designations for such use and as explained above, the decision to clear the site was taken outside the planning regime. Furthermore, there would be mitigation to offset the impact on biodiversity. Officers also confirmed the Canal and Rivers Trust comments on the application.

Members also asked questions about the proposed housing. It was questioned whether the plans complied with the policy for creating mixed and balanced communities by housing tenure. In response, Officers reported that

the plans met the policy in this regard. Given the profile of the wider community (that the policy recommended should be taken into account), Officers considered that it posed no risk of causing an overconcentration of one housing type. Furthermore, the proposal would deliver much needed affordable housing that was a key policy priority.

Officers also responded to further questions about the likelihood of the land reverting back to open space given the lack of designations for this. Officers also outlined the energy efficiency measures.

On a vote of 1 in favour of the Officer recommendation to grant planning permission, 4 against and 1 abstention, the Committee did not agree the Officer recommendation to grant planning permission.

Accordingly, Councillor Andrew Cregan proposed and Councillor Andrew Wood seconded a motion that the recommendation to grant planning permission be not accepted (for the reasons set out below) and on a vote of 4 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention, the Committee **RESOLVED:**

That the Officer recommendation to grant planning permission be **NOT ACCEPTED** at (Locksley Estate Site D) Land at Salmon Lane and adjacent to 1-12 Parnham Street, London for a residential development comprising 20 one, two, three and four bedroom flats available for affordable rent. The height of the building ranges from six storeys to nine storeys (PA/16/02295)

The Committee were minded to refuse the application due to concerns over:

- The impact on the setting of the Canal Towpath and the Regents Canal Conservation Area.
- Impact on the properties at Parnham Street due to the separation distance.
- Loss of publically accessible open space.
- Overconcentration of one housing type.

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

5.3 William Brinson Centre, 3-5 Arnold Road, London, E3 4NT (PA/16/02789)

Update report tabled

Paul Buckenham introduced the application for the demolition of existing building, construction of an 8 storey building and a 6 storey building to provide 62 dwellings (affordable housing tenure) and 398 sq.m B1 floorspace with amenity space, access, cycle parking, landscaping and associated works

The Chair then invited registered speaker to address the Committee.

Sara Stratton and Michael Keith, local residents spoke in objection to the application. They expressed concern about the lack of consultation on the application, and the impact on existing businesses. They also expressed concerns about the scheme's density being in excess of London Plan guidance, the height, scale and massing of the plans that would be out of keeping with the surrounding building heights and the separation distances to nearby properties. They also expressed concern about the lack of a heritage assessment. The speakers considered that as a result of these issues, the development would harm the setting of the nearby Conservation Area, would harm residential amenity and would impact on the biodiversity value of the site. The speakers also considered that the development was of a poor quality design and the layout had not been adequately thought through. In response to questions, they expressed concerns about the closure of roads due to the plans and the displacement of businesses. They considered that the plans should be redesigned to address the concerns.

John Coker (LBTH Strategic Housing) and Gavin Hale-Brown (Architect) spoke in support of the application. The supporters stressed the need for additional affordable units in the Borough which the application would make a critical contribution to. It was not considered that it would result in an overconcentration of one housing type in the area given the nature of the surrounding area in terms of housing types. Any road closures would be temporary. A significant amount of consultation was carried out. The site was well connected and in a relatively isolated area, in relation to residential developments. The scheme had been designed to fit in with the area and would comprise a generous amount of family sized houses. There was nothing to suggest that the existing businesses would close down.

In response to questions about progress in meeting housing targets, Jen Pepper (Affordable Housing Programme Manager) reported that at present the Council was below target. In response to further questions, the speakers considered that the plans would enliven the area, provide natural surveillance, deliver much needed affordable units and business units and would be secure by design. Furthermore, given the distance between the site and heritage assets, it would not harm the setting of the nearby Conservation Area. A noise assessment had been carried out and there would be noise mitigation measures. The speakers also answered questions about the merits of layout from a security point of view.

Officers reported that the Committee should place no weight on the images submitted by objectors circulated at the meeting as Officers had not had sight of these before the meeting and therefore could not verify the accuracy of them. The Committee also should disregard the comments made by third parties about the displacement of businesses as there was no evidence to say that this was factually accurate. The issues around the road closures could be dealt with by condition.

Victoria Olonisaye-Collins (Planning Officer) presented the report, describing the nature of the application site and surrounds and the key features of the application. She explained the outcome of the consultation. In terms of the assessment, it was considered that the loss of the community use was

acceptable given the proposal to relocate this at an alternative suitable location. Furthermore, the application would increase employment opportunities at the site. The new housing, that comprised 100% affordable units, would help meet housing targets and the commercial units would improve natural surveillance. The design of the application would sit comfortably with the area and would preserve residential amenity. Whilst the density of the proposal exceeded guidance, Officers felt that the site could accommodate the density given the merits of the plans and character of the site and the surrounding area. Highway Services had raised no objections to the application. Officers were recommending that the application was granted planning permission.

In response to questions about the sunlight and daylight impacts, it was noted that there would be some impact on properties in Tomlins Grove. However, given the separation distances and that the design of the properties at Tomlins Grove restricted light exposure, the impacts from this development itself would be minimal. In response to further questions, Officers provided reassurances about the height and design of the application in relation to the surrounding area and the density of the application.

On a vote of 5 in favour 0 against and 1 abstention the Committee **RESOLVED:**

1. That planning permission be **GRANTED** at William Brinson Centre, 3-5 Arnold Road, London, E3 4NT for the demolition of existing building, construction of an 8 storey building and a 6 storey building to provide 62 dwellings (affordable housing tenure) and 398 sq.m B1 floorspace with amenity space, access, cycle parking, landscaping and associated works (PA/16/02789) subject to:
2. That the Corporate Director, Development & Renewal is delegated authority to issue the planning permission and impose conditions and informatives to secure the matters set out in the Committee report.
3. That the Corporate Director Development & Renewal is delegated authority to issue the planning permission and impose conditions and informatives to secure the matters set out in the Committee report.
4. Any other conditions considered necessary by the Corporate Director Development & Renewal.

6. OTHER PLANNING MATTERS

None

The meeting ended at 10.30 p.m.

Vice Chair,
Development Committee