

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.00 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 18 MAY 2021

COMMITTEE ROOM ONE - TOWN HALL MULBERRY PLACE

Members Present:

Councillor Kevin Brady (Chair)
Councillor Abdul Mukit MBE (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Sabina Akhtar
Councillor Tarik Khan
Councillor Val Whitehead

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor Dan Tomlinson
Councillor Andrew Wood
Councillor Zenith Rahman

Apologies:

Councillor John Pierce
Councillor Dipa Das
Councillor Rabina Khan
Councillor Leema Qureshi

Officers Present:

Akhlaqul Ambia	– (Development Viability Officer, Place)
Paul Buckenham	– (Development Manager, Planning Services, Place)
Kevin Crilly	– (Senior Planning Officer, Place)
Gareth Gwynne	– (Area Planning Manager (West), Planning Services, Place)
Sally Fraser	– (Area Team Leader (East), Planning Services, Place)
Siddhartha Jha	– (Principal Planning Lawyer, Governance, Legal Services)
Jen Pepper	– (Affordable Housing Development and Partnerships Manager, Place)
Tanveer Rahman	– (Senior Planning Officer, Place)
Simon Westmorland	– (Area Team Leader (West), Planning Services Place),
Zoe Folley	– (Democratic Services Officer, Committees, Governance)

1. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

Councillor Kevin Brady declared a Non DPI interest in Agenda Item 4.1. Land bounded by 2-10 Bethnal Green Road, 1-5 Chance Street (Huntingdon Industrial Estate) and 30-32 Redchurch Street, (PA/20/00557). This was on the grounds of membership of a Members Club, that had objected to the application. He did not consider that this had affected his views on the application

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

RESOLVED:

1. That the minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Development Committee held on 20th April 2021 be agreed as a correct record

3. RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROCEDURE FOR HEARING OBJECTIONS AND MEETING GUIDANCE

To RESOLVE 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 Place 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 Place 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 Strategic Development Committee.

4. DEFERRED ITEMS

4.1 Land bounded by 2-10 Bethnal Green Road, 1-5 Chance Street (Huntingdon Industrial Estate) and 30-32 Redchurch Street (PA2000557)

Update report published

Paul Buckenham introduced the application for the demolition of the existing buildings, excluding the façade of 30-32 Redchurch Street, and redevelopment to provide a mixed-use development and associated works. The update report set out additional representations in support and contained

clarification of drawings and documentation that was not listed in the previous meeting's update report

This application was considered by the Strategic Development Committee on 20 April 2021.

As set out in the minutes of the meeting, the Committee expressed concern that the public benefits of the scheme did not outweigh the less than substantial harm identified to heritage assets, as required by paragraph 196 of the NPPF (2019). Members deferred the application for further consideration of the affordable workspace arrangements and potential for public realm improvements to Redchurch Street.

Tanveer Rahman briefly outlined the site and the surrounds, including the heritage assets and the main elements of the scheme, highlighting the design of the affordable workspace. Officers were of the view this would provide a high quality space.

Addressing the points raised at the previous meeting, the following points were noted:

Affordable Workspace

It was confirmed that the original offer exceeded the Council's Local Plan and the London Plan requirements. However, Officers have since engaged with the applicant and the Director for Growth and Economic Development. Based on a calculation of the realistic market rate for the floorspace, Officers had secured the following changes:

- Increased rent discounts on the lower and ground floor Affordable workspace for 15 years (representing an estimated 36 – 42% discount on the lower ground floor and an estimated 19 – 25% discount on the ground floor). Followed by 10% discount for the remaining lifetime of the development.
- An affordable workspace delivery strategy. This comprised measures to:
 - Safeguard the use of the lower ground floor as 'maker space',
 - A review mechanism on the rent levels for the lower ground, if not occupied.
 - requirements around engagement with local colleges and internships and apprenticeship programmes.
 - ground floor to be fitted to shell and core.
 - marketing strategy with first refusal for microenterprises operated by existing Tower Hamlets Council Tax or Business Rate payees.
 - Measures to secure all workspace for microbusinesses

Public realm improvements to Redchurch Street

Officers have also engaged with the applicant and the Director of Public Realm regarding contributions towards improving the setting of the area. This should also help mitigate any impacts to the setting of the Owl and Pussy Cat Public House and beer garden. Contributions had been secured for the completion of a scoping report and for works to be carried out as set out in the Committee report.

Overall, given the additional public benefits as outlined above, in addition to the range of the original benefits, Officers considered that this would outweigh the less than substantial heritage harm caused by the scheme and that the application should be granted planning permission.

The Committee asked a number of questions of Officers about the following issues:

- Affordability of the workspace. It was confirmed that the improved offer exceeded policy. It was felt that the Council had secured a good offer both in terms of the 15 year offer and the lifetime offer.
- The need for additional workspace in this part of the Borough. Officers expressed confidence regarding its occupation, based on the evidence base.
- That the update report contained no additional objections.
- The public realm works and the plans to mitigate any impact on the Public House and beer garden and its operation. It was noted that Officers would work with the Council's development coordination team in relation to the delivery of the public realm improvements and to ensure that it would have no adverse impact on the operation of the public house. It was also noted that details of a Construction Management Plan were required to be submitted. Officers undertook to ensure that the relevant Council Officers and the development coordination team are consulted on the plan and involved in its development with a view to minimising any impacts from the works. Officers would write this into the conditions.
- The extent of the consultation undertaken, particularly with the Boundary Estate. Confirmation was provided that the scope of the consultation undertaken by the Council met all the necessary requirements. This included the requirements in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement regarding notifying neighbouring properties, which were outlined. Press and site notices were also displayed. The Council had gone above and beyond the minimum requirements and the applicant had also carried out consultation. The Committee also received reassurances about the impact on the Boundary Estate.
- The height of the building and the tall building policy. Whilst the building was located outside of the tall building zone, each application needed to be considered on its own merits. It was also important to note in considering this issue the precedence set by the appeal

scheme for a taller building on the site, and the number of tall buildings nearby. In view of this, Officers were of the view that it is not tenable to sustain an objection in principle to a tall building on the site.

- The views of Hackney Council on the scheme. The Committee should note their views and they should be given the same weight as a third party consultee.

On a vote of 3 in favour and 2 against the Committee **RESOLVED:**

1. That, planning permission is **GRANTED** at Land bounded by 2-10 Bethnal Green Road, 1-5 Chance Street (Huntingdon Industrial Estate) and 30-32 Redchurch Street (PA2000557) for the following development:
 - Demolition of the existing buildings, excluding the façade of 30-32 Redchurch Street, and redevelopment to provide a mixed-use development within a single building rising to three, seven and nine storeys maximum AOD height circa 56m comprising office (up to 14,393 sqm of B1(a)) floorspace, up to 1,444 sqm flexible commercial floorspace (B1(a)/B1(c)), and up to 1,181 sqm flexible retail floorspace (Use Class A1 and A3) along with servicing facilities, cycle parking, vehicle parking and associated works.
2. Subject to any direction by the Mayor of London and the prior completion of a legal agreement to secure the planning obligations listed in the Committee report dated 18th May 2021.
3. The conditions and informatives set out in the report dated 18th May 2021

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DECISION

5.1 Site at Stroudley Walk, London, E3 3EW (PA/20/01696)

Update report published

Paul Buckenham introduced the application for the demolition of existing buildings and structures and redevelopment to provide four buildings, including a tall building of up to 25 storeys, comprising residential units and flexible commercial space and associated works. The update report included additional representations and a number of clarifications including corrections to the level of affordable housing provision.

Kevin Crilly presented the report providing an overview of the site, which had an excellent PTAL rating.

Member were advised of the following issues:

- Details of the previous consented scheme. Due to this, the existing homes and businesses on site had already been vacated so were vacant.

- Consultation had been undertaken. The main issues raised were noted.
- Height of each block and what they would provide in terms of their uses.
- The proposals included the re-provision of the social rent homes and in addition to this, there would be a net uplift in social rent homes, facilitated by grant support. The proposals had been viability tested. It is also recommended that the s106 agreement secure an early stage review.
- Officers were mindful of the conflict with policy in terms of aspects of the housing mix, but on balance given the wider benefits of the application, considered that this was acceptable.
- The proposal would deliver a number of additional public benefits. This included: improvements to public realm and lighting, a pocket park a court yard, and landscaping improvements
- Other benefits included: the delivery of flexible retail and commercial uses with enhancements to facades
- Design. The scheme was considered to have an acceptable relationship with surrounding properties and the setting of the area.
- Height of the development. The development would meet 3 out of the 4 points of the exception criteria for tall buildings outside the Tall Building Zone. Officers also felt that significant weight should be given to the regenerative benefits and the role of the height in supporting the viability of the scheme. Taking these factors into account, it was considered that a tall building in this area was acceptable.
- That, in relation to the heritage assessment, the proposals would have a limited impact on views of the Church of St Mary, the listed buildings and setting of the area. It was considered that the public benefits of the proposals would outweigh any harm so the application complied with the tests in the NPPF.
- That in terms of neighbouring amenity, the proposals broadly complied with policy. Properties would retain a reasonable level of sunlight and daylight.
- The transport proposals included the provision of cycle parking and facilities.
- Contributions had been secured including for improvements to the nearby cycle highway and cycle facilities.

Officers were recommending that the application was granted planning permission.

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

Councillor Andrew Wood expressed concerns about the application. He considered that it was too small for the site given the site's development potential and the PTAL rating. There was a need for more housing in the borough, since Tower Hamlets is missing its housing targets. Therefore, it should match the example of taller buildings elsewhere such as those in Newham and deliver more housing including affordable housing.

Councillor Zenith Rahman, ward Councillor, spoke in support of the application. She expressed support for the scheme, highlighting the community benefits such as the additional affordable housing, the new pocket park and the community café. She stated that, as a community worker, she recognised the need for these facilities and they were welcome.

Councillor Dan Tomlinson ward Councillor, also addressed the meeting. Whilst he expressed support for the new homes, which were much needed in the area, he also noted that some concerns had been raised about the height of the development and the impact on sunlight and daylight on neighbouring properties. He stressed the need for ongoing engagement with residents over the course of the development, especially during the construction phase, particularly with the residents of Regent's Court. Current provision for cyclists in the area was unacceptable and the report only proposed modest contributions in this respect, but more was needed especially to facilitate safer and more convenient cycle turns at the nearby junction. He proposed that a condition be imposed limiting the number of occupants that could move in until the completion of the works to improve the cycle routes.

The applicant's representatives, Duncan Cumberland Babu Bhattaheerjee spoke in support of the application highlighting the following points:

- Site was in need of regeneration.
- Applicant had worked closely with Officers and had consulted residents, and will continue to work with the community.
- Extension community consultation had been carried out.
- That the scheme would deliver a number of community benefits and the developer was eager to deliver the scheme. It was important that the development started soon given the time limits on the grant.

The Committee asked a number of questions of the Officers and the registered speakers around the following issues:

- The housing delivery targets. Councillor Wood stated that the Mayor of London has set housing targets. The recent review showed that the Borough had fell short of meeting the targets, which had consequences for the Council .Consideration should be given to developments in the Isle of Dogs to see what was possible for site with a transport PTAL rating of 6.
- The impact on the existing business and affordability of the rents to businesses especially small local businesses. The Committee sought clarity about the type of businesses the applicant sought to attract and whether local businesses could be given priority, when allocating the business space.
- Officers confirmed that, since the business operators had already moved to Fairlie Court, none would be displaced.
- The applicant's speakers also reported that they had agreed leases with business operators on favourable terms. They also underlined

their commitment to seek a range of occupants, complimenting existing businesses, including small and independent businesses.

- It was also confirmed that, given the flexible nature of the proposed units, and the introduction of the new uses classes, it was possible that the units could be occupied by a range of types of businesses. In view of these discussions, the Committee proposed an additional condition requiring: the submission of a Marketing Strategy for the commercial units, with an obligation to exercise best endeavours to reach out to local businesses.
- The Committee also discussed the measures to mitigate any noise disturbance from aircraft noise, as detailed in the noise assessment. The Committee proposed an additional condition requiring compliance with noise mitigation measures
- It was also noted that the applicant had submitted details of their energy strategy. This has been reviewed by Officers and the GLA and they considered that this was acceptable. To ensure compliance with these measures, the Committee asked that an additional condition be added ensuring compliance with the Energy Strategy.
- Members also sought clarity regarding the improvements for the Cycle Super Highway given the expected increase in cycle trips. The Committee discussed the need for this, particularly in relation to improving the safety of cycle routes near the junction, and the difficulties in addressing this due to the complex constraints. The Committee also heard about TfL's indicative plans for such a scheme. Following the discussions, the Committee proposed amendments to the contributions for cycling as set out in resolution 2 below.
- The Committee also discussed the affordable housing grant. It was noted that, in line with the requirements, all of the social rent units, would be provided at London Affordable Rent. It was also noted that the grant funding had been confirmed, but was time sensitive given the grant conditions requiring that the scheme was delivered on site by a certain time.
- Members also sought clarification about the height of the scheme, the merits of changing the height and massing and how the development fitted in with the Bromley by Bow Master Plan.
- Officers further explained the key aspects of the assessment of the application as set out in the report. Consideration had been given to changing the height and massing, and placing this elsewhere in the scheme, but due to the negative implications of this, the application had declined to do this.
- The Committee also sought and received reassurances regarding the accessibility of the community café, the pocket park and the courtyard to all residents, with opportunities for the courtyard to be closed at night.
- Other issues discussed included: clarification of the nature of the community café.

Councillor Kevin Brady **moved** and Councillor Val Whitehead **seconded** additional conditions as set out below in resolution 2 and 4 below.

On a unanimous vote the Committee **RESOLVED**:

1. That, subject to any direction by the Mayor of London, planning permission is **GRANTED** at Site at Stroudley Walk, London, E3 3EW (PA/20/01696) for the following development:
 - Demolition of existing buildings and structures and redevelopment to provide four buildings, including a tall building of up to 25 storeys, comprising residential units and flexible commercial space (A1/A2/A3/B1) at ground floor level and alterations to façade of retained building, together with associated ancillary floorspace, cycle and car parking, landscaping and highway works.
2. Subject to the prior completion of a legal agreement to secure the planning obligations set out in the Committee report, and the following amendments agreed at the Committee meeting.
 - Conditions D and E of the financial contributions be combined to provide £270k for improvements to the Super Cycle Highway on Bow Road, with a cascade method to ensure that, in the event the improvements were not viable, this contribution be allocated to towards the TFL Cycle Hire Docking station.
3. That the Corporate Director of Place is delegated the power to negotiate the legal agreement. If within three months of the resolution the legal agreement has not been completed, the Corporate Director for Place is delegated power to refuse planning permission.
4. That the Corporate Director of Place is delegated the power to impose conditions and informatives to address the matters set out in the report, in addition to the conditions agreed at the meeting regarding
 - Compliance with the Energy Strategy.
 - Compliance with Noise Mitigation Measures.
 - Submission of a Marketing Strategy for the commercial units, with an obligation to exercise best endeavours to reach out to local businesses.

The meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Kevin Brady
Strategic Development Committee