



STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

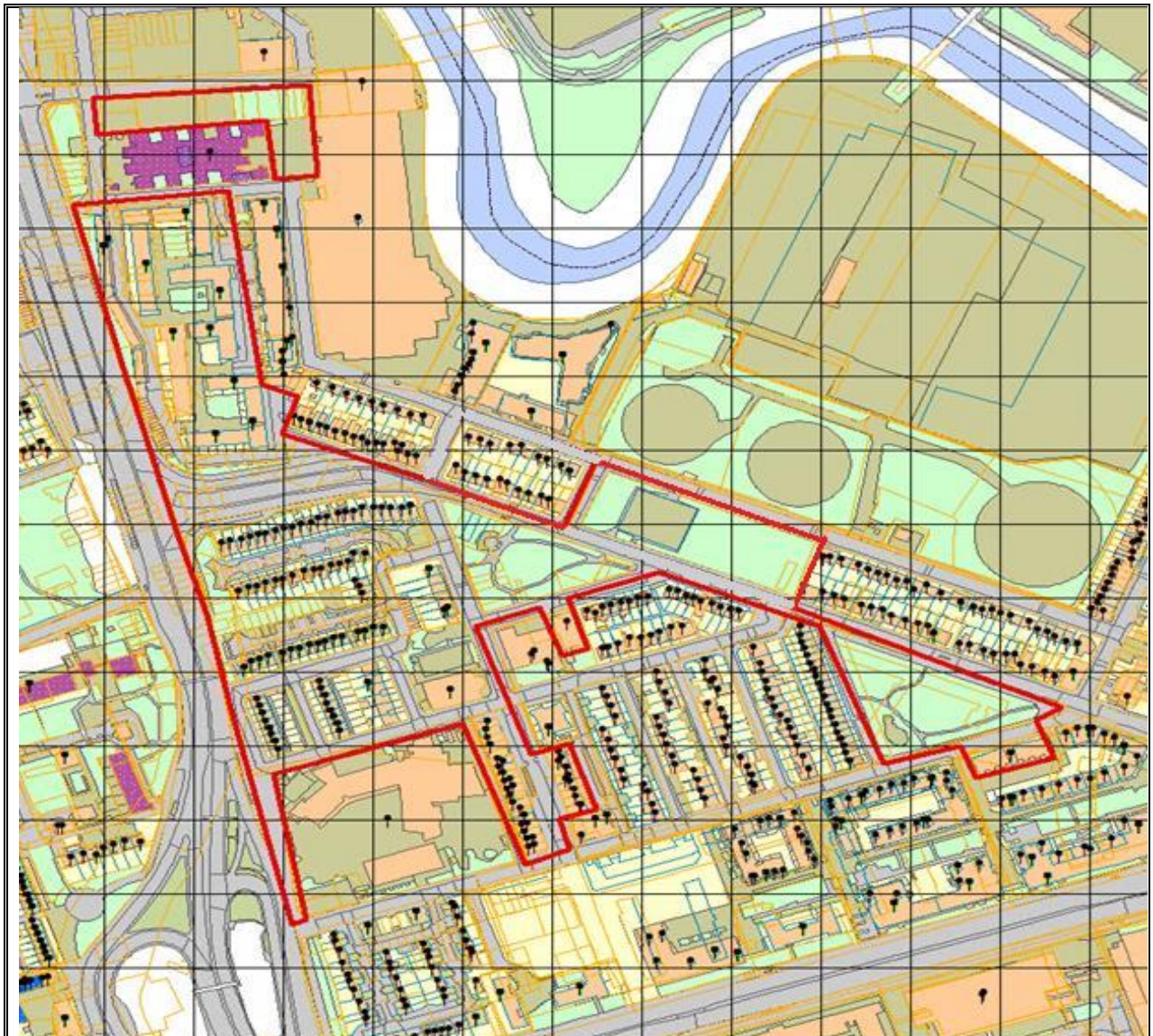
18/08/2021

Report of the Corporate Director of Place Classification: Unrestricted

Pre-application presentation

Reference	PF/20/00108
Site	Aberfeldy Estate, Abbott Road, Land to the north of East India Dock Road (A13), London, E14.
Ward	Lansbury
Proposal	Redevelopment of site to provide circa 1600 new homes, new employment space, a new high street, repurposing of the Abbott Road underpass and new and improved open space.
Applicant	Poplar Harca and EcoWorld London (Aberfeldy Village LLP/The LLP)
Architect	Levitt Bernstein – Masterplan Morris and Co – Phase A Landscape Architects – LDA Design
Agent	DP9
Case Officer	Nelupa Malik
Key dates	Pre-application request submitted May 2020 Pre-app discussions began in May 2020 CADAP 1 review (Masterplan) 12 th July 2021 CADAP 2 review (Phase A) 9 th August 2021.

SITE PLAN



Site Plan



Grade II Listed Building



Conservation Area



Neighbourhood Centre



Planning Applications Site Map PF/20/00108

This site map displays the Planning Application Site Boundary and the extent of the area within which neighbouring occupiers / owners were consulted as part of the Planning Application Process



TOWER HAMLETS
London
Borough of
Tower Hamlets

Date: 10 August 2021

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance promote early engagement between developers and Local Planning Authorities at the pre-application stage, prior to submitting a planning application. The Council welcomes pre-application discussions and has a well-established process to facilitate this. In March 2019 the Council's Development and Strategic Development Committees considered a draft protocol for pre-application presentations. The protocol is now incorporated in the Committee Terms of Reference. The Council's updated Statement of Community Involvement also highlights the importance of pre-application engagement and the role of elected members and local communities in this stage of the planning process.
- 1.2 This report updates the Strategic Development Committee on progress made and issues identified in respect of pre-application discussions for the proposed redevelopment of the Aberfeldy Estate..

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Pre-application advice is being sought for the emerging masterplan for the estate redevelopment of the Aberfeldy Estate consisting of the demolition of existing buildings and the erection of 23 buildings/plots to provide 1608 residential units, new employment space, a new high street, repurposing of the Abbott Road underpass and new and improved open space.



Figure 1 – Proposed Masterplan.

- 2.2 The pre-application scheme initially proposed upto 2000 units and the possible relocation of Culloden Primary School, however the proposed number of units have been reduced to circa 1600 units as a result of on-going pre-application discussions. It is also no longer proposed to include Culloden Primary School within the application boundary however this, is likely to be revisited in the future.
- 2.3 Outline planning permission was granted in 2012 under planning permission PA/11/02716 for the comprehensive mixed-use redevelopment of the Aberfeldy Estate to provide a maximum of 1176 new homes in 15 new blocks ranging between 2 and 10-storeys in height and the provision of 1743sqm of retail space (Use Classes A1, A2, A3 and A5) and 1,786 community and cultural uses (Use Class D1) together with a temporary marketing suite (407sqm), energy centre, new and improved public open space and public realm, semi-basement, ground and on-street vehicular and cycle parking and temporary works or structures and associated utilities/services. This consent was subsequently amended in 2015 under planning permission PA/15/00002. It was anticipated that the consent would be built out in 6 phases.
- 2.4 Phases 1 and 2 of the extant planning permission have been completed and phase 3 is currently under construction. It is anticipated that Phase 3 would be completed by May 2022. On completion of Phase 3 a total of 901 units would have been delivered with 275 units of the extant planning permission yet to be delivered in Phases 4-6. Phases 4-6 which included 134 existing residential units to be demolished will not be implemented and will be replaced with the new emerging masterplan. Figure 2 below provides an aerial view of the site which identifies Phases 1-3 and unimplemented Phases 4-6 of the extant planning permission and the application boundary for the emerging masterplan.

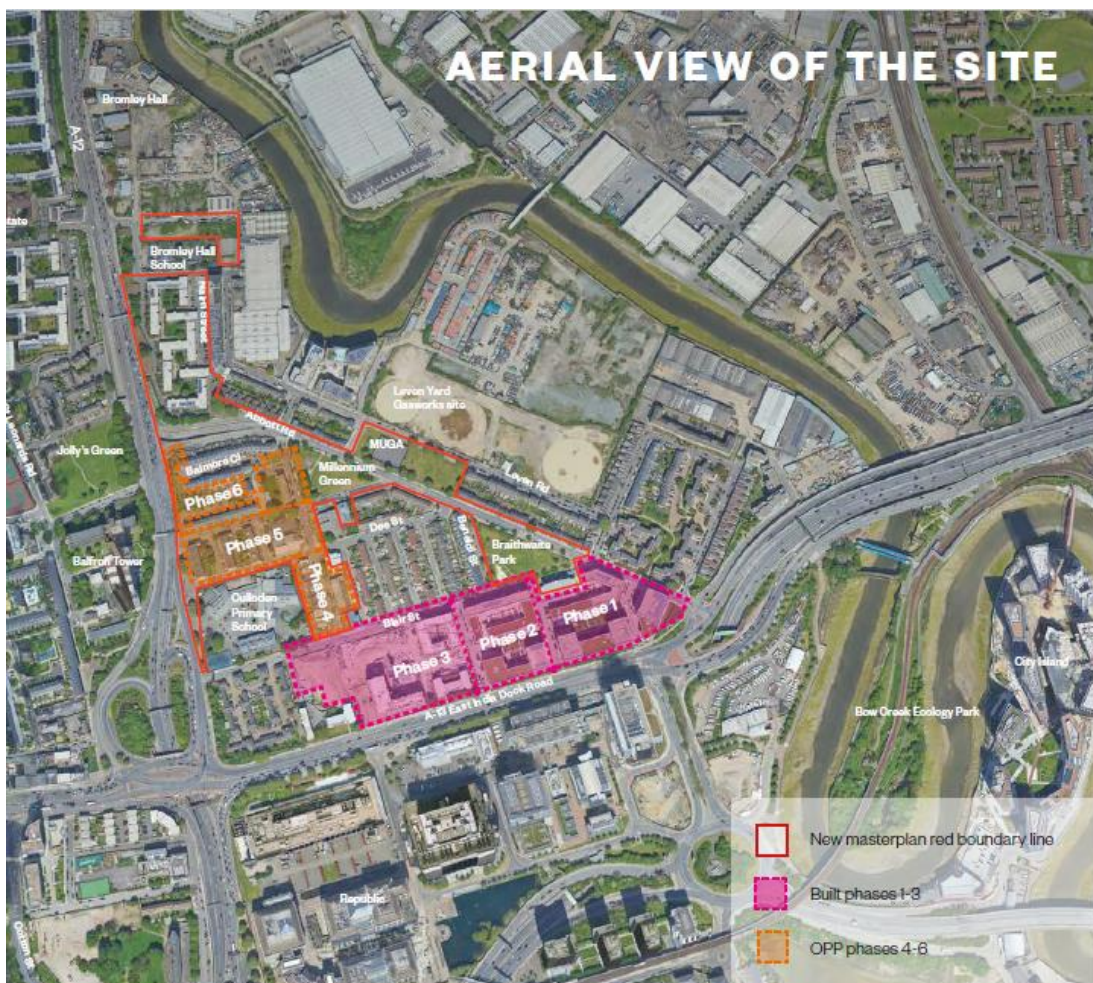


Figure 2 – Aerial View of the Site.

- 2.5 The emerging masterplan for the Aberfeldy Estate incorporates a new red-line boundary which excludes Phases 1-3 of the extant planning permission. Notwithstanding the exclusion of the built out phases, a notable difference in the red-line boundary between the proposed emerging masterplan and extant planning permission is the inclusion of the Nairn Street Estate and part of the Bromley Hall School site. Subsequently there are 330 existing homes comprising a mixture of Tenanted (255 homes) and Leasehold (75 homes) that would be demolished as part of the proposals.
- 2.6 The new masterplan will be a standalone hybrid planning application to be delivered in 4 phases comprising Phases A-D. In addition to the residential component, it is proposed to deliver 2767m2 of new retail space to be provided as part of a revitalised Aberfeldy High Street, 1921m2 of new workspace, 3757m2 of new public open space, the pedestrianisation and repurposing of the Abbott Road vehicular underpass and upgrades to existing public open spaces; Millennium Green, Leven Road Open Space and Braithwaite Park. The phasing plan and construction programme for each phase is indicated in Figure 3 below:

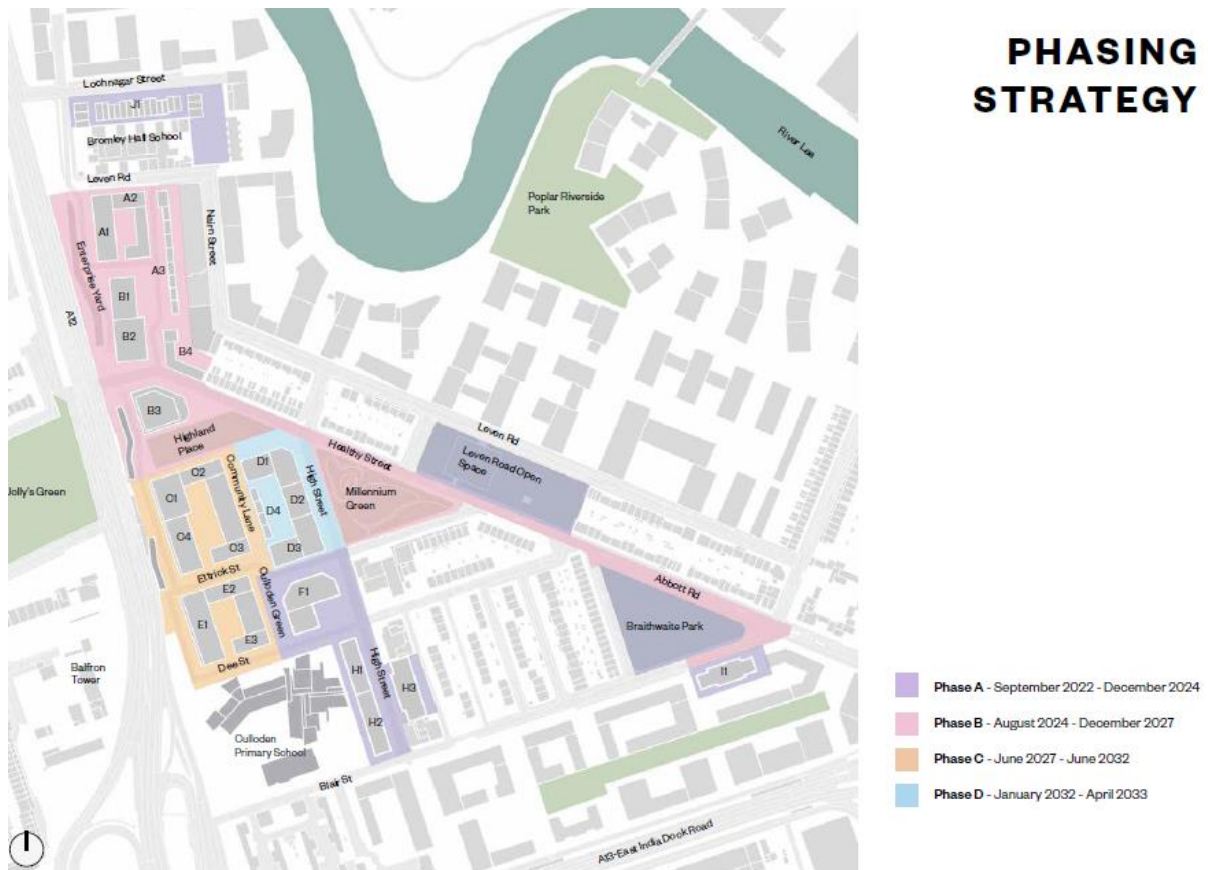


Figure 3 – Phasing Strategy.

- 2.7 Phase A is expected to be the detailed element of the proposal and will include the redevelopment of Aberfeldy Street Neighbourhood Centre. Phase A is anticipated to deliver 280 homes and comprise of four plots; Plot F, H, I and J. An overview of Phase A is indicated in Figure 4 below:

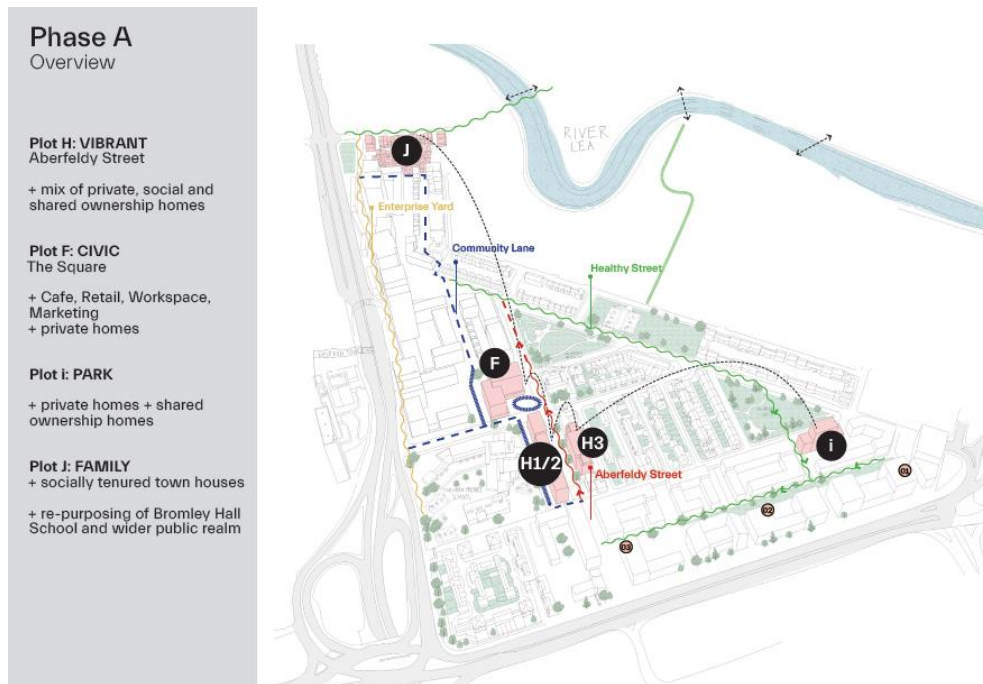


Figure 4 – Phase A Overview.

2.8 Underpinning the layout for the emerging masterplan are six ‘threads’ which are summarised as follows:

- **Healthy Street** – Focuses on Abbott Road as being a green spine that connects outdoor spaces and encourages a healthy lifestyle and prioritises pedestrians and cyclists over the motor vehicle.
- **Aberfeldy High Street** – Replacement of the existing High Street and Neighbourhood Centre with a new pedestrian friendly High Street with residential above. Landscaping would be integrated into the streetscape and it is intended for non-residential uses at street level to activate the public realm.
- **Enterprise Yard** – Taking inspiration from Poplar Works, Enterprise Yard is proposed to be a hard surfaced route with a yard character with low rise new workspace buildings providing opportunities for businesses to spill out onto the street. Where residential buildings face onto the yard, it is proposed to provide these buildings with double height space at the ground floor to allow further activation. Enterprise Yard will be located along the far western part of the site and directly adjacent to the A12.
- **Community Lane** – A new route through the site that will sit between Enterprise Yard and Aberfeldy High Street. It is intended to be domestic and family orientated in character comprising residential units including family homes with entrances along the lane activating the street.
- **East West Links** – The masterplan seeks to improve east-west links throughout the masterplan by tree-lining east-west streets to improve permeability.
- **Blue Loop** – The masterplan seeks to improve connection to the River Lea to encourage its use as a leisure route.

2.9 The remainder of the site will incorporate the repurposed pedestrianised Abbott Road underpass, upgraded Dee Street underpass, new areas of public realm, areas comprising

designated and informal children's play provision, new public open space identified as 'Highlands Place' and a Civic Square identified as 'All Hallows Square'.

3. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 3.1 The pre-application site comprises the Aberfeldy Estate, which is bound by the A12 to the west, the A13 (East India Dock Road) to the south and Abbott Road to the north east. Further east and beyond Abbott Road lies the River Lea which is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. Abbott Road is the principal link through the site, connecting the A12 and A13.
- 3.2 The estate is predominantly residential in character with post war housing and 1970's infill council homes across the estate, most of which range between 2-4 storeys in height. Phases 1-3 of the extant planning permission is nearing completion with buildings heights ranging between 5-11-storeys. The designated Aberfeldy Street Neighbourhood Centre acts as an active spine through the estate, where the main social, community and retail provision is situated.
- 3.3 To the west of the site lies Culloden Primary School and the underground subway crossing under the A12 towards the Brownfield Estate and Grade II* listed building Balforn Tower.
- 3.4 The area contains a number of green spaces, notably, Millennium Green, Leven Road Open Space and Braithwaite Park.
- 3.5 The immediate surrounding context is expected to undergo significant regeneration and transformation with several residential-led mixed use developments coming forward following the grant of planning permission. Namely, Ailsa Wharf which has consent for 785 new homes, Islay Wharf which has consent for 133 new homes, the Former Poplar Bus Depot at Leven Road which has consent for 530 units and the Leven Road Gasworks site which has consent for up to 2,800 new homes.
- 3.6 The site has the following planning designations and site constraints.
- Lower Lea Valley Opportunity Area (Poplar Riverside Opportunity Area)
 - Sub-Area 3: Lower Lea Valley
 - Aberfeldy Street Neighbourhood Centre
 - Poplar Riverside Housing Zone
 - Flood Zones 2 and 3
 - Green Grid Buffer Zone
 - New Green Grid Buffer Zone
 - Archaeological Priority Area Tier 3
 - Area of Deficiency of Access to Nature: East India and Lanbsbury
- 3.7 Nearby Borough Designated Views include the following:
- East India Dock Road (E) towards Balforn Tower.
 - Langdon Park towards Balforn Tower.
- 3.8 The site also lies within close proximity of the following designated heritage assets:
- Balforn Tower – Grade II* listed building and Borough Landmark.
 - Carradale House – Grade II listed.
 - Glenkerry House – Grade II listed.
 - Former Bromley Hall School – Grade II listed.
 - Balforn Tower Conservation Area

- Church of St Michael and All Angels – Grade II listed.
- East India Dock House, Former Financial Times Printworks – Grade II* listed.
- Plaque on Modern Dock Wall Facing West – Grade II listed.
- War Memorial, St Leonard's Road – Grade II listed.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (Notable Applications Only)

4.1 **PA/15/01826/P3** - Submission of reserved matters pursuant to Condition 1 (details of siting, layout, scale, design and external appearance of the buildings, the means of access thereto and landscaping of the site), and partial approval of details pursuant to Condition 43 - (titled reserved matters further information) Sub-sections (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (h) and (i) and partial discharge of Condition 25 (land contamination) Sub-Sections (a), (b), and (c) for the development of Phase 3 of the Aberfeldy New Village Outline Planning Permission (PA/15/00002) approved in June 2015 comprising demolition of Arapiles House, Athenia House, Jones House, Adams House, Sam March House, Theseus House and Trident House and creation of four residential blocks between 3 to 10 storeys, with a total of 344 new dwellings (21 x studio, 122 x 1 bed, 162 x 2 bed, 30 x 3 bed, 4 x 4 bed, 3 x 5 bed and 2 x 6 bed), a health centre facility, a pharmacy, a community/youth centre facility, retail spaces (618sq.m) and energy centre, public open space, car parks, cycle parking and new public open space, car parks, cycle parking and temporary works or structures and associated utilities/services required by the development. Permitted 13/11/2015.

4.2 **PA/15/0002/S** - Minor Material amendment through variation of conditions No 3 (Approved Parameters Plans), 4 (Phasing Plan), 5 (Total Floor Space Areas) and 6 (Phase-by-phase Floor Space Areas), of Outline Planning Permission granted 20th June 2012 (Ref: PA/11/02716) "For the mixed-use redevelopment of the existing Aberfeldy estate comprising:

Demolition of 297 existing residential units and 1,990 sqm of non-residential floorspace, including shops (use class A1), professional services (use class A2), food and drink (use class A3 and A5), residential institution (use class C2), storage (use class B8), community, education and cultural (use class D1); and

Creation of 1,176 residential units (Use Class C3) in 15 new blocks between 2 and 10 storeys in height plus up to 1,743sqm retail space (Use Class A1), professional services (Use Class A2), food and drink (Use Classes A3 and A5) and 1,256sqm community and cultural uses (Use Class D1), health centre (Use Class D1), together with a temporary marketing suite (407sqm), energy centre, new and improved public open space and public realm, semi-basement, ground and on-street vehicular and cycle parking and temporary works or structures and associated utilities/services.". Permitted 15/07/2015.

4.3 **PA/13/01844/P2** - Submission of reserved matters to condition 1 (details of siting, layout, scale, design and external appearance of the building, the means of access thereto and landscaping of the site) and condition 43 (reserved matters further information) for the development of Phase 2 of the Aberfeldy New Village Outline Planning Permission (PA/11/2716) approved on 20 June 2012 comprising demolition of Helen Mackay House, Jervis Bay House, Gaze House and Richie House and creation of two residential blocks between 4 to 8 storeys, with a total of 219 new dwellings (16 x studio; 97 x 1 bed; 92 x 2 bed; 7 x 3 bed; 2 x 4 bed; 5 x 5 bed), new public open space, car parks, cycle parking and temporary works of structures and associated utilities/services required by the development. Permitted 27/03/2014.

4.4 **PA/11/03548/P1** - Erection of three blocks between 4 and 10 storeys on the corner of Abbott Road and East India Dock Road to provide 342 new residential units, 352 sq.m. new retail floorspace (Use Classes A1 and A3), a marketing suite of 407 sq.m. (Use Class A2), semi-

basement and ground floor parking, cycle parking, landscaped public open space and private amenity space and other associated works. Proposal constitutes Phase 1 of application PA/11/02716. Permitted 20/06/2012.

4.5 **PA/11/02716/PO** – Outline planning application (all matters reserved) for the mixed-use redevelopment of the existing Aberfeldy estate comprising:

Demolition of 297 existing residential units and 1,990 sq m of non-residential floorspace, including shops (use class A1), professional services (use class A2), food and drink (use class A3 and A5), residential institution (use class C2), storage (use class B8), community, education and cultural (use class D1); and Creation of 1,176 residential units (Use Class C3) in 15 new blocks between 2 and 10 storeys in height plus 1,743sqm retail space (Use Class A1), professional services (Use Class A2), food and drink (Use Classes A3 and A5) and 1,786 community and cultural uses (Use Class D1) together with a temporary marketing suite (407sqm), energy centre, new and improved public open space and public realm, semi-basement, ground and on-street vehicular and cycle parking and temporary works or structures and associated utilities/services. Permitted 20/06/2012.

5. PUBLICITY AND ENGAGEMENT

5.1 The Applicant undertook a resident's ballot in October 2020 which achieved a 91.1% turnout with 93.1% residents in favour of the proposals.

5.2 The Applicant commenced a 53 day public consultation strategy on 22nd July 2021 which is due to expire on the 12th September 2021. The public consultation strategy involves a mixture of printed public information packs delivered to 4898 residents, access and updates to an online consultation website (activated November/December 2020), surveys and feedback forms, a community forum intending to take place in September with attendance from Council Officers and resident stakeholder group meetings. In addition, public consultation materials, including a model of the masterplan will be on display in the newly refurbished Poplar Harca shop on Aberfeldy Street. Other forms of public engagement will include walking tours and drop-in surgeries throughout July/August.

5.3 The Applicant has engaged in 15 pre-application meetings with Officers and has had two pre-application meetings with the GLA.

5.4 The masterplan proposals were presented to the Council's Conservation and Design Advisory Panel (CADAP) on 12th July 2021. Comments from CADAP members included the following:

- The panel commented on the clear and strong urban design principles that lay at the heart of the masterplan, noting that the 4 fingers running north to south were an extremely positive move. Panel members commented that the masterplan was believable, credible and well thought through, particularly the ambition of the proposed streets that lie at the heart of the proposals.
- The panel stated that the east/west route and connection through to Jolly's Green was of extreme importance as it acts as the justification for the height strategy across the site.
- The panel were keen to point out that the commitment and delivery of everything within the red line boundary would be essential to delivering a successful scheme.

Panel members highlighted to the client that whilst the aspirations of the proposals were exciting these must not be watered down through the process.

- The panel noted that the whilst the height of the taller buildings was good, the lower buildings felt a little monolithic. Whilst the previous phases were buildings of 4-6 storeys, nothing proposed on this masterplan would be less than 8 storeys in height. The panel felt that perhaps there was just too much being proposed on site with the applicants trying to squeeze too much in. Panel members thought it would be interesting to respond to the wider context and play with a variety of heights across the masterplan area.
- The panel thought that a simple material palette across the masterplan area would be fantastic ensuring that where there were elements of embellishment they would then really stand out within the landscape/public realm.
- Panel members questioned location for the tallest building noting that perhaps this should be the northern most building. There was a feeling that bringing the tallest element into the underpass could give a lot more in terms of active frontage, adding to the overall safety and activity at ground level. They commented that moving the building to the north would also address the view from Langdon Park in which the church spire and the tallest element of the proposals have an awkward relationship.
- The panel were concerned about the potential number of single aspect units that were proposed facing onto the A12. They noted that this was a projection but suggested that the applicant explore the potential of dual aspect and deck access within the blocks where single aspect units would be facing onto this major transport route.
- The panel expressed an interest in better understanding the building typologies on Community Lane as well as how the courtyard spaces would work in terms of daylight and sunlight.
- The panel commented that Enterprise Yard looked a little small and thin and were keen to emphasise that detail is the crucial element in the success of the public realm and delivery of play space.
- The panel were keen to understand about the carbon ambitions for the site.
- The panel were keen to understand how the proposals would enhance the setting of Balfron Tower.

5.5 Members are advised that a second presentation to CADAP is due to take place on 9th August 2021 which will focus specifically on Phase A of the masterplan.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

6.1 The Development Plan comprises:

- The London Plan 2021 (*hereafter referred to as the London Plan*)
- Managing Growth and Sharing the Benefits – Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 (2020) (*hereafter referred to as the Local Plan*).

6.2 Other policy and guidance documents relevant to the proposal are:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (updated 2021)
- National Design Guide (2019)
- BRE – Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight (2011)
- Mayor of London: Better Homes for Local People – The Mayor’s Good Practice Guide to Estate Regeneration (2018).
- Mayor of London: Energy Assessment Guidance (2018)
- Mayor of London: Housing SPG (updated 2017)
- Mayor of London: Affordable Housing and Viability SPG (2017)
- Mayor of London: Social Infrastructure SPG (2015)
- Mayor of London: Shaping Neighbourhoods Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive Environment SPG (2015)
- Mayor of London: Sustainable Design and Construction SPG (2014)
- Mayor of London: Shaping Neighborhoods: Play and Informal Recreation SPG (2012)
- Lower Lea Valley Opportunity Area Planning Framework (2007)
- LBTH High Density Living SPD (2020)
- LBTH Planning Obligations SPD (2021)
- LBTH Development Viability SPD (2017)
- LBTH Balfron Tower Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2007).
- LBTH Leaside Area Action Plan (Leaside AAP) Regulation 18 Consultation Version (April 2021)

7. PLANNING ISSUES

7.1 The following key planning issues have been identified at the pre-application stage.

Land Use

7.2 The site is located within Sub-area 3: Lower Lea Valley as designated by the Local Plan. The Lower Lea Valley sub-area is located on the eastern side of the borough and forms part of the wider Mayor of London’s Lower Lea Valley Opportunity Area which stretches north comprising the boroughs of Newham and Hackney.

7.3 The sub-area is a collection of vibrant and distinctive town centres, transport interchanges and residential areas. The sub-area comprises six distinct character places of which the pre-application site falls within the character place of Poplar Riverside.

7.4 Policy SD1 Part A of the London Plan seeks to ensure that Opportunity Areas fully realise their growth and regeneration potential by, amongst other things, under criterion (5) seeking to ensure that Opportunity Areas maximise the delivery of affordable housing and create

mixed and inclusive communities. Table 2.1 that accompanies this policy identifies that the Poplar Riverside Opportunity Area has the potential to deliver an indicative capacity of 9,000 new homes and 3,000 jobs.

- 7.5 Objective GG4 of the London Plan emphasises that there is a pressing need for more homes to be delivered in London and promotes the creation of mixed and inclusive communities that offer homes of the highest quality of design and meet identified needs.
- 7.6 Policy H1 of the London Plan seeks to amongst other things, optimise the potential for housing delivery on all suitable and available brownfield sites through Development Plans and planning decisions. The policy sets ten-year targets for net housing completions for each Local Planning Authority. For Tower Hamlets, Table 4.1 sets a ten-year target of 34,730 net housing completions covering the period between 2019/20 – 2028/29.
- 7.7 The Local Plan sets the following strategic objectives for the Lower Lea Valley:
- a. Improve strategic connections to overcome the physical barriers to movement created by the A12, A13 and the waterways.
 - b. Deliver the Lea River Park (including the Leaway) to provide a network of interconnected water and open spaces, green walking and cycling routes and improve access to and along the River Lea.
 - c. Improve local connections by creating a street pattern that increases permeability for ease of pedestrian and cyclist movement.
 - d. Support existing and new neighbourhood centres by improving accessibility to them to ensure they act as the civic heart of surrounding communities.
 - e. Contribute towards the delivery of new affordable homes and community facilities through Poplar Riverside Housing Zone regeneration.
 - f. Optimise former industrial/employment land and protect designated industrial areas whilst sensitively integrating industrial activities into their site context.
- 7.8 Policy S.H1 of the Local Plan commits to securing the delivery of at least 58,965 new homes across the Borough (equating to at least 3,931 new homes per year) between 2016 and 2031.
- 7.9 Site Allocation LS-A (Aberfeldy Estate) of the emerging Leaside AAP identifies residential, community, retail and other town centre uses and public open space as being suitable land uses for this site.
- 7.10 The provision of new housing would positively contribute to the Borough's housing stock, noting that there is an acute local and national demand for increased housing. The principle of the housing-led regeneration of this site would be acceptable in land use terms subject to the Applicant demonstrating compliance with relevant Development Plan policies in respect of matters relating to including but not limited to; design and heritage, affordable housing and housing mix, amenity, transport and environment.

Housing

- 7.11 Chapter 4 (Housing) of the London Plan contains the suite of strategic policies that relate specifically to housing.
- 7.12 Policy H4 (Part A) of the London Plan sets a strategic target for 50% of all new homes delivered across London to be genuinely affordable.
- 7.13 Policy H8 of the London Plan which relates to the loss of existing housing and estate redevelopment requires the loss of existing housing to be replaced by new housing at existing or higher densities with at least the equivalent level of overall floorspace. Part D of the policy goes on to require that where demolition of affordable housing is part of an estate redevelopment programme, development should not be permitted unless it is replaced by an equivalent amount of affordable housing floorspace. Part E of the policy requires all development proposals that include the demolition and replacement of affordable housing to follow the Viability Tested Route and should seek to provide an uplift in affordable housing in addition to the replacement affordable housing floorspace.
- 7.14 Policy S.H1(2) of the Local Plan states that development will be expected to contribute towards the creation of mixed and balanced communities that respond to local and strategic need.
- 7.15 Policy D.H2 of the Local Plan requires development to maximise the provision of affordable housing in accordance with a 70% affordable rent and 30% intermediate tenure split based on the number of habitable rooms. Policy D.H2 also sets locally specific targets for unit mix and sizes.
- 7.16 The scheme currently proposes to provide 1608 homes of which 1181 units would be for private sale, 81 units in the intermediate tenure and 346 units as affordable rent. Details of the intermediate product have not been provided so far in pre-application discussions.
- 7.17 The proposed unit mix against policy D.H2 is set out below in the table below:

		Market Housing			Intermediate			Affordable Rented		
Unit Size	Total Units	Units	As a %	Policy Target %	Units	As a %	Policy Target %	Units	As a %	Policy Target %
Studio	88	88	7.5%	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
1-bed	612	480	40.6%	30%	45	55.6%	15%	87	25.1%	25%
2-bed	709	587	49.7%	50%	36	44.4%	40%	86	24.9%	30%
3-bed	166	26	2.2%	20%	0	0%	45%	140	40.5%	30%
4-bed	30	/	/		0	0%		30	8.6%	15%
5-bed	0	/	/	/	/	/	/	0	/	/
6-bed	3	/	/	/	/	/	/	3	0.9%	/
Total	1608	1181	100%	100%	81	100%	100%	346	100%	100%

Table 1 – Unit and tenure mix against Policy D.H2.

- 7.18 Based on the above, the scheme does not propose a policy compliant unit mix across all tenures. Within the unit mix, 7.5% of the total units will comprise studio flats for which there is no policy requirement.
- 7.19 In the market housing tenure there would be an over provision of 1-bed units proposing 40.6% against a policy target of 30% and a substantial under provision of family housing with only 2.2% comprising 3-bed units and no 4-bed units against a policy target of 20%.
- 7.20 In the intermediate tenure, there would be a substantial over provision of 1-bed units equating to 55.6% against a policy target of 15% and over provision of 2-bed units equating to 44.4% against a policy target of 40%. No family units are proposed against a policy target of 40% in this tenure.
- 7.21 In the affordable rent tenure, there would be an under provision of 2-bed units proposing 24.9% against a policy target of 30%, an over provision of 3-bed units proposing 40.5% against a policy target of 30% and an under provision of 4-bed units against a policy target of 15%. However, it is noted that the scheme proposes to provide 9.0% 6-bed units and the total provision of family housing combined equates to 50% of the affordable rented tenure.
- 7.22 Officers have not been provided with a breakdown of the existing unit mix to be demolished as part of the proposals to fully understand the context which has predicated the current proposed unit and tenure mix. Officers have requested this information to provide detailed feedback on the proposed unit and tenure mix.
- 7.23 The affordable housing offer is proposed at 35% based on habitable rooms and 26.5% based on the number of units. 17% of this will be re-provision whilst 18% will be an uplift in affordable housing. This has been the only affordable housing offer proposed to date in pre-application discussions and is specific to the latest design proposals. The scheme seeks to provide 4447 habitable rooms of which 1534 would represent affordable equating to the 35% proposed. The tenure split within the affordable housing element will 87%:13% in favour of Affordable Rent and therefore is not a policy compliant tenure split. As an Estate Renewal scheme, the planning application must be accompanied by a Financial Viability Appraisal (FVA). Officers have undertaken initial viability discussions with the Applicant and review of the Applicant's initial FVA suggests that the scheme will result in a deficit. The offer of 35% affordable housing will therefore be a commercial decision undertaken by the Applicant.
- 7.24 The indicative number of units anticipated to be delivered in each phase is set out below:

Phase	Total Number of Units	Number of Private	Number of Affordable	% Tenure Split Based on Habitable Rooms.
Phase A	281	182	99	52% Private 48% Affordable
Phase B	556	365	191	60% Private 40% Affordable
Phase C	587	464	123	72% Private 28% Affordable
Phase D	184	170	14	89% Private 11% Affordable

Table 2 – Number of units per phase.

- 7.25 In terms of housing standards and quality, details of internal space standards and private amenity space for each dwelling type have not been provided in the pre-application discussions. The development would be required to accord with the space standards set out in Policy D6 of the London Plan which amongst other things sets out requirements for the gross internal area (GIA) of all new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy, as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage, and floor-to-ceiling heights.
- 7.26 Officers understand that the scheme as it stands proposes 50% dual-aspect units. Officers have therefore expressed concerns that this is quite low and that opportunities to maximise the level of dual-aspect units should be sought.
- 7.27 In terms of communal amenity space based on the current proposal the scheme would be required to provide 1648m² of communal amenity space. Earlier iterations of the proposals suggested that communal amenity space would be provided on podiums and roof terraces. Officers have advised that communal amenity space must not be double counted with areas of public realm, children's play space and public open space.

Design and Heritage

- 7.28 Objective GG2 (Making the Best Use of Land) of the London Plan refers to the need to create successful, sustainable mixed-use places that make the best use of land by ensuring that those involved in planning and development apply a design-led approach to determine the optimum development capacity of a sites.
- 7.29 Chapter 3 (Design) of the London Plan contains the suite of policies that are intended to promote good design of buildings and surrounding spaces whilst Chapter 7 (Heritage and Culture) contains the suite of policies that are concerned with the protection of heritage assets.
- 7.30 Policies S.DH1, D.DH2 and D.DH6 of the Local Plan deal with good design and the assessment of tall buildings. Policy S.DH1 notably requires developments to meet the highest standards of design, layout and construction which respects and positively responds to its context, townscape, landscape and public realm at different spatial scales. To this end, amongst other things, development must be of an appropriate scale, height, mass, bulk and form in its site and context.
- 7.31 Policy S.DH3 of the Local Plan seeks to protect heritage assets and their settings and emphasises proposals would only be permitted where amongst other things, they safeguard the significance of the heritage asset, including its setting, character, fabric or identity.
- 7.32 Policy D.DH4 of the Tower Hamlets Local Plan requires developments to positively contribute to views and skylines that are components of the character of the 24 places in Tower Hamlets. Development will be required to demonstrate how amongst other things it preserves or enhances the prominence of borough-designated landmarks and the skyline of strategic importance in the borough-designated views.
- 7.33 Policy D.DH6, Part 1 of the Local Plan sets out a number of criteria with which developments comprising tall buildings must comply. Part 2 of Policy D.DH6 directs tall buildings towards Tall Building Zones (TBZ) whilst Part 3 of the policy states that outside these zones, tall building proposals will be supported provided they meet the criteria set out in Part 1 and can demonstrate how they will:

- a. Be located in areas with high levels of public transport accessibility within town centres and/or opportunity areas.
- b. Address deficiencies in the provision of strategic infrastructure.
- c. Significantly strengthen the legibility of a Major, District or Neighbourhood Centre or mark the location of a transport interchange or other location of civic or visual significance within the area, and
- d. Not undermine the prominence and/or integrity of existing landmark buildings and tall building zones.

7.34 The masterplan strategy initially sought to incorporate a number of towers running on a north-south axis adjacent to the A12. Two scenarios were initially proposed with Scenario A (retaining Culloden School site) and Scenario B (Including Culloden School site). Currently only Scenario A is being pursued and therefore there is currently no intention to relocate Culloden School. Scenario A initially proposed 5 towers ranging between 14-28 storeys whilst Scenario B proposed 6 towers ranging from 14-28 storeys.

7.35 The site falls outside a designated Tall Building Zone (TBZ) and lies to the north of Blackwall TBZ and to the north-west of Leamouth TBZ. Most of the buildings across the masterplan are “tall buildings” as defined by the Local Plan. Officers have advised the Applicant that the tall buildings outside of a TBZ must be justified against criteria outlined in part 3 of Policy D.DH6 of the Local Plan.

7.36 In earlier pre-application meetings, Officers have expressed concerns of the height and massing of the proposal and its impact on the setting of the Balfour Tower Grade II* listed building. The Applicant has now reduced the height of the two towers (Buildings E1 and C4) opposite Balfour Tower and this move has been welcomed by Officers. The current height and massing strategy is indicated in figure 5 below:

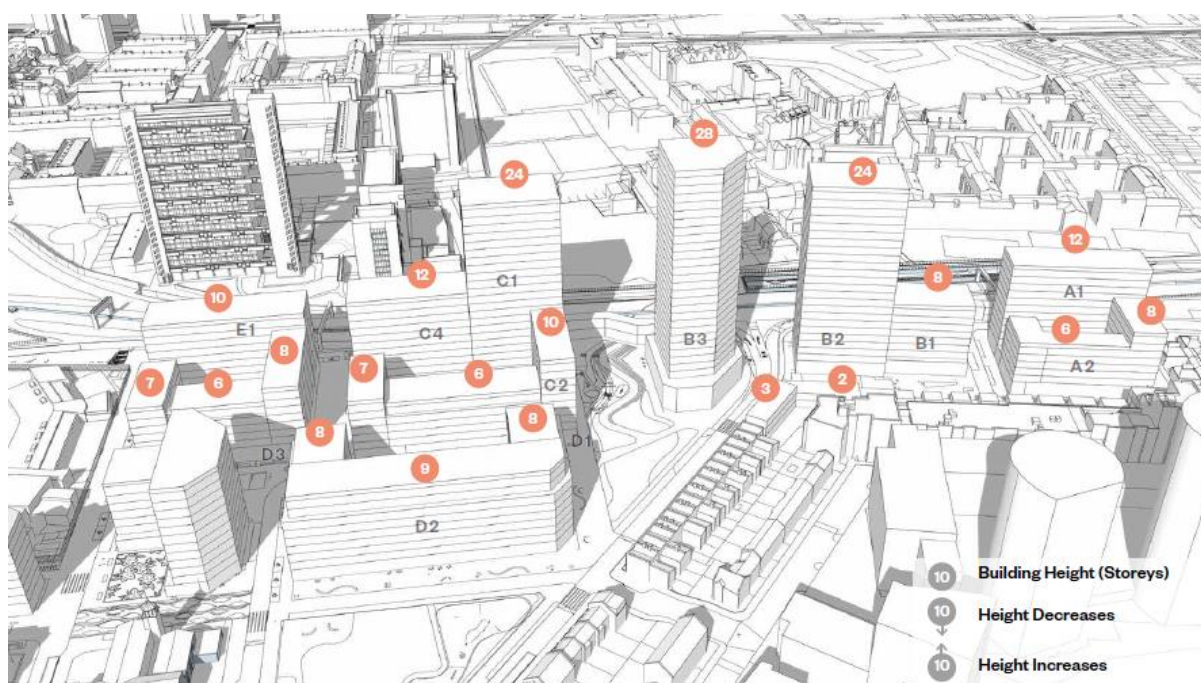


Figure 5 – Proposed Masterplan Height and Massing Strategy.

- 7.37 The Applicant considers that the scheme would, deliver strategic infrastructure in the form of a new public open space area identified as Highlands Place in the Masterplan and the repurposing of the vehicular underpass. Officers have advised the Applicant that greater certainty is required that the repurposing of the underpass is deliverable as Transport for London (TFL) have yet to support the principle of the closure of the underpass and its repurposing for pedestrians and cyclists only.
- 7.38 Highlands Place is intended to mark the tallest building in the masterplan at 28-storeys (Building B3). Officers have advised that the underpass should provide appropriate levels of activation, be designed in and safe and secure manner and exit through to Jolly's Green. Officers also consider that Jolly's Green should be included within the application boundary.



Figure 6 – CGI of Highlands Place.

- 7.39 Phase A (Plot J of Phase A) of the masterplan includes part of the Grade II listed Bromley Hall School site and a strip of land directly north of the former school's boundary. Careful consideration would need to be had to the impact of buildings on the setting of the school building.

Plot J
Proposed Arrangement



Figure 7 – Plot J

7.40 In terms of the appearance and architectural language for the masterplan, broadly speaking the scheme seeks to reflect the architectural expression of Balfroon Tower particularly for the towers along the A12. For the landmark building (Building B3) in particular, a vertical façade expression on the northern and eastern elevation is proposed to reflect the verticality of Balfroon Tower’s circulation tower whilst the southern and western elevations have a strong horizontal expression that is reflective of the eastern and western elevations of Balfroon Tower. In principle, Officers consider that this approach is interesting however, further detailing is required with regards to its articulation to ensure that the quality of the development comes through successfully.

ELEVATION DEVELOPMENT

BUILDING B3

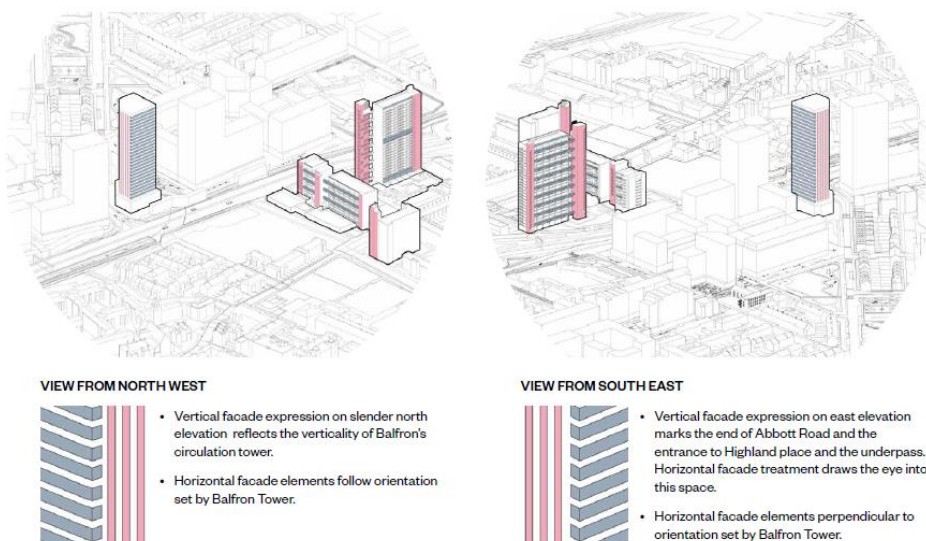


Figure 8 – Architectural Expression.

Aberfeldy Street

- 7.41 The masterplan includes the redevelopment of Aberfeldy Street and Aberfeldy Street Neighbourhood Centre to provide a new high street. The redevelopment of Aberfeldy Street will sit within Phase A (Plot H) and form part of the detailed component of the application. Plot H comprises buildings H1/H2 and H3 and will sit east and west of Aberfeldy Street respectively.

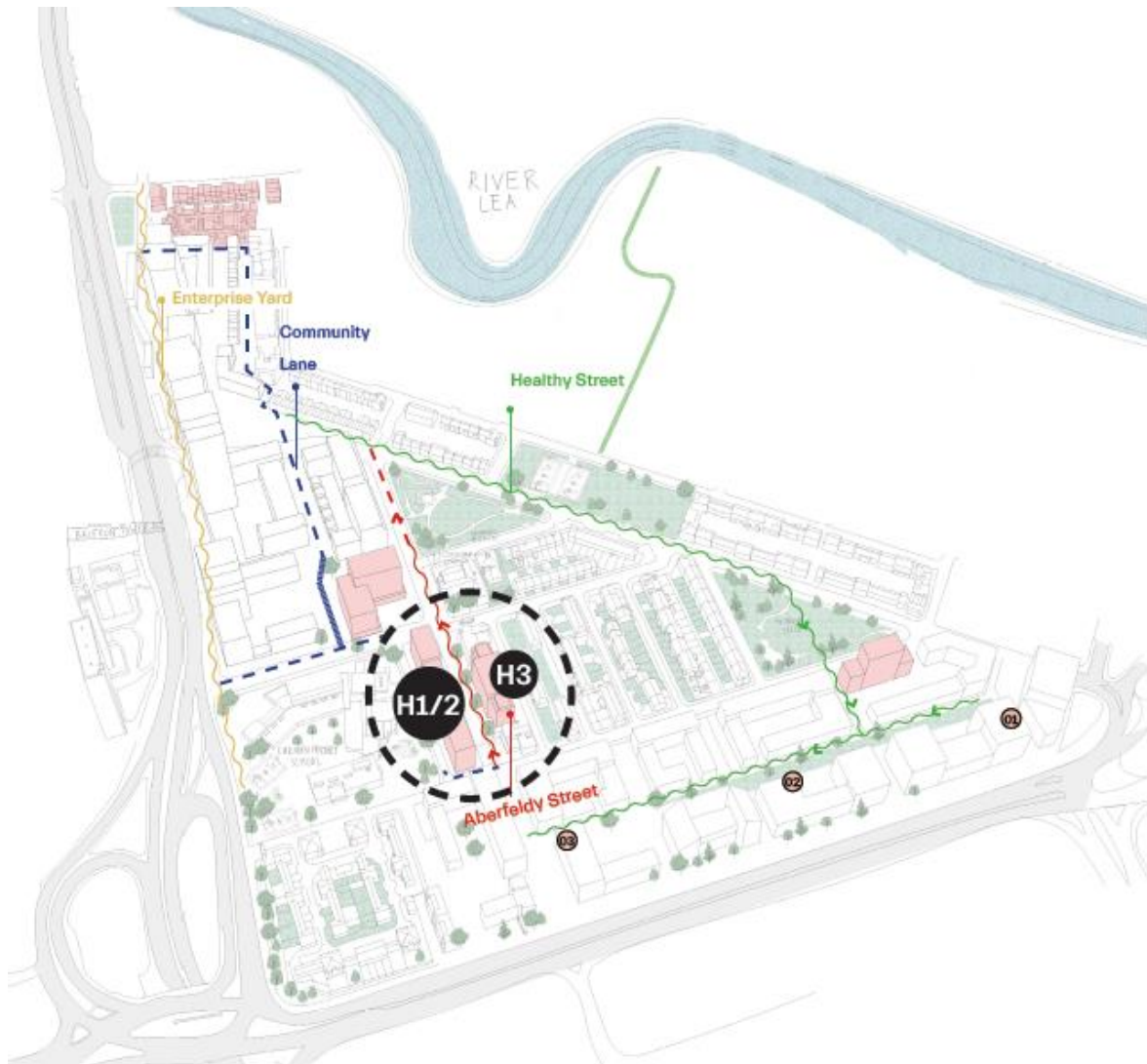


Figure 9 – Plot H.

- 7.42 Aberfeldy High Street has recently undergone a transformation via the implementation of a meanwhile use strategy led by a joint venture between Jan Kattein Architects and Meanwhile Space, to creatively revitalise the high street in the interim whilst the wider regeneration of the site continues. This has resulted in a colourful makeover of the retail units and residential units above along Aberfeldy Street using patterns from fabrics donated by local residents and traders. This has revived the high street and has been positively received by the local community. Officers have identified that it will be challenging to recapture the success of the existing High Street and meanwhile use within the new masterplan.



Figure 10 – Aberfeldy Street Existing Meanwhile Uses.

- 7.43 The pre-application documents presented thus far to Officers indicates that the appearance and materiality of the proposed buildings will comprise a strong precast concrete plinth in a warm terracotta colour with a combination of light and dark brickwork above to distinguish between the retail and residential elements. The commercial units are proposed to have a variety of different coloured shopfronts and individual awnings which serve to provide uniqueness and identify between each shop unit whilst the terracotta plinth framing provides uniformity. Officers have supported the approach to using colour and detailing to reinterpret the success of the existing high street in the new masterplan and consider that it is particularly important that the spirit and essence of the existing high street is authentically encapsulated.



Figure 11 – Aberfeldy Street Proposed CGI.

Open Space and Children’s Play Space

7.44 Policy S.OWS1 of the Local Plan requires proposals to provide or contribute to the delivery of an improved accessible, well-connected and sustainable network of open spaces through amongst other things:

- Protecting all existing open spaces to ensure that there is no net loss (except where it meets the criteria set out in Policy D.OWS3).
- Improving the quality, value and accessibility of existing publicly accessible open space across the borough and neighbouring boroughs, in line with the Green Grid Strategy, Open Space Strategy, Local Biodiversity Action Plan and Sport England’s Active Design Guidance.
- Maximising the opportunities to create/increase publicly accessible open space (including playing pitches and ancillary sporting facilities) with a range of sizes and for a range of users.

7.45 Officers have expressed concerns that the provision of public open space proposed for the wider masterplan would not be commensurate to the scale and magnitude of development proposed. Officers considered initially that the only meaningful new public open space proposed in the Masterplan would be Highlands Place and All Hallows Square. Notwithstanding this, Officers have indicated to the Applicant that it is considered that Highlands Place is more akin to a combination of public realm, recreational and

predominately hard landscaping rather than public open space that incorporates a substantial amount of green space and infrastructure. However, it is acknowledged that there is a logic for Highlands Place to mark the tallest building on the Masterplan. The latest iteration of the proposal suggests that 3757m² of new public open space will be delivered as part of Highlands Place.

- 7.46 The Masterplan boundary includes the following areas of existing public open space: Millennium Green, Braithwaite Park and Leven Road. Until recently Officers have questioned the inclusion of these areas within the proposed red-line boundary. There had been a lack of clarity as to the justification for the inclusion of these public open spaces and what was being proposed for these areas as it was not originally intended that the Applicant would be delivering improvements to these spaces directly.
- 7.47 The Applicant has been engaging with the Council's Parks Team and is now intending to deliver improvements to these spaces directly. This would provide a greater level of certainty that meaningful level of improvements can be secured. This will require the Applicant to work closely with the Council's Parks Team and Aberfeldy Big Local to agree an appropriate and deliverable scheme for improvements to all three areas of existing public open space. It is proposed to deliver improvements to Braithwaite Park and Leven Road Open Space in Phase A. It is understood that public consultation had commenced on the proposals for all three spaces mid-July 2021.
- 7.48 In terms of children's play provision, the Applicant has been advised that dedicated children's play provision should be distinguishable from areas of public realm, public open space and landscaping. Based on the current unit mix the scheme would be required to provide 6404m² of children's play provision comprising of the following:

PLAY SPACE REQUIRED:

2,483	sq m for 0-4 year olds
2,013	sq m for 5-11 year olds
1,907	sq m for 12-18 year olds
6,404	total sq m for all children

- 7.49 The scheme would be seeking to provide a combination of dedicated children's play and playable space. Whilst Officers have been provided with indicative locations of these areas, the detailed element of these areas have not been presented to Officers to date.

Neighbouring Amenity

- 7.50 Policy D.DH8 of the Local Plan requires new developments to protect and where possible enhance or increase the extent of the amenity of new and existing buildings and their occupants, as well as the amenity of the surrounding public realm. To this end development should maintain good levels of privacy and outlook, avoid unreasonable levels of overlooking, not result in any material deterioration of sunlight and daylight conditions of surrounding development.
- 7.51 No preliminary daylight/sunlight assessments have been submitted to Officers for review during the course of the pre-application discussions to fully inform Officers of the likely impact of the proposals on potential occupiers of the development and neighbouring buildings.

Transport and Servicing

- 7.52 Local plan policies S.TR1, D.TR2 and D.TR3 require proposals to have consideration to the local environment and accessibility of the site, on-street parking availability, access and amenity impacts and road network capacity constraints while supporting the Council's commitment to reduce the need to travel and encourage modal shift away from the private car towards healthy and sustainable transport initiatives and choices, notably walking and cycling. These policies also seek to secure safe and appropriate servicing arrangements.
- 7.53 The Local Plan also envisages that development in the Lower Lea Valley will have sufficient transport and social infrastructure to facilitate the creation of thriving mixed communities alongside vibrant neighbourhood centres. Housing provision will be accelerated through the Poplar Riverside Housing Zone and delivered alongside new local employment, enterprise and business opportunities.
- 7.54 To facilitate the delivery of the vision for the Lower Lea Valley, the Local Plan sets a number of objectives which include amongst other things:
- Improve strategic connections to overcome the physical barriers of movement created by the A12, A14 and the waterways.
 - Improve local connections by creating a street pattern that increases permeability for ease of pedestrian and cyclist movement.
 - Support existing and new neighbourhood centres by improving accessibility to them to ensure they act as the civic heart of surrounding communities.
- 7.55 The site has a PTAL (Public Transport Accessibility Level) of 1b-4 which is poor to good on a scale of 0-6b where 6b is the best.
- 7.56 The wider masterplan seeks to improve east-west routes and connectively across the wider area and create key north-south routes within the masterplan such as Enterprise Yard, Community Lane and Abbott Road. Abbott Road is a widely used through route which connects the A12 from the north-west to the A13 to the south-east. Abbott Road is also used by the Bus Route 309; the northbound service which utilises the Abbott Road Vehicle underpass.
- 7.57 The scheme proposes to turn Abbott Road into a "healthy street", introducing speed restrictions, reducing the width of vehicular routes and widening pedestrian paths to prioritise the use of Abbott Road by pedestrians and cyclists.
- 7.58 In terms of the vehicular underpass, it is proposed to repurpose this by raising the floor of the existing underpass by approximately 2m and creating the new public realm area in Highlands Place. The repurposed underpass would be used solely by pedestrians and cyclists and Abbott Road would be extended further to the north to provide a replacement connection to the A12. This would also require re-routing of the 309 northbound bus service.
- 7.59 Officers support the aspiration to improve connectivity in the wider Aberfeldy Area however, concerns have been expressed during pre-application meetings as to the mechanism for delivery, as the repurposing of the underpass is contingent on support and approval from TfL who have yet to confirm that the proposals for the underpass or the rerouting of the bus route would be supported.

7.60 Officers are aware that the Applicant's Team have recently submitted results for strategic modelling undertaken to TfL to assess the effect of repurposing the underpass. Three scenarios were modelled as follows:

- Scenario A – Do nothing.
- Scenario B – Closure of the underpass (buses and other traffic re-distributed to Lochnagar Street via Leven Road).
- Scenario C – Closure of underpass combined with the provision of a new Abbott Road/A12 bus gate (for northbound buses).



Figure 12 – Strategic Modelling Scenarios.

7.61 It is understood that the Applicant's preferred option would be Scenario C as bus delays are minimised under this scenario with an increase in westbound journey time by approximately 45 seconds. Officers understand that TfL will shortly be issuing a pre-application letter in response to the modelling report.

7.62 In terms of upgrade to the Dee Street underpass, Officers have yet to see any details of these proposals.

7.63 In terms of car parking, the scheme would be seeking to provide parking spaces for 71 returning residents and 50 blue badge spaces are proposed which would be in accordance with the London Plan policy requirement for a minimum of 3% of dwellings on residential developments of ten or more to be provided with at least one designated blue badge bay per dwelling from the outset.

7.64 There has been limited information submitted to date during pre-application meetings in respect of matters relating to delivery and servicing and cycle parking provision. It would be expected that cycle parking is provided in accordance with the standards set out in the London Plan.

Environment

- 7.65 National planning policy and guidance sets the direction of travel for the planning system to support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate.
- 7.66 Policy D.ES7 of the Local Plan specifically requires that for residential developments, zero carbon should be achieved through a minimum of 45% reduction in regulated carbon dioxide emissions on-site and the remaining regulated carbon dioxide emissions to 100% are to be off-set through a cash in lieu contribution.
- 7.67 Detailed discussions with regard to the proposed energy and sustainability strategy have not been undertaken during pre-application meetings thus far however, it would be expected that the scheme that comes forward demonstrates compliance with the above through an appropriate Energy Strategy.
- 7.68 Development plan policies also seek to secure a range of sustainable development outcomes including net biodiversity gains; the implementation of efficient energy systems which seek to minimise carbon emissions and to secure effective strategies for addressing matters relating to contaminated land and sustainable urban drainage.
- 7.69 The proposed development would constitute an EIA development as such the accompanying Environmental Statement submitted with any subsequent planning application would need to include the relevant impact assessments.

Infrastructure Impact

- 7.70 The proposed development will be liable to the Council's and the Mayor of London Community Infrastructure Levies (CIL) and planning obligations to be secured under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

8. SUMMARY

- 8.1 In summary the scheme would deliver a number of public benefits including the provision of new housing; both replacement (17% re-provision) and an uplift (18% uplift) in affordable housing based on the number of habitable rooms, improvements to existing areas of public open space, new workspace and new retail including the replacement of Aberfeldy Street Neighbourhood Centre. However, Officers consider that the success of the masterplan is fundamentally heavily reliant on the delivery of the repurposing of the underpass and significantly improving east-west connections across the A12. The delivery of this strategic infrastructure improvement is also key to justifying the masterplan's tall building strategy against Policy D.DH6 of the Local Plan as discussed earlier in this report.
- 8.2 Officers consider that support for the repurposing of the underpass from TfL is crucial to its deliverability. Moreover, whilst recent pre-application meetings have presented Officers with proposals that suggested improvements to the western side of the underpass which include the possibility of providing affordable workspaces, public realm and landscaping improvements to the slip road on the western side of the A12 and improvements to Jolly's Green, Officers are aware that the applicant's red-line boundary currently does not propose to extend beyond the underpass to include Jolly's Green. Whilst there are other mechanisms to deliver these improvements, Officers consider that their inclusion within the red line boundary would deliver a greater degree of certainty and therefore should form an integral part of any scheme formally submitted to the Council.

8.3 Moreover, Officers have also recently become aware that the Applicant is now suggesting to remove Millennium Green from the application boundary. This is due to the fact that Millennium Green is owned by the Millennium Trust which does not appear to have any active members operating the Trust. Members are advised that the Council's Regeneration Team are actively investigating and working towards disbanding the Trust. Due to the existence of the Trust, the Applicant would be seeking to secure improvements to the Millennium Green via the S106 legal agreement; however, Officers have expressed concerns with this approach. Officers consider that the improvements to all the areas of existing public open space together with the repurposing of the underpass are fundamental to the proposals, they effectively form the basis for which the Applicant is justifying this masterplan and the substantial density and the number of tall buildings proposed to be delivered. Officers do not consider that it would be appropriate to secure improvements to Millennium Green via a S106 legal agreement and would seek to fully scrutinise and understand the detailed elements of the proposed improvements as part of the planning application.

8.4 In conclusion Officers consider that the masterplan can only be deliverable if there is certainty about the full details of the underpass and the mechanism for deliverability, wider east-west connections including improvements to Jolly's Green and greater detail of the improvements proposed to the existing areas of public open space.

9. RECOMMENDATION

9.1 The Committee notes the contents of the report and pre-application presentation.

9.2 The Committee is invited to comment on the issues identified and to raise any other planning and design issues or material considerations that the developer should take into account at the pre-application stage, prior to submitting a planning application.

10. APPENDICES – IMAGES

Image 1 – Wider Context

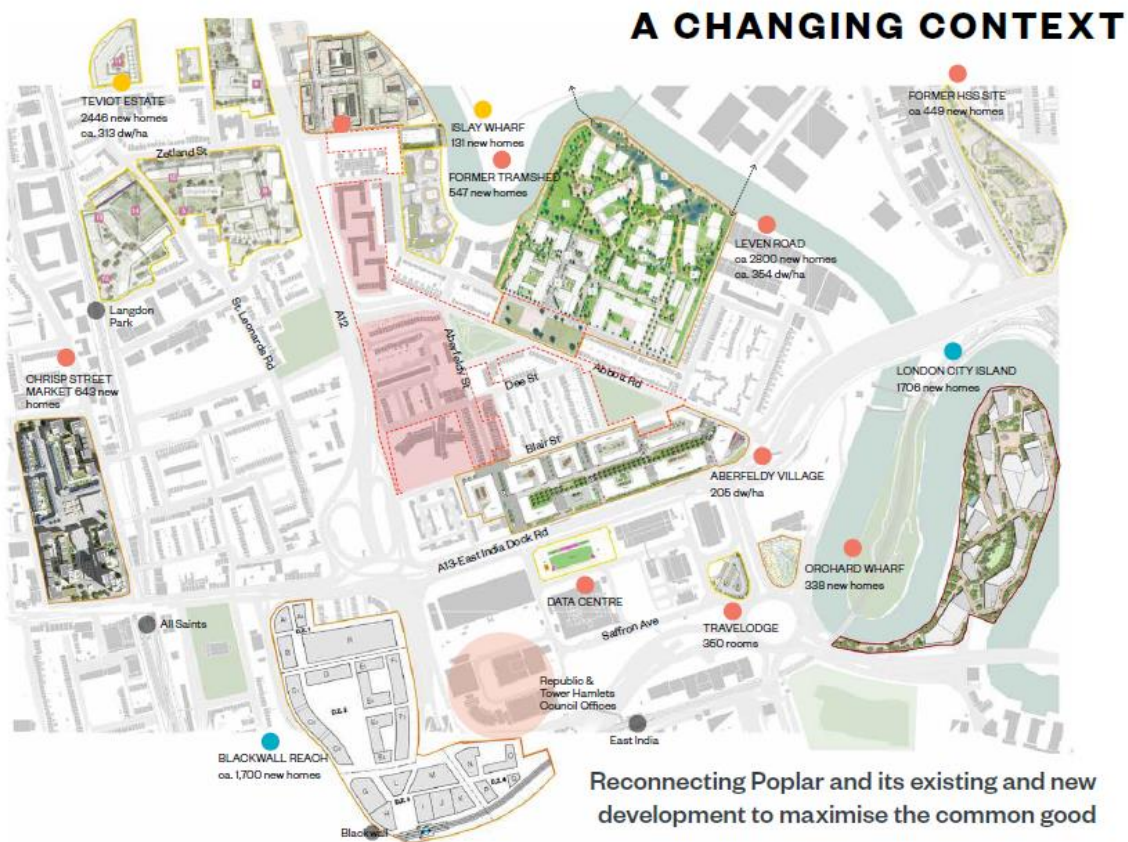


Image 2 – Masterplan Threads

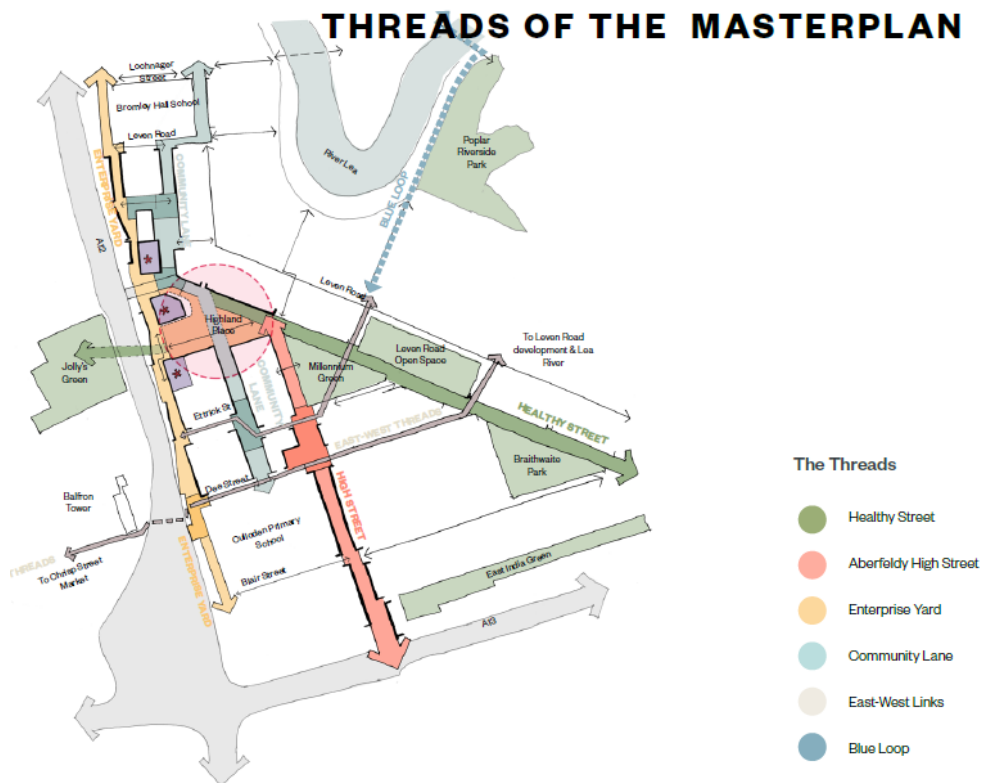


Image 3 – Masterplan Landscape Concept



Image 4 – Proposed Massing

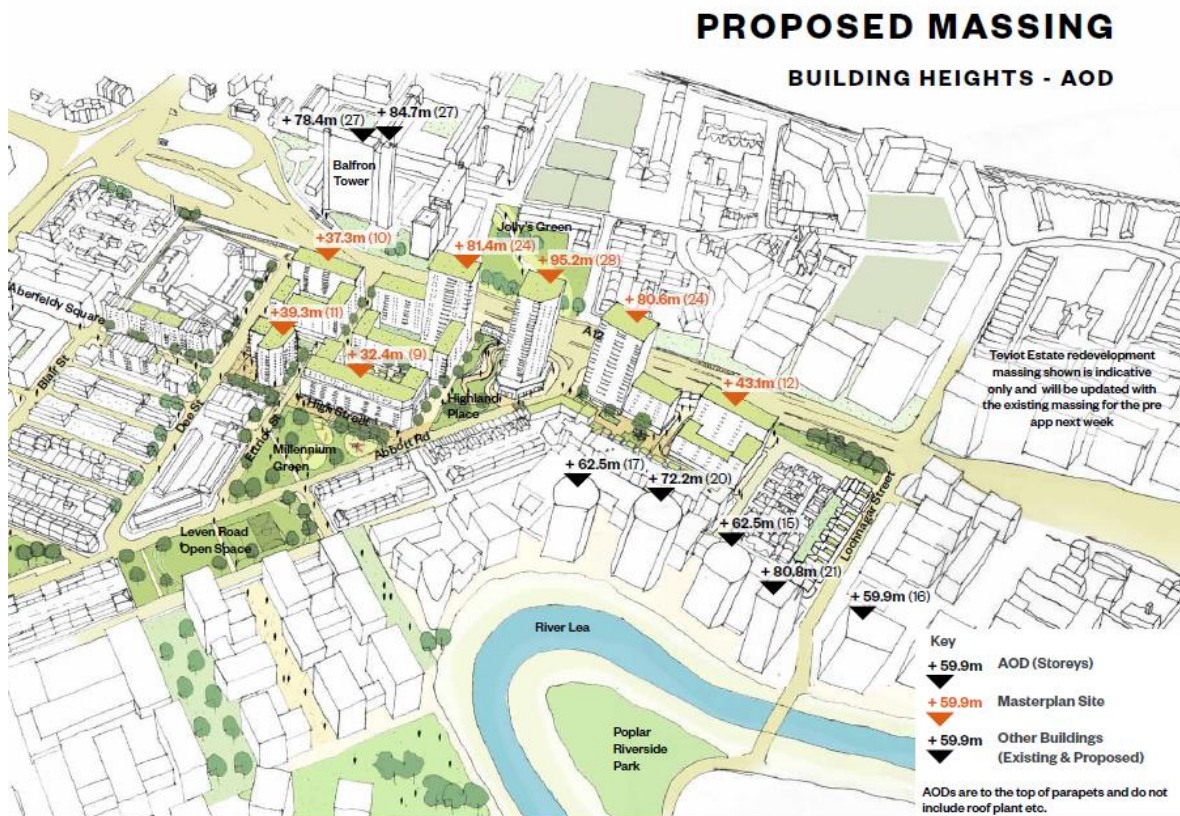


Image 5 – Pedestrian Movement Strategy

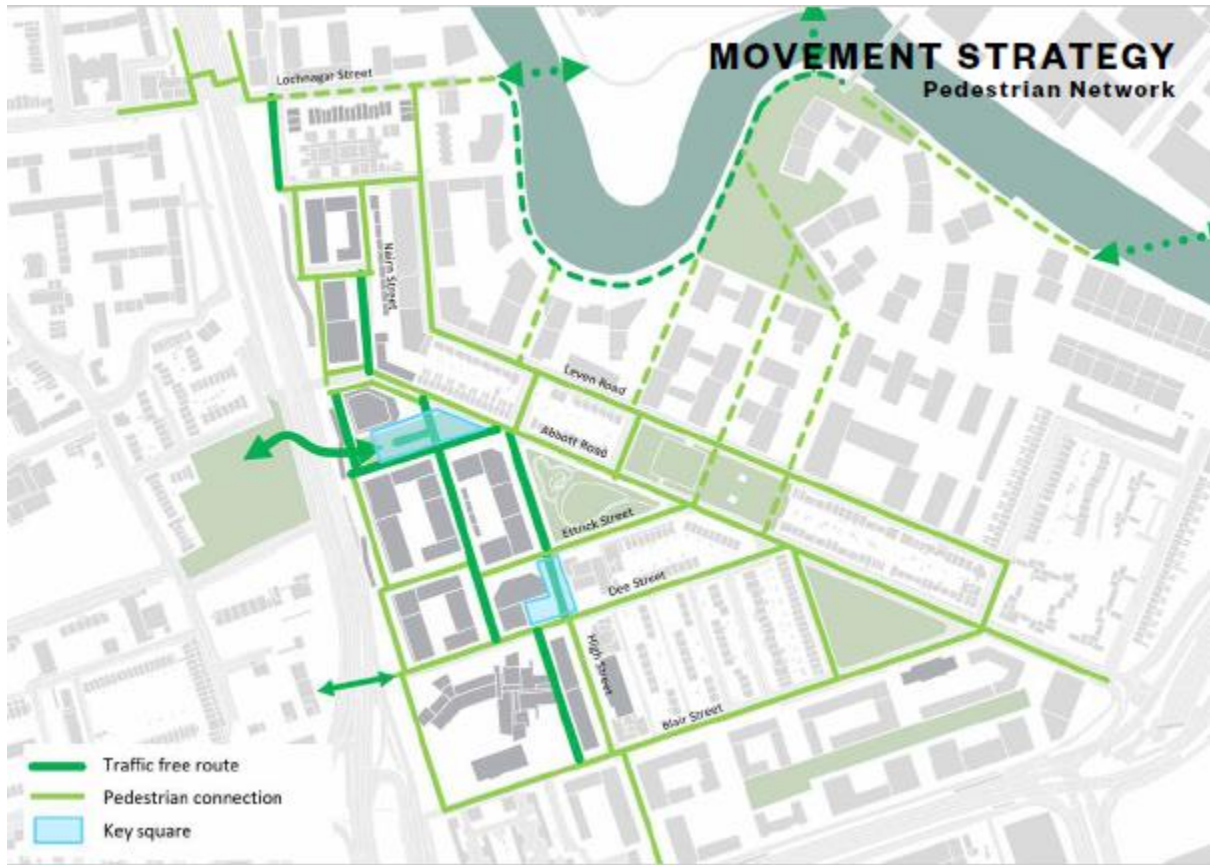


Image 6 – Public Realm

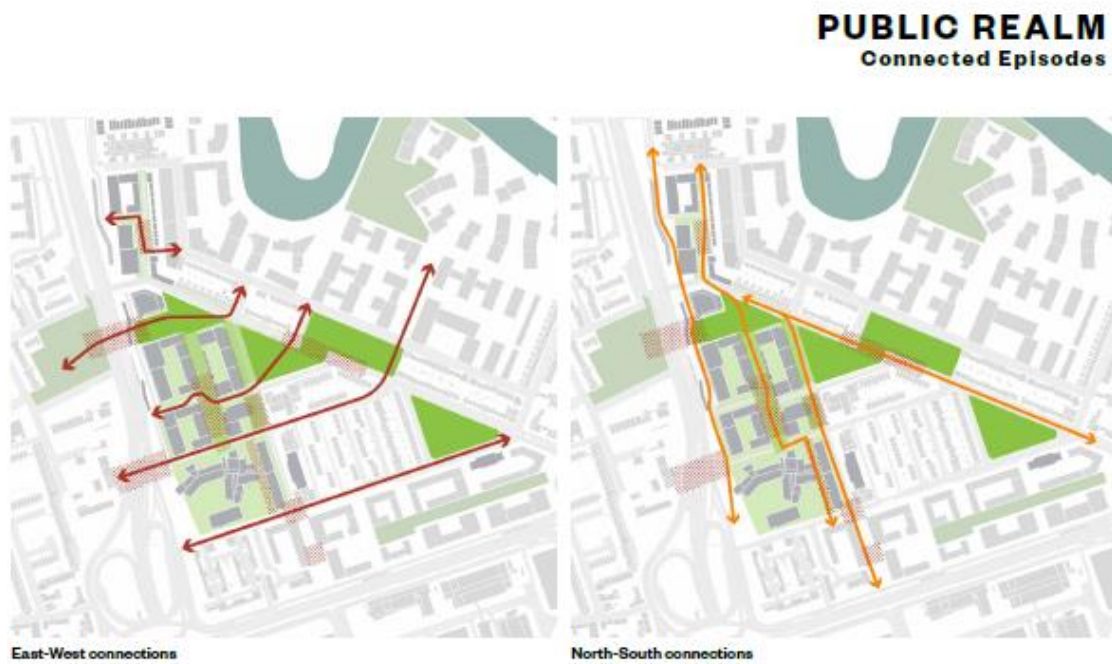


Image 7 – Proposed View East India Dock Road

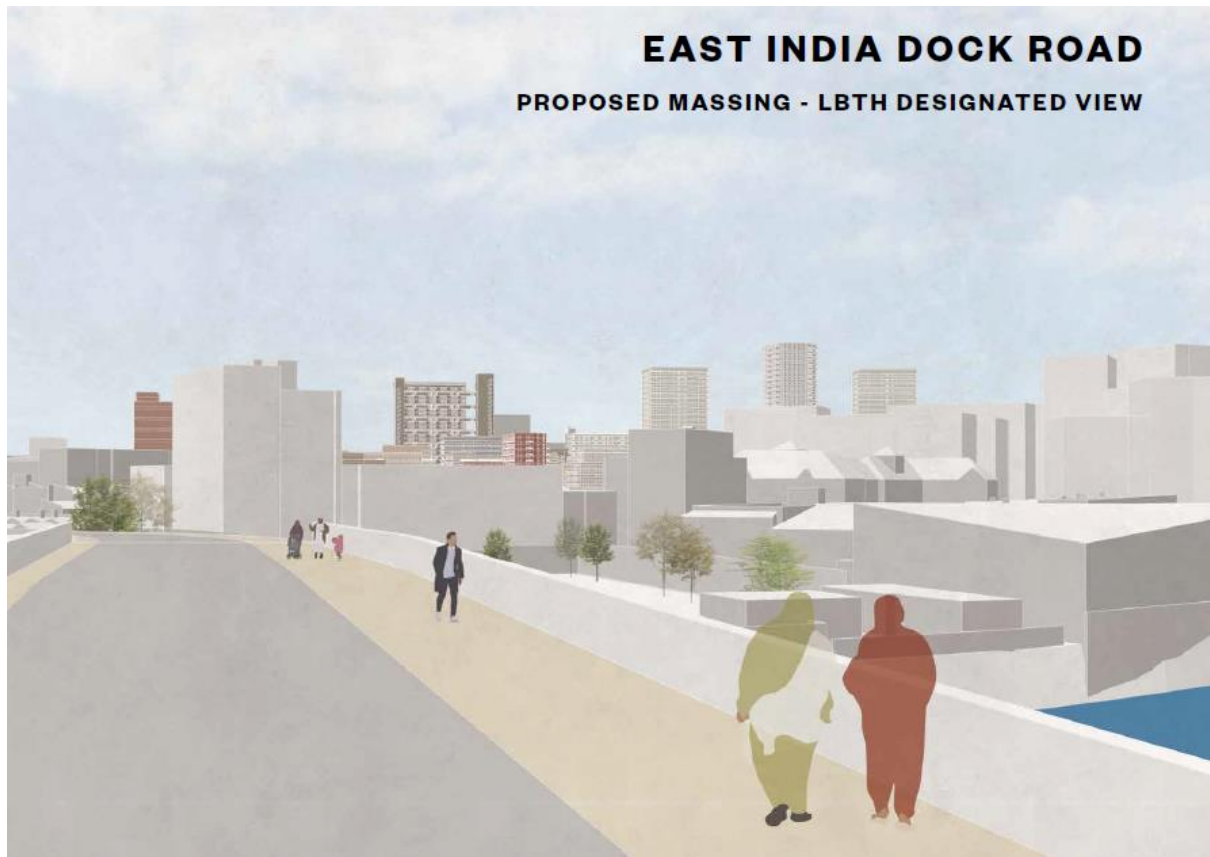


Image 8 – Langdon Park



Image 9 – Abbott Road

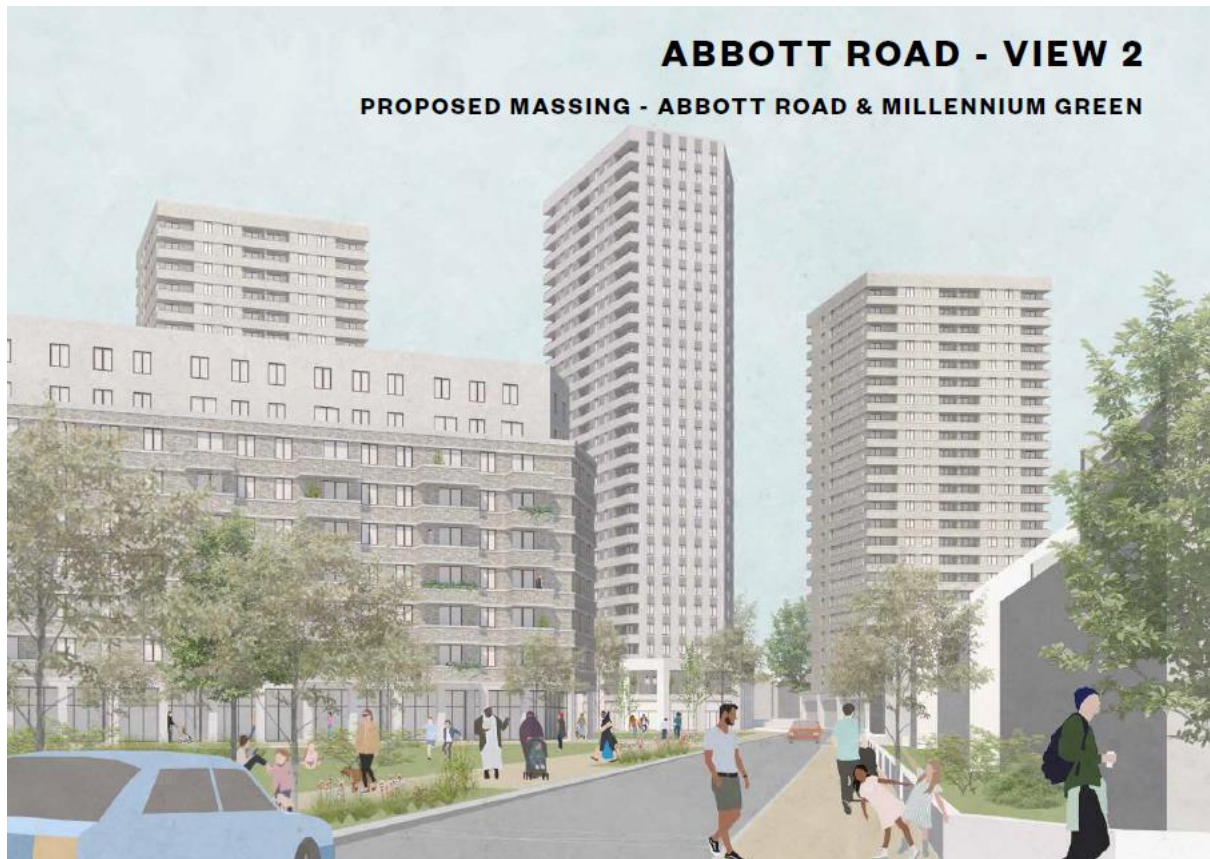


Image 10 – Dee Street



Image 11 – A12 Blackwall Tunnel



Image 13 – Abbott Road Proposed



Image 14 – Braithwaite Park

BRAITHWAITE PARK - Axon



Image 15 – Leven Road Open Space

LEVEN ROAD OPEN SPACE - Axon



Image 16 – Millennium Green

MILLENNIUM GREEN - Axon



Image 17 – All Hallows Square



Image 18 – Aberfeldy Street (Daytime CGI)



Image 19 – Aberfeldy Street (Night time CGI)

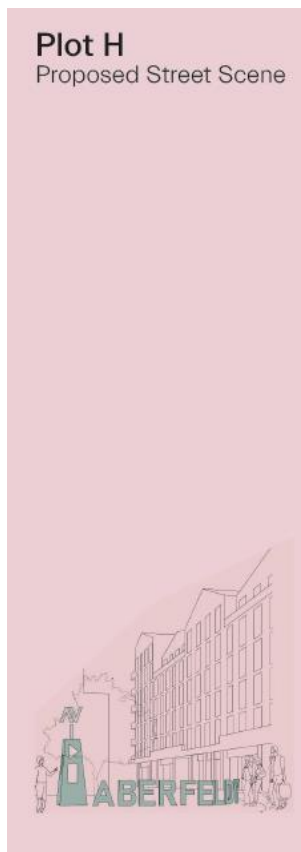


Image 20 – All Hallows Square CGI



Image 21 – Highlands Place Underpass Entrance CGI

JOURNEY THROUGH- Highland Place to Jolly's Green



Image 22 – Highlands Place Underpass Entrance CGI

JOURNEY THROUGH- Highland Place to Jolly's Green



Image 23 – Underpass CGI

JOURNEY THROUGH- Highland Place to Jolly's Green



Image 24 – Underpass exit to Jolly’s Green

JOURNEY THROUGH- Highland Place to Jolly’s Green

