

MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 31 October 2013 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Liam Curran (Chair), Julia Fletcher, Ami Ibitson, Marion Nisbet and Eva Stamirowski and Alan Hall and Kevin Bonavia

APOLOGIES: Councillors Suzannah Clarke, Obajimi Adefiranye, John Bowen and Mark Ingleby

ALSO PRESENT: Joe Gillam, John Miller (Head of Planning), Salena Mulhere (Overview and Scrutiny Manager), David Benyon (Senior Project Manager) (Hutchinson Whampoa), Nigel Bidwell (Partner) (Farrells (Master Planner)), Duncan Hawkins (Director) (CGMS (Archeology Consultant)), Phil Hayden (Senior Project Manager) (Hutchinson Whampoa), Andrew Howard (Chief Executive Officer) (Hardhat Communications (Communications and Consultation)), Ian Turkington (Director) (Turkington Martin (Landscape and Public Realm)), Lesley Brooks (Service Group Manager, Travel Demand Management) and Councillor John Paschoud (Chair of Strategic Planning Committee)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2013

RESOLVED: To agree the minutes of the meeting as a true record.

2. Declarations of interest

Councillor Ibitson declared a non pecuniary interest as an employee of the GLA.

Councillor Fletcher declared a non-pecuniary interest as a temporary employee of the GLA, on an interim basis, employed via an agency.

3. Response from Mayor and Cabinet on Build the Lenox

RESOLVED: To note the response from Mayor and Cabinet.

4. Future of the former Ladywell leisure centre site

Joe Gillam (Project Manager) introduced the report. The key points to note were:

- This report was an update to the report received in September.
- A number of appointments have been made, the demolition contract is currently being tendered.
- A planning application has been submitted and it is hoped work will begin at the end of the month.
- In relation to the specific recommendations made by the Committee: an update has been put up on the Council website, with the site being named the Lewisham Central Opportunity Site, within the town centre section of the website.
- Officers have attended the two local assemblies closest to the site, Ladywell and Lewisham Central to give an update.
- Discussions regarding the future development of the site are on-going.

In response to questions from the Committee Joe Gillam advised that:

- The site is designated as a mixed use site and is suitable for retail; some interest has been expressed by food retailers already.
- Retaining the freehold of the site will be considered.
- Viability work to consider and understand the most appropriate use and development of the site will be carried out to identify the most sustainable use of the site.
- He will speak to strategic housing, as at Housing Select Committee the previous evening, a list of sites being considered for development was considered and the Lewisham Central Opportunities Site was not included in that list.

5. Parking policy: monitoring and update

Lesley Brooks (service group manager, parking services) introduced the report. In response to questions the Committee was advised:

- Cash payments for visitors parking permits can now be made at Lewisham library, and this is a manual process.
- Processing applications and payments requires access to key council systems to check eligibility.
- The added cost of managing cash at all libraries makes rolling that provision out to all libraries in the borough prohibitive.
- The recommendation of free permits for carers has been implemented as has a book of 10 vouchers for £10. The recommendation of 10 visitors passes to be issued with each resident permit issued will happen automatically from April.

6. Convoys Wharf

The Chair welcomed Hutchison Whampoa and associates to the meeting and thanked them for coming. Phil Hayden (senior project manager, Hutchison Whampoa) advised that he and his associates would give a 25 minute presentation and then take questions. The key points to note were:

- Hutchison Whampoa envisaged building 3500 new homes on the site of which 15% would be affordable homes, a 2 form entry primary school and creating 2150 new jobs. There would also be further contributions locally through Section 106 monies and a contribution to the London Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Duncan Hawkins gave an overview of the archaeology of the site:

- English Heritage has been involved in monitoring the archaeological investigations. The archaeological investigations are the largest carried out on any historical dockyard in the world and have been based on old maps and old evidence and what is known about the yard from its closure in 1869.
- The great dry dock was rebuilt between 1839 and 1841 on the site of previous docks; those previous docks were destroyed with the creation of the dock in 1839. Only small fragments of smashed up timber have been

found. English heritage have made clear they will not support any proposal for demolition of that area so an open area, in memorial of it, is planned.

- The Tudor store house was demolished at the end of WW2 and only the foundations remain – English heritage have monitored the excavations as this is the most important archaeological site in Lewisham.
- The Olympia building was built in 1844-1846 with the roof being rebuilt in 1890.

In response to questions Ian Turkington advised:

- Sayes Court Mansion House was previously demolished and rebuilt as a work house, some garden walls have been found but no evidence of the gardens were found – English Heritage specifically asked that these were looked for.
- There has been a lot of public and academic interest in the excavations on the site; over 1000 people have visited to view the site to hear about the work.
- A full report will be available by the end of 2014.

In response to questions, Duncan Hawkins advised:

- Very few artefacts had been recovered, it appeared the site was picked clean in 1869 and kept clean due to fire risks. A Neolithic axe has been found and a 19th century pot.
- Part of the Sayes Court Mansion House foundations recovered will be incorporated into the planned study centre.
- Given the depth of the archaeology, its fragility and the relative amounts found, in this instance it is not appropriate to rebuild, but to map what has been uncovered and recover it to protect it.

Nigel Bidwell and Phil Hayden advised:

- The site is a key site for Lewisham as it covers more than half of the Borough's river frontage.
- It was previously a military and industrial site so the general public did not have access to it, the master vision for the site would ensure public access to the riverfront, whilst recognising the historical boundaries of the site.
- There is a need to link the site with the local area and local high street and flow and connection to both, the riverfront and neighbouring sites have been considered in pulling together the master plan – the aim is to enable people to meander through the site and connect to the water via the jetty and the links to the Thames pathway.
- The Olympia building is the only listed building on the site and should be central focus of the site, and has been the centre of the master plan. The legacy of John Evelyn should influence the whole site not just one part of it.
- The creation of the site would be phased, starting with the Eastern side, including the double dry dock adjacent to the master shipwright's house area, with half of the proposed jetty landscaped park provided at this stage.

In response to questions, Nigel Bidwell, Phil Hayden and Andrew Howard advised:

- The range of values of properties proposed for this site will give opportunities for local people to purchase property there.
- The properties that are sold on the free market cannot be guaranteed not to be bought for investment purposes and limitations cannot be placed on who can purchase them.
- It is intended to use the river to bring in materials and remove waste from the site while it is being developed. A company with experience of moving waste and construction materials by water has been successfully awarded the contract – there is also an existing space at the edge of the site where a building will be used to store materials and waste for 7-8 years of the development.
- Consultation with local people has been on-going for three years, and Farrells have consulted with local people in the development of the master plan. It has only been 24 hours since the Mayoral decision, to become the planning authority, so a little more time to understand the process for consultation moving forward is needed, but it is anticipated that work will take place with Lewisham Council, the GLA and local groups to support comments on the proposals.
- Hutchison Whampoa have worked closely with planning officers in Lewisham over recent years, and in 2011/12 took a decision to stop and think and asked Sir Terry Farrell to come on board, and by April 2013 got to a point where they saw a determination coming this year, with the anticipated 16 week determination period. However, when that had not happened by September and with no anticipation that officers would be ready to present the plans to members in immediate future, the decision was taken to approach the Mayor. It was not an easy decision to make and Hutchison Whampoa still intends to work closely with the Councils' planning officers.
- Lewisham had indicated that they anticipated considering the application by February 2014, however the new timescale, for determination of the plans by the Mayor of London and the GLA, is not yet known although Hutchison Whampoa understand that the plans have been well received. The Mayor of London has made clear that the GLA will be seeking the advice and involvement of Lewisham planning officers
- The viability report was submitted confidentially to officers in April and has been provided to the GLA.
- Whilst they have been involved and approved some of the archaeology work, English Heritage are not entirely happy with the plans and have taken the view that some of the buildings may be too high and the plans for the site too dense. Hutchison Whampoa and Sir Terry Farrell have responded to English Heritage. They will take stock but they will not be able to provide all of the amendments to the site that English Heritage seek. Their biggest objection is to the design for the buildings around the Olympia Building, it is anticipated that the Mayor will work with Hutchison Whampoa, English Heritage and the Council.
- This is an outline planning application with indicative heights of buildings given; the three tallest building will be 48 storeys, two will be 38 storeys and other buildings will be between 3 and 14 storeys high. Most urban developments include dense mixed use developments and include tall buildings.

- Whilst the Mayor may have outlined a target of 50% affordable housing, based in the financial viability analysis put forward by Hutchison Whampoa, 15% affordable housing has been put forward within the scheme. The financial viability sets out in detail the associated costs of infrastructure development such as the jetty, which will require huge investment from Hutchison Whampoa, as well as factoring in the contributions to the CIL, the Mayor of London CIL for Cross rail and Section 106. All those things come together and mean that their analysis is that they can only provide 15% affordable housing, and that then leaves only a 10% profit on the project for the developers. If, when development starts, it becomes clear that more than 15% affordable housing could be achieved then that will be delivered; there will be a review mechanism in place to assess this regularly.
- The remnants of the double dry dock are mainly timber in form. The remnants need to be kept as they are of national significance. To facilitate a working dock for the construction of the Lenox, the existing area would need to be rebuilt which would diminish the history of the dock. Moreover, what remains of the dock is not from the 17th century dock used to build the Lenox but from the 1839 reconstruction.

The Chair thanked the representatives for attending and adjourned the meeting for a 5 minute comfort break.

In response to questions John Miller and Petra Der Man advised:

- The letter from the GLA advised that the Council could make representations if a hearing was requested. It had been thought that a representation hearing was automatic, however a request would be made as outlined in the letter, and the Council would make representations of its views. The hearing would be in public.
- Planning officers regularly work with colleagues at the GLA and would continue to do so in relation to this application, as highlighted in the letter received.
- The letter advises that it will be determined as soon as reasonably practicable; officers have no information on when that might be.
- The letter from the GLA sets out the reasons Hutchison Whampoa gave for the application to have the Mayor take over as the planning authority. The Council made its own submission on the issues in writing via the Chief Executive.
- Any decision in relation to planning is open to legal challenge, at this time lawyers cannot comment as to what action may be taken – all options are being considered.

7. Select Committee work programme

RESOLVED: To move some items back to January to create a travel themed meeting, and to ask the Chair to liaise with the scrutiny manager to make any necessary amendments to the programme to allow for the savings item to be considered by the Committee when the report becomes available.

8. Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet

There were none.

The meeting ended at 9.10 pm

Chair:

Date:
