

# MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Thursday, 30 July 2020 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors John Paschoud (Chair), Leo Gibbons (Vice-Chair), Kevin Bonavia, Andre Bourne, Suzannah Clarke, Liam Curran, Olurotimi Ogunbadewa, Sakina Sheikh and James-J Walsh

ALSO PRESENT:

Apologies for absence were received from Aisling Gallagher

## **Under Standing Orders:**

Councillor of Telegraph Hill Ward: Luke Sorba  
Councillor of Bellingham Ward: Allan Hall

**OFFICERS:** Director of Planning (DoP), Major and Strategic Projects Manager (MSPM), Development Management Officer (DMO), Planning Officer (Officer) and Committee Officer.

**EXTERNAL LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE:** Charles Merrett, Barrister, Francis Taylor Building.

## **Item No.**

### **1     Declarations of Interest**

None received.

### **2     Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Strategic Planning Committee held on 22 June 2020 and the AGM, Strategic Planning Committee held on 15 July 2020 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

### **3     LAND ON THE CORNER OF BRIANT AND BESSON STREET, LONDON, SE14**

The Planning Officer, gave an illustrative presentation recommending the grant of planning permission for the

- Comprehensive redevelopment of Land at the corner of Briant and Besson Street, SE14, including demolition of existing structures to deliver a mixed use development comprising:
  - 324 residential units (Use Class C3), flexible retail and commercial floorspace (Use Class A1/A3/B1), a Pharmacy (Use Class A1), a GP surgery (Use Class D1) and community space (Use Class D2) in buildings ranging from 3 to 12 storeys, provision of disabled car parking, cycle parking and servicing facilities, landscaping and other associated works.

The committee noted the report and that the main issues were:

- Principle of Development
- Housing
- Provision of GP Surgery, Pharmacy and Community Space
- Urban Design
- Impact on Adjoining Properties
- Agent of Change
- Transport
- Sustainable Development
- Natural Environment
- Planning Obligations

Following the presentation, members' raised concerns regarding affordability, density, diversity, height, social housing, amenity space and, noise pollution protections.

The Officer advised Members the Mayor's Affordable Housing and Viability SPG outlined the London Living Rent and Build to Rent elements of the scheme, which included the availability of secure tenancies of at least three years. This would be secured via the s.106 agreement. The Officer advised London Living Rents were calculated and, reviewed annually by the Greater London Authority (GLA). Rents were variable by wards and boroughs. It was advised that generally London Living Rent was a 1/3 less than living rents on the market. The

Officer advised the annual rents were announced by the GLA annually. The DoP provided figures relating to the London Living Rent.

The Officer informed the Committee that residential density of the proposed scheme was above the recommended density for an “urban” location. The site would move away from an “urban” location to a more “central” location as defined by the current London Plan density matrix, which in turn would permit higher densities than that currently proposed. It was also advised that the draft London Plan removed the density matrix and focused on a design-led approach.

It was further advised that the proposed development would provide plenty amenity spaces, including working spaces and, were considered acceptable.

The Officer advised the Committee the London Plan encouraged the optimisation of sites in terms of quantum and quality, which included height. It was confirmed that the development design was presented twice to LBL’s Design Review Panel (DRP), who were broadly supportive of the scale and density of the scheme. It was acknowledged that whilst the development would be visible from the immediate location and further away, officers felt the development sat comfortably within its surroundings and was considered to be acceptable.

The Officer confirmed the development under consideration was part of a development portfolio for affordable housing. This particular site would deliver a particular type of tenure, whilst other developments in the portfolio would concentrate on the delivery of social housing. The Officer advised the Committee it was important for the local authority to acknowledge the various housing needs required.

The Officer used the presentation to illustrate to Members that the recreational spaces provided was integrated throughout the development, noting that consultation was also conducted regarding this matter. It was confirmed final details of the soft and hard landscaping would be secured by condition and, would be forthcoming at a later date.

The Officer informed the Committee of the Agent of Change principle, as the most significant source of noise was The Music Room given its close proximity to the application site. The Music Room commissioned and agreed to incorporate the results of 2017 and 2019 surveys in its noise assessment submission. The officer described the various construction mitigations taken by the applicant to contain noise on the development. It was also advised the applicant had offered to agree a Deed of Easement across the entire development site which would protect the operators of The Music Room from

complaints from future residents should they arise. It was confirmed that the applicant would fund an independent third party noise assessment in relation to noise generated by The Music Room and any additional mitigation identified within the report would be implemented prior to occupation of the residential units. It was advised that officers were satisfied that the mitigation measures proposed were appropriate and, acceptable in planning terms.

The agent for the applicant, addressed the Committee, describing the scheme. The agent reiterated the points raised by the Officers presentation and report. Emphasis was given to the mixed use of the development and job generation. The representative of the New Cross Gate Trust also addressed the Committee in support of the scheme noting the services, community and office space that would be provided to and in support of the community. It was highlighted that consultation was conducted with the local community and that the local community also strongly supported the scheme. Noise mitigation was noted and it was advised the developments design led approach had avoided conflict with existing businesses. It was felt the development served as a 'catalyst for regeneration' of New Cross and the borough.

Following Members enquiries related to design, cycle storage, height, ventilation, heating, parking, broadband, service charge, social housing, and accommodation.

The agent advised the Committee of the developments brick strategy that entailed mainly red brick, with a 'richness of detail' by adding complimentary bricks. The agent also discussed the varying aspects of the developments design for enhancement purposes. The agent stated there were hues in the local environment that contributed to the choice of the red brick colour. The agent confirmed there would be 568 cycle spaces internally and externally. There would also be a cycle parking management plan secured by s.106 agreement, which would monitor the use and take up of those spaces.

The agent reiterated the earlier advice provided by the Officer regarding design. It was noted that the developments tower was located away from the High Street, due to the 'sensitive' opinion towards it. Following visual assessments, it was conceded that the visual aspects of the development did create some harm, but this was outweighed by the benefits of the development. The agent noted the assessments, concluded they constituted 'less than substantial harm'. It was advised that the development was well furnished with ventilation.

The agent advised Members of the carbon emission reduction and heat network plans for the development. The full details of the plan would be secured by condition with the council and the GLA. It was confirmed the heat system would be centralised on the development. There was no centralised district community-wide heating network available offsite. It was advised if one became available, the developments system could be linked into it.

The agent advised Members that the development area benefitted from a very high PTAL rating. Therefore, the need for parking was not a requirement. It was advised the current GP surgery did not have parking, and no concerns were raised.

It was advised the amenities would be accessible by all of the developments residents and with no extra charges. Broad band was incorporated into all units. It was again confirmed there would be no extra charge attached to the service, as it would be incorporated into the tenancy agreement. The agent confirmed the applicant would work with the developers and officers to ensure the broad band quality was sufficient.

The DMO addressed Members to reiterate the advice provided by the Officers presentation and report regarding social housing. The DMO noted the extremes of those who could be put on the housing register and those who could afford private rents. It was then emphasised there was a need to assist the 'squeezed middle', those who could not get onto the housing list register, nor afford private market rents. The agent advised the London Living Rent was assessed using various job role and family mix scenarios. It was confirmed the development suited keyworkers and depending on job role salaries various unit sizes would be affordable.

The agent advised the Committee that the Mayors ambition for the development would be a 'parking free zone'. The capacity for local street parking was noted. The agent advised Members of the applicants proposed £30,000 contribution toward the consultation and implementation of a CPZ in the area. If implemented, residents would not be allowed to apply for permits. The agent concluded the development would also operate a 'car club' arrangement, where cars would be available, if required.

The agent advised Members that policy accepted unit mix depending on various needs. This development would be more suitable to smaller families, hence the proportion of smaller units was deemed reasonable. In addition, the council's substantial need for housing regardless of unit size and its accessibility meant the proportion of

3 bed units onsite were viewed as reasonable. The DMO confirmed the councils housing delivery programme would provide units as required across its portfolio.

The meeting was adjourned at 21.15pm and reconvened at 21.17pm.

Representatives speaking for Music Room London and local residents immediate to the development, addressed the Committee, citing objections relating to noise mitigation, noise assessment, design, parking and the impact on neighbouring properties, inviting the Committee to defer or reject the proposal to approve the planning application.

Questions were raised by Members relating to noise mitigation and, desired outcomes of the developments construction.

The representative speaking for Music Room London advised one of the noise assessment surveys was conducted during a quiet time. Therefore, there was a need for an independent noise assessment. It was advised the assessment results should be made available before a Committee decision was made on the planning application and adequate mitigation measures then employed.

The representative speaking for residents advised a reduction of building height and a right to light be maintained.

The Officer advised both points raised were material considerations and, had been addressed in the Officer's report. The Officer reiterated the advice regarding the applicant's noise assessment submission and mitigation measures as outlined in the report and, described the measures as 'robust'. The Officer noted any additional mitigation measures identified would be incorporated into the design and construction of the development. These measures would be incorporated prior to occupation. The Officer stated that BRE guidelines were not formal planning guidance and should be applied flexibly according to context. It was acknowledged a development of this type, would experience loss of light, which at the levels identified were considered acceptable.

Telegraph Hill Ward Councillor Luke Sorba addressed the Committee, under Standing Orders in support of the development. Emphasis was given to needs of residents in the private renting sector. The councillor also noted community facilities, diversity, secured tenancies, capped rents linked to local incomes and keyworkers. Increased investment from the council's joint venture partner

Grainger was highlighted. Height of the development was noted and compared to nearby developments of similar height. The councillor concluded on hope being given to residents as a result of the development, and they would not support the application if it did not benefit the community.

Bellingham Ward Councillor Allan Hall addressed the Committee, under Standing Orders representing a constituent. The Councillor discussed the importance of music to the arts in the borough, Agent of Change principle and concerns regarding whether the application was ready for a Committee decision. It was felt three options existed for the Committee: approve, defer or reject the application. It was felt all the details could have been negotiated beforehand and not come to a Planning Committee.

The Councillor raised concerns regarding noise assessment and mitigation, the viability of the development in the current climate and the rising costs of affordable housing construction. The Councillor felt the viability assessments should now be rerun, which would produce new accurate information.

Following member enquiries, Councillor Sorba felt assured by the Officers presentation and report. He advised a balanced view was taken on overlooking and felt the benefits outweighed the concern. Councillor Hall advised it was felt the council committed to building social housing due to the chronic shortage and therefore there should be some social housing in the development under consideration.

During the course of the meeting, the Committee discussed the affordability of the development, the London living wage and the differences between the unit sizes. A Member recommended that London Living Rents data should be available for all future Planning Committee meetings, for Members to view alongside the application under consideration. Officers were asked to put this information in their reports. A Member advised it was felt the private rental sector required reform to allow this type of development to be the normal standard. It was argued such developments would allow individuals below the living wage to have tenure security and, the chance to move toward home ownership. Noise pollution was discussed with regard to the effect on residents. A Member felt the applicant had gone 'over and beyond' to mitigate the noise issues identified. The majority of the Members felt the development was beneficial to the local community.

Members voted on the recommendation in the report with a result of 8 in favour of the proposal and, 1 abstention.

The Committee

## **RESOLVED**

That it be agreed to:

GRANT planning permission subject to a S106 Legal Agreement, for the comprehensive redevelopment of land at the corner of Briant and Besson Street, SE14 including:

o demolition of existing structures to deliver a mixed use development comprising 324 residential units (Use Class C3), flexible retail and commercial floor space (Use Class A1/A3/B1), a Pharmacy (Use Class A1), a GP surgery (Use Class D1) and community space (Use Class D2) in buildings ranging from 3 to 12 storeys, provision of disabled car parking, cycle parking and servicing facilities, landscaping and other associated works.

Subject to conditions and informatives outlined in the report.

The meeting closed at 22.28 pm.

Chair

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