

Local Meeting

Lewisham Gateway Reserved Matters Application

06 November 2014 - 7:00pm

Lewisham Methodist Church Hall

Attendees

Emma Talbot (ET) – LBL Planning
Cllr Stella Jeffrey (SJ) – ward councillor (chair)
Doug Finlay (DF) – Lewisham Gateway Development Ltd (LGDL)/Muse
Richard Hesketh (RH) – QUOD planning consultant
Phil Stanier (PS) – Local Dialogue
Richard Lowenthal (RL) – BWB
David White (DW) – TPS
Craig Sheach (CS) – PRP
Robert High (RH) – PRP
Adrian Judd (AJ) - PRP

Approximately 25 residents attended the meeting

SJ made a brief introduction

ET explained the purpose of the meeting as part of the Council's consultation process set out within the Statement of Community Involvement. The context for the current reserved matters application was explained, noting that the scheme has Outline planning permission for the location and upper and lower limits of blocks, the maximum amount of development and the principle of the scheme and the infrastructure, including roads and rivers, has full planning permission. The present application is to consider the detail of the exact siting, height, appearance and landscaping details for Building B
DF introduced his team.

CS presented the detail of the current reserved matters application and AJ explained the approach to landscaping

KM outlined the approved highway network and location of bus stops in the new 'low-H' road layout and set out the approach to the phasing of the road works.

JB showed the proposed internal arrangement of units within the buildings.

Following the presentations, the floor opened for questions:

The presentation noted that the tallest building could be no more than 70m so why is the building taller than that?

CS answered that the height excludes AOD (above ordinance datum) and is to the main level of the roof only. The approved parameter plans also allow for an allowance for services and items such as balustrades above the roof level of an average 4m height.

Will the buildings be joined at the ground floor and if so, will the public be able to have access through the building?

The buildings would be joined at ground level and whilst there are doors on both sides of the central unit to enable it to be accessed although it would not be a public access route in itself.

The width of routes along the DLR given in the presentation of 7.1m doesn't appear to include planting.

AD confirmed that with the planting, the effective width of the routes would be 5m

Has an allowance been made for flooding? Will there be shallow waters for heron?

The river has been designed to have various depths with deeper areas for fish passage and some shallower areas that might suit birds. Confluence Place has been designed to flood and provides the flood attenuation for the scheme?

Who will be responsible for managing the open space and table and chairs?

DF explained that any tables and chairs associated with café or restaurants would be managed by the operators of those units. More generally, the public realm would be managed by a management company paid for via the developer and the service charge.

ET confirmed that the Council would not be taking on responsibility for the public areas of the site but would (and have) secured details to ensure that the management of the routes and park would be consistent with the Council's management.

Why has a darker brick been proposed when the predominant colour in the area is yellow brick?

CS stated that he believed there was a range of brick colours within the area and felt that the colour was appropriate.

Have the volumes of pedestrians and traffic been updated rather than relying on 2009 data and studies? This should be looking at pinch points around the station and more needs to be done to integrate the development with the station. Could the ground floor be opened up to provide more permeability? Has the ability of the station to accommodate the anticipated number of people been considered? If access isn't achieved, would the scheme be reduced in scale?

DF answered that LGDL seek better integration with the station and had approached southeastern to enquire about reopening the Platform 4 entrance and also the horseshoe to the front of the station. This hadn't been successful to date. He explained further that the geometry of the scheme had sought to improve access to the station and that more recent modelling had been undertaken. Access through the ground floor wasn't being proposed as there is a need for a sustainable and sizable commercial space at ground floor.

ET added that the application is accompanied by an analysis of pedestrian movement that was being assessed but this did not extend into the Station itself. Whilst it is the Council's desire to improve access into the Station, if that is not achieved, there is not the ability to scale back the scheme as it has been approved in outline already. At this time, the concern from southeastern appears to be about revenue protection and the need for a gate-line at platform 4 if that was opened.

Would LGDL consider putting money into the Station if it meant that that access could be reopened.

DF stated that they had not been asked to do that.

Where is the drop off for the public using the Station? People will want access to Station Road.

For the general public, the use of Station Road will be managed by TfL and they have concerns about the public using Station Road. It could be accessed by disabled users and taxis.

There is no car park for Building B so where will people park?

ET answered that there is a legal restriction preventing any future resident from applying for a permit within the CPZ. A level of car parking is approved for the scheme and would be delivered in a later phase.

Where will buses wait?

The Thurston Road bus stand is permanent and operational.

Where are the new bus stops and how wide will the pavement be to accommodate people waiting? The current arrangements mean that the pavements are crowded.

There are various bus stops around the development but the exact location of stops and which routes will serve those has not yet been determined by TfL/London Buses. The main area of bus stops is to the west of Building D and the blocks will have to be designed so that sufficient space is made available for bus stops. The main routes will be through the centre of the scheme to seek to remove areas of conflict between those people waiting for a bus and those wishing to walk through the site.

Confluence Place seems too small and could resemble a ditch. How will this be safe? A bridge should be included to allow people to make a north/south movement through the site.

It was explained that the park would be managed and that it would operate in the same way as a Council park with gates being locked at night. A bridge is not part of the current proposals.

What level is open space is being lost compared to how much is being provided?

No answer was provided on the night

Post meeting note – the original committee report for the scheme included details of the net change in open space for the scheme as a whole:

	Existing	Proposed	Net change
Metropolitan Open Land	3040m ²	577m ²	-2463m ²
Accessible Open Space	1193m ²	3450m ²	+2257m ²

(from 2007 Report to Strategic Planning Committee, para 6.8.4)

How many extra people will the scheme accommodate overall?

The exact figure was not known but was estimated at around 1500.

Post meeting note – the original Environmental Statement that accompanied the original planning application (DC/06/62375) included details of the predicted population increase as a result of the scheme. This was predicted to be between 1383 and 1768 people on completion.

How tall will the scheme be generally?

ET explained the parameter plans and identified the tall zones, mid zone and lower zones throughout the development.

Where are the other uses that were promised? This scheme is just flats and is disappointing.

DF stated that there are smaller retail units in the phase 1 but other uses throughout the scheme in the later phase which will come forward as those details are progressed. LGDL are still committed to provide a cinema if there is the interest from an operator and a level of return that enables it to be viable. He confirmed that the Council are pushing for this. There will be a lettings strategy and staggered release of buildings but the scheme and the proposed mix of uses has not changed since the scheme was originally considered.

Who are the units being sold to? Where are they being marketed?

DF answered that two blocks had been pre-sold for Private Rented Schemes (PRS). DF referred to PRS as being a form of affordable housing. ET clarified that PRS was not a form of affordable housing in planning terms and the scheme currently proposed that no affordable housing was delivered in this phase due to viability.

DF answered that the blocks were marketed in the UK first and were still being marketed but had also been released in other countries.

What about doctors' surgeries? Will there be capacity. Need assurances from the Council.

ET answered that the original Environmental Statement included an assessment of the impact on local surgeries and was found to be acceptable. No further Section 106 contributions could be sought at this stage but this scheme has been taken into account in forecasts on health and education needs.

What does the new road system provide in terms of improved cycling facilities?

ET explained that the original scheme included advanced stop lines but since that time further refinement had taken place through discussions with TfL, not all of which involved planning. Those discussions are continuing to make sure that the scheme maximises benefits to cycling.

Lots of things have been mentioned – wider pavements, improved station access, cinema but none are certain. Not convinced about health and education provision. Can you understand why people are concerned?

Yes, it is understandable why people would be concerned. LGDL undertake regeneration schemes and do want to improve the area.

The number of children living in 2 bedroom units has increased. Has this been taken into account?

ET answered that this could be looked at.

Are PV cells being looked at?

ET answered that the scheme did not propose PV cells for this phase but the approach to renewable energy would be looked at again in later phases. If new technologies or ways of delivering energy had been developed these should be looked at, at that time.

Large scale developments such as this should be looking at how to personalise the cores to deal with issues of mental health and ensure that people know their neighbours.

CS explained that the scheme has been designed to meet the London Housing Design Guidance. This included providing storage, meeting the London Plan minimum space standards, providing 5 units per core and having dual aspect units.

Lewisham has no social heart and if this scheme helps to address that it should be applauded. Encouraging to hear that the developer is committed to a cinema but will have to look at the overall development further to see if it is delivering what is needed within the town centre.

ET advised that the Lewisham Town Centre Local Plan is available on the Council's website and explains the overall vision for the town centre and how aspects can be improved.

The meeting closed and ET explained next steps with the scheme being considered at planning committee accompanied by a copy of the note of the local meeting.