

# MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE B

Thursday, 30 August 2018 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Suzannah Clarke (Chair), Tom Copley (Vice-Chair), Tauseef Anwar, Andre Bourne, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Silvana Kelleher, John Muldoon and James Rathbone

ALSO PRESENT: OFFICERS: Suzanne White – Planning Service, Paula Young – Legal Services, Samuel James – Committee Co-ordinator, Holly Lucas – Planning Officer, David Robinson – Planning Officer

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Obajimi Adefiranye and Councillor John Paschoud

## 1. Declarations of Interests

No declarations of interest.

## 2. Minutes

Members approved minutes for Committee B held on 19<sup>th</sup> July.

Prior to presentation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> item, the Chair announced that the 4<sup>th</sup> Item on the agenda, 34 St Margaret's Passage, had been pulled from the agenda by officers due to some late information being received by herself during that day, which officers did not have time to consider prior to the meeting.

## 3. NORTHWEST GARAGES, KNAPDALE CLOSE, LONDON, SE23 3XG

The presenting Planning Officer Suzanne White (SW) explained the details of the application by Lewisham Homes for the demolition of 8 garages, surface car park and 'drying area' at Knapdale Close, to allow the construction of 17 self-contained flats of 100% socially rented tenure.

27 letters of objection were received, and 1 in support. A local meeting was held on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018, where issues including existing management of the estate, sunlight/daylight/overlooking concerns, and highways concerns were raised.

The proposal is considered by officers to be acceptable, and the scheme therefore recommended for approval. Questions from Councillors to the presenting officer followed.

Councillor Muldoon (CM) raised concern that the parking would not be allocated and SW clarified that Condition 16 was for submission of details of a Parking Management Plan to control this issue.

Councillor Kelleher (CK) stated that she lives on an estate, and that non-residents parking there is an issue, and stated that the management plan should ensure only residents can use the spaces.

Councillor Johnston-Franklin (CJF) raised concern that the lack of provision of wheelchair units was not policy compliant. SW explained that due to level changes on-site, it was not practical to deliver wheelchair units in this location, and where there are practical difficulties, the policy allows for less provision of wheelchair units. It was explained that any wheelchair user in this location would be required to have a car to access the site, and this would be an unreasonable expectation.

CJF reiterated her concern, and asked why it would not be possible to deliver at least one wheelchair unit in one of the end units. SW explained that any wheelchair user would not be able to get up Eliot Bank without a vehicle.

Chair Councillor Clarke (CC) noted that some of the trees to be removed were Ash Trees, and that Ash trees were becoming rare, and questioned whether any Ash trees would be replanted. SW clarified that there is no policy directly pertaining to protection of Ash trees, but that the replanted trees would all be native species.

CC stated that Ash trees should be replaced, and moved on to ask for a comparison of the height of the proposed buildings and the existing blocks of flats on the site. SW showed the elevation drawings again on the screen, and stated that a comparison had been made in the officers report, on page 30 of the agenda. SW stated that the heights were very similar to the existing blocks.

Councillor Rathbone (CR), following up from CC's question, wanted to know how much of the height was due to the pitched roof. Approximately 2.5m above the top of the top windows clarified SW, and she stated that this was angled away from neighbouring windows, which reduces the bulk and impact on neighbouring occupiers' amenity.

20:05 Councillor Bourne arrived and took a seat.

The Chair invited the applicant to approach the table and speak in support of the proposal. Neil Campbell (NC) of BPTW explained that estate residents had been engaged throughout the application process through consultations and their "New Homes, Better Places" programme, and that the proposal has been adapted in response to concerns raised. He stated that they were committed to continuing this obligation to existing residents throughout the construction process and beyond, through a 'package of improvements'.

He went on to explain the design rationale, and how the proposal had been sensitively designed to minimise impacts of overlooking and respond to the site context. Traffic and parking assessments had been carried out in July, and highways improvements would be secured through the Section 106 agreement. Questions from Councillors to the applicants followed:

CJF asked the applicant why no wheelchair units would be provided. NC reiterated that due to site constraints and level changes the provision of wheelchair units would be inappropriate, and that this had been agreed at the Pre-application stage. CJF stated that this should have been noted in the officer's report.

CK questioned whether a non-wheelchair user could be moved from a wheelchair adaptable unit and put into one of the proposed flats, and a wheelchair user be given their flat. CC stated that this could be considered as a wider policy, but was not a material consideration to this planning application.

CC asked the applicant to justify the height of the building and raised concern over the overlooking and moderate sunlight and daylight impacts identified in the report. NC stated that the proposed buildings are of a similar scale and proportions to those existing on-site, but with a contemporary design style. He stated that the closest overlooking between windows was 19.8m and showed this on a plan, and that this was sufficient.

CC raised concern that 6 windows had been identified in the Daylight/Sunlight Assessment as having minor to moderate transgressions. SW clarified that only 2 moderate transgressions had been identified in Forest Croft, and the other 4 were only minor, which on a balance is acceptable.

Councillor Anwar (CA) requested further information on the proposed parking controls. The applicant responded by stating it would initially be uncontrolled, but as part of the parking management plan Lewisham Homes would monitor the situation, and if residents felt that a permit system was required then this could be introduced.

CR stated that the parking concerns should be addressed at this stage, as it had been repeatedly raised as a concern during consultations. NC replied that the total number of parking spaces was being increased at an almost 1:1 ratio for new dwellings, and that the parking survey showed capacity on surrounding streets. The monitoring system to be secured in the parking management plan would be in place to ensure this.

CC thanked the applicants and invited the objectors to take the table.

Rebecca Thurgood (RT), the chair of the Forest Estate Residents Association next spoke on behalf of objecting residents. She stated that the site was very peculiar and had many constraints which could only be appreciated when visiting the site, and expressed her concern that all members had not been to site prior to the meeting. Concern was also expressed over the proposed access, and whether emergency vehicles would be able to access if they needed to. She also expressed concern that the delivery and servicing, and construction management plans were being conditioned, and not dealt with prior to making a decision, as no consultations were required for approval of detail applications and residents would therefore have no say.

Further concerns was expressed towards the access road, previous refuse management at the site, previous management of the estate by Lewisham Homes, overlooking, outlook and sunlight/daylight issues.

CM asked whether RT was proposing the committee defer the application to allow for a site visit to be made, and she indicated that was what she was saying.

CC sought clarification from the objector over how the existing road conditions have an impact on this application specifically. RT replied that the Section 278 agreement would add yellow lines, resulting in the loss of on-street parking, which hasn't been accounted for. She went on to state the indicative construction management plan has errors, and that all details should be provided prior to a decision being made, and repeated the proposal to defer the decision.

CC stated that it is normal for the construction management plan to be conditioned, and determined after the decision has been made, and that it would be unreasonable to defer on those grounds. RT responded by saying that the decision should be deferred due to the lack of a site visit then, to which CC replied she had visited the site as Chair of the committee, so it couldn't be deferred on those grounds either.

Councillor Gibbons (CG) next spoke under standing orders as a ward councillor. He stated that he was not speaking to directly oppose the proposal, but wanted to give additional context to the objecting resident's concerns. He reiterated concerns regarding the access road and emergency vehicle access, as well as illegal parking – citing the fact that in July a fire engine was not able to access the site when required. He reiterated concerns of overlooking, acknowledging the 19m separation between windows, but only as little as 5m between windows and rear boundaries of neighbouring gardens. He raised concerns over damp in some existing flats, and the loss of the clothes drying area to make way for the proposal.

CA sought clarification from the presenting officer as to whether the London Fire Brigade had found the emergency access acceptable. SW confirmed they had raised no objections, and cited the 45m test that is applied.

CG stated that the proposed parking appeared tight, and would be difficult to manoeuvre should the car park be full. CC stated that the proposal is for a formalised and more ordered parking system, as opposed to the existing informal situation, which clearly represents an improvement. She sought clarification from the presenting officer on turning for refuse vehicles. SW showed the swept path drawings, and stated that this point had been considered at length during assessment, and had been found to be acceptable. The yellow lines at pinch points would alleviate the issues raised.

CK asked the presenting officer whether the road could be widened, as there seemed to be a lot of space either side of the road. SW responded by saying that the road would now effectively be widened, as it would be a shared pedestrian/vehicle surface. CJF sought clarification on this point, and SW replied that there would be demarcation between the road/pedestrian path with different landscaping materials for each surface, she also stated that traffic calming measures would be in place to slow down drivers.

CR stated that the main issues were the access via Knapdale, and the parking, as well as emergency vehicle access and asked whether conditions could be strengthened at all, for example by enforcing a residents only parking management plan, and by bringing conditions back to committee for decision. SW replied that the conditions could be decided by the committee should Councillors want to request this.

CC asked whether anyone wanted to propose a motion. CK again asked whether the road could be widened, and CC clarified that it couldn't be as part of the current application. SW stated that currently people park on the access road, which would now be controlled, so the road didn't need to be widened.

Councillor Muldoon asked how far strengthening conditions can go to alleviating the previously mentioned issues, and stated that the construction management plan should provide a definitive statement on management of access.

SW stated that if councillors felt there was enough information to be comfortable that the access would work in principle, then conditioning it is a strong enough measure to control the issue.

Councillor Copley moved to accept the officer's recommendation to grant planning permission, especially considering the 100% affordable tenure, and provision of 40% + family housing. Councillor Muldoon seconded.

Members voted as follows:

FOR RECOMMENDATION: Councillors Clarke (Chair), Copley (vice-chair) Anwar, Franklin, Kelleher, Muldoon and Rathbone.

AGAINST RECOMMENDATION: None

ABSTAINED: None

RESOLVED: Unanimously accept officer's recommendation and grant planning permission.

**4. 34 ST MARGARETS PASSAGE, LONDON, SE13 5BS**

Pulled from agenda.

**5. DEPTFORD CREEK ADJACENT TO PHOENIX WHARF, NORMAN ROAD, LONDON, SE10**

SW outlined the proposal for permission to install multiple marine works within Deptford Creek to facilitate barge movements associated with the construction of the Thames Tideway sewage pipeline. The public benefit of the work includes the fact there would be just 2 barge movements per day compared with hundreds of HGV movements. There is no long term ecological or heritage asset damage predicted. It was noted that Greenwich Council had already given consent to the works on their side of the creek.

CK noted that she was aware of 7 residential barges on the creek, and questioned the impact upon them. SW stated that this had been raised by an objector, and the proposal would have no impact on these barges, and navigational rights would not be affected.

CK raised further concern with regard to the residential barges, and asked whether there was a danger they could be capsized by the works, and whether any conditions could protect them.

CM stated he was concerned with the ecological impacts and raised specific concern regarding the impact on birds such as kingfishers. SW replied that she couldn't answer specifics regarding the ecological impacts, but that the Environment Agency and the Council's Ecological Regeneration manager had been consulted and were happy with the proposed mitigation measures.

CC asked why there was a need to re-silt the river bed after the works had been completed. SW replied that this was to reinstate the river bed back to its natural condition and to reinstate the ecology that would be lost due to dredging.

CFJ sought confirmation that the creek would be restored, and that no spoil would be left as a result when works have been completed. SW clarified that it would be highly unlikely to be left in a poor condition, considering the amount of statutory bodies involved in regulating the works.

The applicant, a representative of CVB who would carry out the works, and a representative of Thames Tideway took to the table to make their case in support of the proposal.

Firstly they stated that no one lives on the barges stored closest to the application site, and claimed they have been empty since 2007. Tideway have engaged with the owners of the vessels and they have been re-located. The closest barges being lived on are 100m from the dredging site.

They also clarified that kingfishers will not be affected, as the dredging would be over a short time-frame, and only the silt would be impacted. There is also a Construction Ecology Management Plan as a part of the wider Tideway works.

They also stated that as part of the works a lot of refuse had already been cleared from the creek, and other regulatory bodies are very strict about leaving things behind.

CK stated that the site is in her ward, and asked whether the tow-path on Lewisham's side would be retained or reinstated, as access has recently been lost. The applicant replied that there would be no impact on the Lewisham bank side.

CC questioned whether any pollution could be brought up by the dredging works. The applicant replied that there will be constant monitoring for contamination whilst works are being carried out, and there are processes in place if contamination is detected.

Councillor Rathbone moved to accept the officer's recommendation and approve the application for planning permission, including the additional conditions suggested by officers. This was seconded by Councillor Kelleher.

Members voted as follows:

FOR RECOMMENDATION: Councillors Clarke (Chair), Copley (vice-chair), Bourne, Anwar, Johnston-Franklin, Kelleher, Muldoon, and Rathbone.

AGAINST RECOMMENDATION: None

ABSTAINED: None

RESOLVED: Unanimously accept officer's recommendation and grant planning permission.

Meeting closed at 21:30