

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE - PRE-APPLICATION

MONDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2022

THIS MEETING WAS LIVE STREAMED AND CAN BE VIEWED HERE:
<https://youtu.be/6SWTheH1zul>

Councillors Present: Councillor Steve Race in the Chair

Cllr Michael Desmond
Cllr Clare Joseph
Cllr Clare Potter
Cllr Ali Sadek
Cllr Jessica Webb (Vice Chair)
Cllr Sarah Young

Apologies: Councillor Lee Laudat-Scott, Councillor Michael Levy and Councillor Jon Narcross

Officers in Attendance: Rob Brew, Major Applications Team
Natalie Broughton, Head of Planning and Building Control
Louise Claeys, Principal Sustainability and Climate Change Officer
Luciana Grave, Conservation, Urban Design and Sustainability Manager
Matt Payne, Conservation, Urban Design & Sustainability Deputy Manager
Catherine Slade, Major Projects Principal Planning Officer - Woodberry Down
Gareth Sykes, Governance Officer
Christine Stephenson, Legal Officer

Also in Attendance: Matthew Bailey, Director, Hodkinson Consultancy
Mark Bell, Fabrik
Charlie Blunt, Berkeley Homes
Oliver Coleman, Associate, Rolfe Judd
Sarah Fabes, Berkeley Homes
Jane Havemann, Interim Head of Regeneration (Woodberry Down), Hackney Council
Nicola Hudson, Project Manager (Woodberry Down), Regeneration, Hackney Council
Martin Kiefer, LDS
Jaime Powell, Berkeley Homes
Babak Samangouei, Arup
Leo Scarfe, Berkeley Homes
Sean Tickle, Rolfe Judd

1 Apologies for absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Levy, Cllr Narcross and Cllr Laudat-Scott.
- 1.2 Apologies for lateness were received from Cllr Desmond.

2 Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 Councillor Young declared an interest; she had been involved in the planning process prior to the pre-application meeting and had attended the Woodberry Down Community Organisations' (WDCOs) board meetings. The Councillor stated that she would recuse herself from the future Planning Sub-Committee meeting when the application came for decision.

3 To consider any proposal/questions referred to the sub-committee by the Council's Monitoring Officer

- 3.1 None.

4 Minutes of the previous meeting

- 4.1 The minutes of the previous pre-application meeting, held on 19 October 2022, were agreed as an accurate record of those meeting's proceedings.

RESOLVED:

The minutes of the previous pre-application meeting, held on 19 October 2022, were, subject to a minor amendment, approved as an accurate record of those meetings' proceedings.

5 Woodberry Down Masterplan - Phase 4

- 5.1 The Major Projects Principal Planning Officer - Woodberry Down briefly introduced the proposals.
- 5.2 The Sub-Committee noted that there was a minor amendment to the presentation pack (previously included in the published papers). The main change was that the proposal was now for 473 units rather than 470.
- 5.3 The Sub-Committee heard from various representatives from Arup, Berkeley Homes, Fabrik, LDS and Rolfe Judd and from the Council's regeneration team who gave an overview of the proposals for Woodberry Down Phase four, including context, vision, layout, design and the sustainability approach.
- 5.4 A discussion took place where a number of points were raised including the following:
- It was noted that although the Phase 4 application would be a standalone application for full planning permission, the phase four proposals had to be considered in the wider context of the regeneration of the whole of the Woodberry Down estate. Existing tenants in phase four would move into phase three that was already

Monday 14 November 2022

under construction. Those existing tenants in phase five would also move into phase three and so forth;

- One of the representatives for Berkeley Homes explained that the Principal Development Agreement introduced Shared Ownership as a tenure type whereas previously all units had been either Social Rent or leasehold. Some of the Sub-Committee members raised concerns about a "shrinking pool" of existing residents, i.e. that secure tenants were being replaced with temporary tenants. The Council's Regeneration team replied that they had seen an increasing numbers of tenants, increasing the numbers of Social Rent, through a trend of 'split households';
- Only one to two bedroom shared ownership units were proposed under Phase 4 after the applicant had taken advice from the Notting Hill Genesis Housing Association. Three bedroom units were not considered as they were seen as unaffordable;
- The applicant stated that of the existing units in phase four 41 units were leasehold with 15 out of phase. 144 were social housing. Members queried whether the proposed 90 social rented units re-provide the 144 social rent units on Phase 4;
- The applicant noted the "portfolio approach" to re-provision which has resulted in 2317 units so far being built on the estate of which 537 were shared ownership;
- The whole estate development was tenure-blind;
- The Financial Viability Assessment for phase four had not yet been submitted. It would be included as part of the future planning application;
- By the completion of phase five all of the remaining existing tenants were expected to have been rehoused within the Woodberry Down estate;
- The rationale behind the approach to massing was explained, in relation to the block along Seven Sisters Road providing a barrier between the highway and the courtyard garden which would protect the amenity space in relation to air quality and noise;
- The applicant had undertaken air quality assessments on Seven Sisters Road and at the facade line, the results had shown the levels were aligned with national standards;
- By increasing the massing of the buildings along Seven Sisters Road the south side would be opened up so those gaps between each building to the south would allow daylight/sunlight into the plot and would provide a benefit to those north side residents;
- Under the proposals no one would be able to travel through the middle of the site, but there would be a green link between Seven Sisters Road and Woodberry Down in the west of the site;
- Due to the podium garden at the first floor level there would not be a break at street level between the proposed buildings. This would also provide car parking and servicing at ground floor level;
- From the proposals it was highlighted that several of the proposed units were dual aspect, in that they met the London Plan's definition. However, the Council's Planning Service found that some of those proposed units did not quite have the level of cross ventilation to allow for a conventional through flow. There remained concerns about the possibility of overheating in those units;

Monday 14 November 2022

- The Council's Planning Service was generally satisfied that most units would receive an adequate level of light. However, there was a 'pinch point' in the extreme west end of the site. Solutions had been proposed, however, concerns remained over the quality of the units and the design impacts in that area of the site:
- The applicant was currently in the process of collating a number of technical reports for the scheme, all of those technical reports would be independently assessed by accredited experts;
- It was understood that, prior to occupancy, the new buildings would be signed off an approved inspector and that samples of concrete would be strength tested before use;
- Within the Transport for London (TfL) proposals for Seven Sisters Road there was a crossing midway between Woodberry Grove and Manor House. Discussions were under way to move the line to be aligned with the phase four proposals. The TfL proposals were not equal with the North side as there was a cycle lane and a wider pavement was located there with additional trees and protection from the street. The focus of the Master Plan was to have pedestrianisation on that north side where there was more protection. An improvement scheme, which had been funded Phase three planning permission, however, it was understood that it was not progressing very fast. There may be a requirement to deliver an interim solution if Phase Four appeared that it was going to progress ahead of delivery;
- Some of the Sub-Committee members highlighted that the pre-existing buildings were generally characterised by deck access which had design, ventilation and social benefits. The architect confirmed that under the phase four proposals the applicant was seeking to move away from a previous long linear corridor design which had led to a hotel-like feel, grouping front doors in clusters to allow a sense of community between neighbours and providing spaces to wait and meet neighbours in lobby areas;
- Under the proposals there would be open windows on the Seven Sisters Road side to prevent overheating. Steps had also been taken to maximise the opening of windows across all of the phases. The technical reports to be submitted would provide further details;
- On the issue of wind tunnels occurring on site, the findings of applicant's tests had been disputed by local residents and it was confirmed that further modelling was required. Discussions were to take place with WDCO to look at the issue in further detail. There was an expectation that the current proposals were designed in such a way that allowed for safe and appropriate wind conditions around the central square and the rest of the development;
- The Phase four proposals would not encroach upon the TfL pavement;
- On concerns raised about the height of the towers under phase four proposals it was noted that there were already three existing tall buildings in the immediate vicinity. The proposed towers would still be shorter than two of the existing buildings;
- The proposed units would be tenure-blind; the layouts of the private sale and shared ownership were interchangeable;
- The funding for the wider Seven Sisters Road improvement scheme was attached to the phase three s106 agreement. It included a

Monday 14 November 2022

requirement for a steering group to be set up between the various stakeholders e.g. Hackney Council, TfL and Berkeley Homes. This work was ongoing and would run parallel to the other phase four work;

- On the retention of the existing trees, the applicant explained that they would assess each tree on a case by case basis and confirmed that there is an arboriculturist on the applicant team;
- References to public spaces in the published papers referred to the central square, the pocket park to the south of the site and the Saint Olaf's Green Link space. Discussions were ongoing to determine which Council team would have long term responsibility for those areas;
- The podium area was intended for residents and their visitors only, although a small area may potentially be made accessible for users of the library (see below). There would be tenure blind access;
- Hackney Council was currently undertaking a feasibility study to determine if a library could be delivered on site along with how much flexible space was also needed;
- A mechanically-assisted ventilation system would control the release of exhaust fumes from the car park into the podium area above. The podium's play space was not directly adjacent to the ventilation system and only a small amount of fumes was expected to be released into only one location at the podium. An air quality assessment would be included as part of the technical reports to follow. Studies had been undertaken by the applicant and it was noted that the ventilation systems' fans would be running several minutes a day and would be triggered by a car idling;
- The podium was included as part of phase four proposals because of the requirement for the car parking place. A basement had been considered but was deemed to be too expensive;
- Under the proposals there was a requirement to provide car parking spaces for existing returning residents with existing car parking privileges. The need for these car parking spaces would reduce over time but currently this was difficult to quantify. Members noted from the Council's Regeneration Team that the reduction in demand for car parking spaces and use of the space would require careful consideration and a long term plan.;
- The podium would also provide plant cycle parking space and bin storage. The applicants suggested that this may result in a more active frontage and through a series of layering might provide a number of features including play space, biodiversity and urban greening;
- The podium was the first of its kind as part of the Woodberry Down Estate regeneration scheme to be accessible to all tenure tenants and their visitors. It was never proposed that it would be a public area;
- Residents would gain entry to the proposed parking space through use of a fob control system;
- Service charge costs for phase four were expected to be similar to those of previous phases of the project;
- The proposed play space within the podium was targeted at 0 to 11 years old but that older children would not be excluded. There would

Monday 14 November 2022

not be a focus on athletic activities in this area as alternative facilities are already available elsewhere on the estate;

- Currently car club and cycle club schemes were not included as part of the car park area proposals as the car park is a private space with limited access;
- In response to a Member question about how the Central Square would function, the applicant explained that the proposed central square would act as the civic heart of the estate and was intended to be an inviting space where people would slow down and linger;
- Members asked about healthcare (socio-economic) impacts of the proposals, and the applicant confirmed that this would be covered by the Environmental Impact Assessment (Environmental Statement) and the Regeneration Team explained that the library feasibility study would also look at “co-located” facilities;
- In terms of lessons learned from previous public spaces, the applicant noted that the Central Square and podium garden were to be different, and was currently working with local residents on a number of areas, for example the use and design of the benches. As the work continued bench design would be refined to ensure that they were flexible and could be used by all members of the local community;
- It was proposed that the use of private gardens would be less passive compared to previous phases of the regeneration scheme;
- The proposed green spaces under phase four would be reflective of the wild areas around the east reservoir;
- Under phase four the public spaces would be strengthened by bringing the character in from the edges through various measures such as planting for example;
- The proposed net zero carbon target was based on the operational emissions associated with the scheme, and confirmed that the proposals would exceed the GLA’s targets in relation to embodied carbon. This would be achieved through a number of initiatives including green roofs and the recycling of materials from the demolished existing buildings on site. Where possible materials would be reused;
- The Sub-Committee members noted that a ‘fabric first’ approach would apply to the whole design of the building;
- Details were forthcoming on the use of Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) in phase four. They would sit on top of the two tallest buildings linked to an energy centre in Phase 3. They were considered to be a more flexible option and no alternative source of heating was proposed;
- The applicant had not considered retaining and refurbishing the existing buildings on site. While they were in good condition but had accessibility issues and were not structured in a way to allow for cost effective extension or infill of space for example;
- Commitments had been made with the Design Committee. This Committee was a group set up from Berkeley Homes, the Regeneration Team, Notting Hill Genesis Housing Association and WDCO members. They would look at the design of the bin storage areas long term and further details were to follow. The positioning of the bin storage area was related to service charge and the residents’ ability to access them as well as ensuring that refuse collection could

Monday 14 November 2022

gain access to the area without the need to move the bins. Three collection points were proposed;

- There were two dedicated delivery bays accessible by delivery vans on site within the podium area;
- All deliveries, waste collection etc. would be from Woodberry Down (not Seven Sisters Road);
- The security of letter boxes and their accessibility by tenants would be included as part of the final proposals.

Duration of the meeting: 6:30pm – 9:55pm

Chair of the meeting: Councillor Steve Race

Contact:

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