

ROYAL BOROUGH OF GREENWICH

PLANNING BOARD

6 JULY 2021 AT 6.30PM

MINUTE

PRESENT:

Members:

Councillor Stephen Brain (Chair); Councillors Gary Dillon, Olu Babatola, Sandra Bauer, John Fahy, Averil Lekau, Clive Mardner, Geoffrey Brighty and Nigel Fletcher

Officers:

Assistant Director Planning & Building Control, Planning Manager (Major Developments), Principal Planning Officer, Solicitor for Legal Services and Committee Services Officer

At the commencement of the meeting the Chair announced the procedure which the Meeting of the Board would be followed for considering the item(s) before the Board, including that, as the meeting was being held under Covid-19 regulations it was limited to sitting for one hour and at the agreement of the Board Members could continue for one further hour, following an adjournment to air the room.

Item

No.

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for this meeting

2. Urgent Business

The Planning Board noted and accepted the Planning Officers' Addendum report and public submission circulated in advance of the meeting, in relation to;

Item 5 – Land at Nos. 6, 61-81 and Coopers Yard, Eastmoor Street and Nos. 6 & 10 Westmoor Street, Charlton, London, SE7 8LX - Ref: 20/1924/F

3. Declarations of Interest

In respect of Item 5 - Land at Nos. 6, 61-81 and Coopers Yard, Eastmoor Street and Nos. 6 & 10 Westmoor Street, Charlton, London, SE7 8LX - Ref: 20/1924/F; Councillor Dillon declared that he was a member of the Charlton Society but had no involvement in the Societies comments or address on this application.

Resolved –

That the list of Councillors' memberships as Council appointed representatives on outside bodies, joint committees and school governing bodies be noted.

4. Evelyn House, 5-31 Eastmoor Street, Charlton, SE7 8LX - Ref: 20/2186/F

The Chair advised that this item was listed on the Agenda in case it was not possible to fully consider it at the Planning Board Meeting of 28 June 2001. The application was considered and discharged at the meeting of 28 June 2001.

5. Land at Nos. 6, 61-81 and Coopers Yard, Eastmoor Street and Nos. 6 & 10 Westmoor Street, Charlton, London, SE7 8LX - Ref: 20/1924/F

Councillor Dillon declared that he was a member of the Charlton Society but had no involvement in the Societies comments or address on this application.

The Planning Manager (Major Developments) gave an illustrative presentation noting that whilst the application exceeded the height recommendations set out in the Charlton Masterplan and Charlton Riverside SPD, the public benefits were judged to deem it as an acceptable proposal.

In response to Members questions the Principal Planning Officer confirmed that the during the pre-application process the height of the proposal had been reduced as had the density and number of units, which had also impacted the affordable housing offer. She confirmed that the proposal had been assessed and confirmed as acceptable by the Council appointed independent viability officer.

The Assistant Director Planning & Building Control advised Member that the affordable units would be available to people on the Council housing waiting list and were let at the London Affordable Rent, which was comparable to Council social housing rent levels.

The Principal Planning Officer advised that Officers had taken regard of the Secretary of States comments on the Rockmount Development (VIP) and considered that there were distinct differences between the proposal's with the one before Members including lower building height, lower density and a smaller scale of the development.

The Planning Manager (Major Developments) confirmed to Members that there was play provision on three levels of the podiums for 0-5 year olds as well as a green area and green link providing provision for 5-12 year olds and 12+. Further, the provision of play space exceeded policy requirement.

N.B – The Planning Board, having sat for an hour agreed to adjourn for 15 minutes, in order to allow the room to air, in line with Covid-19 Health & Safety guidelines, before re-convening for, up to one further hour.

The Planning Board accepted address' from the representatives of;- the Charlton Society; Charlton Central Residents Association; Derick & Atlas Residents Association; Charlton Benefice and Charlton Together. Further, the Planning Board accepted address' from five residents who, in speaking to the application stated;

- The Royal Borough of Greenwich spent over £1 million on the development of the Charlton Masterplan and Charlton Riverside SPD, which residents supported. The aim of which was to avoid similar high-rise blocks, as seen at the Peninsular and Woolwich, directing developments were of low to medium height, not exceeding 6 floors and protect the special character of the Charlton Riverside.
- The application breached the Charlton Riverside SPD, at 6 floors raising to 9 floors and would not keep the ethos of human scale. It did not reflect the Heritage significance of the area, as set out in the London Plan.
- At the first development on site it would set the template for future proposals for the area and it should start by respect and adhering to the Charlton Masterplan, Charlton Riverside SPD and London Plan and be an innovative building reflecting the heritage and character of the area.
- The development was not in line with the Charlton Riverside SPD, which sought mixed use of the site between housing and industry and low and mid-rise residential development to create a 'village feel'. The proposal also had to be considered in connect with the wider Charlton area, as guided by the Charlton Masterplan.
- Integrated employment and housing were a key aspect of the Charlton Riverside SPD and, whilst the re-location package to existing business was welcomed, the proposal had reduced the commercial offering, rather than housing density, to reduce the height from the original to current proposal.

- The proposed landmark 9 floor element was uninspiring and, like the entire proposal, did not reflect the existing architectural design, character or history of the area.
- The Thames Barrier formed the landmark to the Thames, needing renewal with then next 60 years, which was no reference in the report or appeared to have been taken into account, as part of this development.
- Architectural features such as the set-back 7th floor and single windows spanning two floors did not detract from the over density of the development which would have an increased impact on the local infrastructure.
- The proposal would be twice the recommended density of the Charlton Masterplan, SPD and London Plan at 342 units per hectare, instead of the guided 151-200 units per hectare. The London Plan sought 8,000 housing units for the Charlton Riverside. However, if the density of this proposal was reflected across the Charlton Riverside, the density level could approach 21,00 units.
- The scale of the development would have an adverse impact on daylight and sunlight and the visual perception of the area.
- The affordable housing offer had changed from 35%, to 28 % to the current 30% which was below the Council requirement of 35% and seemed to be used as a bargaining chip to overcome the issues of height and density.
- The affordable housing element would not be affordable to many key workers or residents, who would be forced out of the area.
- A similar development proposal for the area, which offered 100% affordable housing, was refused by the Planning Board at its last meeting, as it was not in line with the Charlton Masterplan & Charlton Riverside SPD guidance on height and density.
- A robust landscaping proposal, which enhanced the public realm and support ecology, and environment concerns was needed as the public realm associated with the development was lacking, with small green areas which would be insufficient for bull games or mixed use. The podium play areas would be exposed to winds, dark and overlooked as well as potentially causing noise nuisance.
- Accepting the proposal was designed before the Covid-19 pandemic, the outcomes of the pandemic, such as the need for green areas, needed to be reflected and integrated to ensure the development was sustainable to the long-term well-being of residents.
- The Covid-19 virus could remain alive on dust particles, which needed to be considered as part of any demolition process.
- There appeared to be little or no appreciation for the Council's and National Carbon Neutral Strategy as the proposal was not car free and would provide parking, which would contribute to air pollution.

- The entrance to the site was proposed as Westmore Street with exit via Eastmoor Street. However, this would be counter to the Councils long-term objective of closing Eastmoor Street.

The speakers felt that the Council had spent a lot of money on developing the Charlton Master Plan and Charlton Riverside SPD, which residents supported and set out the requirement for and restrictions on development of the area; these should be enforced to ensure that the expense was not a waste and the character of the area was t.

With the consent of the Chair the Planning Manager (Major Developments) advised that;

- The proposal would be at a density of 350 units per hectare, which was not double the guidance of 318- 329 units per hectare; as set out in section 10 of the main report.
- Density alone would not be a martial planning ground for refusal and consideration would need to be given to the design lead approach and public benefit.
- The policy guidance for development exceeding 10 units was for provision of 35% affordable housing. However, the independent viability assessment had confirmed that the offer of 30% was the maximum viable offer. An early and late stage review, to investigate if any further affordable accommodation could be provided, would be secure by Condition.
- Whilst not directly Energy and Carbon Neutral the development would meet 53% carbon reduction with a carbon offsetting financial agreement secured under the Heads of Terms.

The Principal Planning Officer reiterated to Members the Planning Officers had not disregarded the Secretary of States comments on the Rockmount (VIP) development. The new London Plan had removed the density matrix in favour of the adoption of a design lead approach supported by proper infrastructure. It was considered there were significant differences between the Rockmount (VIP) development and this proposal.

The Chair advised that the Planning Board would move to accepting an address from the applicant, but given that the meeting was approaching the expiration of the permitted second hour to sit, he proposed that the proceedings be adjourned for continuation, without repetition of the Officers presentation and public address, at the next Meeting of the Planning Board on 20 July 2021

Resolved unanimously –

That consideration of the application be adjourned until the next meeting of the Planning Board

The meeting closed at 8:43pm

Chair