

ROYAL BOROUGH OF GREENWICH

PLANNING BOARD

7 JANUARY 2020 AT 6.30PM

MINUTE

PRESENT:

Members:

Councillor Sarah Merrill (Chair); Councillors Norman Adams, Olu Babatola, Linda Bird, Angela Cornforth, Gary Dillon, Adel Khaireh, Clive Mardner, Linda Perks, and Nigel Fletcher

Officers:

Assistant Director Planning & Building Control, Planning Manager (Major Developments), Principle Planning Officer, Assistant Head of Legal Services and Corporate Governance Officer

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chair announced the procedure which would be followed for considering the item(s) before the Board. The Chair confirmed the names of members of the public who had registered to speak on the item(s) and clarified that only those members of the public included on the register would be called to address the Planning Board. The Chair advised that all attendees were welcome to film, record, blog or tweet during the meeting so long as this did not disturb proceedings and flash photography was not permitted. The Chair advised that Board Members would be using electronic devices to access the agenda, reports and documents published and submitted for consideration at the meeting.

Item No.

I. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors Geoffrey Brighty and Peter Brooks

Apologies for lateness were received for Councillor Angela Cornforth.

2. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business for consideration.

The Planning Board noted and accepted the Planning Officers' Addendum Report's, circulated in advance of the meeting, in relation to;

Item 4 – Sunbury Lodge, 1 Sunbury Street, Woolwich. Ref: 19/1460/MA

Item 5 – Ravensbourne Wharf, Norman Road, Greenwich. Ref: 18/4530/F

Further, that public submissions had been circulated, in advance of the meeting, in relation to item 5.

3. Declarations of Interest

Resolved –

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

4. Sunbury Lodge, 1 Sunbury Street, Woolwich, London, SE18 5NA - Ref: 19/1460/MA

The Planning Board noted that this application had been withdrawn by the applicant, in advance of the meeting.

5. Ravensbourne Wharf, Norman Road, Greenwich, SE10- Ref: 18/4530/F

The Principal Planning Officer gave an illustrative presentation of the application which would provide 129 units, 26 of which would be available at London Living Rent levels. There would be minimal impact on the conservation areas or the Greenwich World Heritage site, if the impact was considered to concur with policy and not cause detrimental harm.

In response to Members questions the Principal Planning Officer advised that there would be 1 and 2 bed units on each floor with the 3 bed duplex units over two. That a small number of the units were not fully compliant with BRE standards but, due to the minimal impact, were considered.

He confirmed that the development would be within the sight line of neighbouring it would not have a demonstrative impact. English Heritage

He confirmed that it would be a car free scheme.

A Member expressed concern at the visual impact the development would have upon Greenwich, World Heritage site and conservation areas. That whilst they were aware of the standard mechanism in respect of projected possible visual harm, another development had had a greater impact than projected.

The Principal Planning Officer confirmed that the proposed development would attribute some harm as if would be just visible but not so much as to cause substantial harm.

Members sought clarification as to how the residents of Ravensbourne were to be protected from the noise of the working wharf. Also, how the Wharf was to be protected from an inundation of complaints.

The Principal Planning Officer responded that the applicant had undertaken a significant technical analysis of building. The rooms could be mechanically ventilated which would remove the need to open windows; the units closes to the Wharf were all angled slightly away from the wharf, so there would be no direct facing. All these units would be fitted with high performance glazing would be fitted to units facing closes to the wharf slightly angled away from wharf. Of the 144 balconies, 12 would receive noise levels that surpass the 55db acoustic limit, however this was considered acceptable as the units larger than policy requirement and additional community facilities were provided within the building such as a roof garden and winter garden.

The Principal Planning Officer confirmed that the applicant had offered 26% affordable units but this was found unacceptable by the Royal Borough of Greenwich and the GLA as they would only be provided, as affordable units, for 15 years. The reduced offer of 20% was deemed as acceptable as these would be provided as affordable units in perpetuity.

The Planning Board accepted an address from a representative of the Greenwich Planning Alliance, who, speaking in objection, advised that the Alliance considered the proposal to be of an excessive high and density. That the visual impact on the conservation and world heritage areas would be dependent on the existing mature trees, which in winter or if removed, allowed for an unacceptable visual impact. More housing was needed that would be of an affordable rent level for local residents, including family homes which the majority of these units would not be, as the rents would only be achievable to middle or high income workers. There was a need to provide affordable accommodation for lower income workers, such as nurses, teachers and cleaners.

The Planning Board accepted an address from a representative of the Greenwich Society, who advised that Society had three main objections, those been an overdevelopment of the site, unacceptable living conditions for new residents and the feasibility of the proposal being supplied to the standard proposed.

He continued that the development would be three times the advised density of the current London Plan, which would be a risk to the wellbeing of residents. The site would be 9 metres from a road frequently used by lorries accessing the working wharf. He quoted that Councils objection to an adjacent develop of 28 – 30 stories in Lewisham Borough, as an overdevelopment yet were accepting a larger development on this small site. The use of internal ventilation was not energy efficient. The design would incorporate premium specialist glazing and was interesting but would be extremely costly to design and construct and there should be concern at the viability of this project and if it the quality would be achievable or reduced during construction.

The Planning Board accepted an address from a local resident, who speaking in objection, noted that 50 objections had been received and it was difficult for many of those residents to attend the meeting. He felt that the applications should be refused on the basis height, mass, lack social housing and social impact due the increased number of residents without further infrastructure. He noted that Greenwich Council had objected to two taller developments in the adjacent Lewisham area of the site, partly due to the visible impact on the Historic Greenwich site and questioned how this building would not have a similar adverse impact. He advised that the School and medical provision in the area was already struggling to meet the demand of the existing residents which this development would only compound with no, apparent, input into providing more school places or medical practices.

At the request of Members the Assistant Director of Planning and Building Control confirmed that the developments propose in the Lewisham Borough had not yet been determined and the Council had submitted objections. However, the schemes were quite different and each application must be considered on its own merit.

In response to Members questions the resident confirmed that there were three GP partners for the area. He also confirmed that there was a small car park in Greenwich and many people used the Waitrose carpark or parked on the local double yellow lined roads, id they did not have their own drive.

(Councillor Cornforth in attendance)

The Planning Board accepted an address from the immediate neighbour to the development who advised that he was aware of the need for housing and social housing in particular but the proposal was too dense, too height and would have an adverse impact on amenities, schools, medical services and will change character from mixed residential and industrial use to predominantly residential.

That he had spoken with the applicant and if the application was agreed he had a number of proposed amendments to Condition 4 – Construction Method Statement, which he advised the applicant had accepted. He expressed concern that the Condition only required the applicant to refer to policies and that they should have to adhere to such.

In respect of Condition 15 & 16 (Noise requirements) he questioned why reference was made to an acceptable dB noise level for the new development units but not for the existing resident. He felt that that, as the development was designed to encourage external congregation and activities, this was an important issue given the potential impact on noise levels for the existing residents. That, given the promotion of the use of external areas the Condition 67 (*set out on the addendum report*) should be amended to cover the external areas, including the picnic area.

In respect of the daylight impact he advised that 1 of the windows in his home would be completely obscured no mitigation for of performance glazing to mitigate overlooking or compensation for loss of amenity was being offered.

The Planning Board accepted an address from a resident of New Capital Que who concurred with the previous speakers concerns at the impact on, the currently overstretched, local service provision and amenities with no mitigation. The speaker noted that as a nurse they would not be able to afford to rent a property in the development and felt that this would be a similar situation for teachers and other essential workers that the units were, supposedly, aimed at.

The Chair advised that, whilst understanding the concerns that had been raised in respect of GP access and schools, these were not material planning considerations that the Planning Board could consider.

At the request of the Chair the Assistant Director Planning and Building Control confirmed that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was collected on each development and pooled into a single funding source.

A percentage had to be paid to the Mayor for Crossrail with the remainder being spent on improvements for example for in health provision, transport and children's services across the Borough. The allocation of the CIL monies did not fall to the Planning Board to decide but was Member decision.

The Chair advised that the Board would considered the amendments proposed by one of the speakers but that she would take the applicants address first.

The applicant's agent addressed the Planning Board stating that they had worked closely with the Council's Planning Officers to bring the proposal forward. The Local Plan supported tall buildings on the site and they had undertaken consultation with residents, amenities groups and local councillors. She stated that the development would bring a number of benefits including the creation of new public access to Creekside, the provision of London Living Rent (LLR) units for key workers, employment and a car club and cycle schemes to support the Councils Greener Greenwich aims. The development would optimise the full potential of a brown field site, be built to high specification with units that exceed space recommendation.

The applicant's representative responded to Members that the development was a build to rent scheme with one landlord. Service charges would be encompassed in rent with no hidden or additional costs. The service charge element would be approximately £1,000 per unit, per annum. The developer had a long term interest in the development and would wish to safeguard the scheme. He confirmed that the LLR rate was set by the GLA, the market units would need to be competitive to avoid empty flats.

Members raised concern that the market units were not being provided for the benefit of local resident, to which the applicant's representative advised that the development was specifically responding to the changing circumstances of 25–40 year old who could not get on the property ladder. The development would offer the security of a long term rent and allowing people the security to raise savings for a deposit, if they wished to move on. In response to Members concern at the density of the development the applicants agenda advised that the GLA and London Plan was moving away from using a density matrix and that other issues needed to be taken into account. In respect of the development every unit would exceed the minimum space standards and have multiple aspects.

The applicant's representative added that this was not an 'infill' development and there would be external public amenity space as well as amenities being incorporated vertically through building, which would be of the highest quality and unique design.

The applicant's representative confirmed to Members that the viability of the development had been independently analysed to ensure a rigorous review of costs was undertaken. The Councils viability review mechanism would ensure that several reviews were undertaken, at key stages, to ensure viability. The proposed development was specifically build for rent and all the units would be affordable to key workers and people on low to middle incomes.

Given the comment from a public speak, a member questioned the affordability of the units to Key Workers; to which the applicant's representative advised that they were intermediate based units with a rent level lower than market rent. The applicants agent added that the income level projection was based on London Key worker income levels not specifically Greenwich.

In respect of the working wharf the applicant's representative responded to Members that a substantial level of work had been undertaken in respect of insulation and mitigation of noise from the wharf, which was considered as adequate by the GLA. That, whilst the wharf was in 24 hour, 7 days a week operation the critical noise level was during the loading of the barges, which happened once a day for about 30 minutes, otherwise the working noise level was not excessive.

A Member proposed that the LLR units be offered to people on the Council's housing waiting list. The applicant's agent confirmed that the applicant would not object to this in principle but the legal practicalities would need to be addressed with Council officers.

The Chair sought clear clarification that the external cladding would be a metal cross material with no panelling and in no way, shape or form, from aluminium or other combustible material, similar to Grenfell Tower.

The applicant's representative confirmed this to be the case and that the building would have a concrete core.

The Chair called for a brief adjournment in order to allow officers and the applicant to discuss the amendments to the Conditions, as proposed by the resident of the adjacent property.

At the Chairs request the Planning Board adjourned at 8.50pm and reconvened at 9.13pm.

At the request of the Chair the Assistant Director, Planning and Building Control read out the proposed amendments;

In respect of Conditions it was proposed that;

- Bullet point five, which commences 'Proposals for monitoring noise and....' Be removed.
- The existing bullet point six be amended to read 'Where works are likely to lead to noise and/or vibration impacts on surrounding residential properties, and in particular including Babbage Point, proposals for monitoring noise and/or vibration and procedures to be put in place if agreed noise and/or vibration levels are exceeded.
- The bullet point 11 be amended to change 'Reference shall be made to;' to 'Consistent with:'

In respect of Condition 67, as set out on the addendum, the wording of the first line be changes so that it shall read;
'Operational use of the development could generate noise affecting local residents use.'

In determining the application the Chair commented that she had given a lot of consideration to the proposal and listened carefully to the representations. That there was architectural merit to the development and she completely understood the comments regarding the supply of housing type that was needed but noted that they Council could always get completely what it would like to.

A Member concurred at the architectural merit but considered that at 28 stories it was too high and too dense.

A Member applauded the design but was good but they still had a number of concerns, specifically around parking, as people will still wish to use their cars, accessibility, density and affordability for the boroughs Key workers. That at 28 stories it was too high for the area, unacceptable density and an overdevelopment of the site.

A Members accepted fellow Members reservations but felt that the issue of tall buildings in the area had been resolved by the tall developments in the Lewisham area. It was an interesting scheme and they would like to see more build for rent, as long as the rent was reasonable.

A Member agreed it was an attractive building but has an issue with the height. The comments of Historic England and the conservation officers should be taken into account. That the illustrative views were not always reflective of the actual impact and any impact on the Greenwich World Heritage Site should be given extra sensitivity and this would harm the view. That the concept of build for rent was a good one that other developers should be encouraged to emulate as long as they offered affordable accommodation. They continued that the proposal was too tall creating a ratchet effect with taller and taller proposals being brought forward Too high and would create a ratchet effect with proposals for taller buildings being brought forward.

A Member comments that there were both good and bad aspects of the development but felt, on balance, they would support it. As 28 stories it was a bit high but was a similar height to other buildings in the area. The level of LLR provision was lowered due to our requirement for the units in perpetuity and the GLA were happy with the breakdown of affordable provision. They encouraged Officers to look at the possibility of the letting of the LLR units being linked to the Councils Housing waiting list.

The Assistant Director Planning and Building Control confirmed that all the units would be advertised to residents of the Borough, in the first instance and that officers would look at the potential of nomination.

The Chair put the Principal Planning Officers recommendation to grant planning approval and the proposed amendments to Condition's 5 and 67 to the vote with 5 Member in favour 3 against and 0 abstentions.

Councillor Cornforth did not take part in the determination or votes as she was not in attendance for the entirety of the presentation and address in respect of the application.

Resolved –

That Planning Permission be granted for the demolition of existing buildings and construction of a 28 storey building (plus basement) comprising 129 self-contained residential units (Use Class C3), 791sqm of co-working office floorspace (Use Class B1a) and 64sqm of café floorspace (Use Class A3),

public realm improvements, hard and soft landscaping, communal amenity space (including child play space), secure cycle storage, car parking spaces and car lift, provision of access for a permanent mooring for public use on Deptford Creek, and other associated works.

That planning permission be granted subject to:

- A. Referral of the application to the Mayor of London as required under the terms of The Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008
- B. The prior completion of an agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) containing the planning obligations as summarised in the heads of terms set out in this report (Section 30.0), its addendums, and the minutes of this Planning Board meeting.
- C. Authorise the Assistant Director of Planning & Building Control to:
 - i. make any minor changes to the detailed wording of the recommended conditions as set out in this report, its addendums, as summarised in the minutes of the Planning Board meeting, where the Assistant Director of Planning & Building Control considers it appropriate, before issuing the decision notice; and
 - ii. finalise the detailed terms of the planning obligations pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), as set out in this report (Section 30.0), its addendums and as summarised in the minutes of the Planning Board meeting, of this Planning Board meeting.
- D. In the event that the Section 106 Agreement is not completed within three (3) months of the date of this Planning Board meeting, to authorise the Assistant Director of Planning & Building Control to consider whether permission should be refused on the grounds that the proposals are unacceptable in the absence of the benefits which would have been secured, and if so, to determine the application with reasons for refusal which will include the following:
 - i. In the absence of a legal agreement to secure Affordable Housing and workspace and financial and non-financial contributions including for Employment, Skills and Training, Highways, Energy and delivering public realm improvements, the development would fail to maximise the delivery of affordable housing and fails to mitigate its impact on local services, amenities and infrastructure contrary to policies H3, IM1 and EA(c) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with

Detailed Policies (Adopted July 2014) and the Planning obligations (s106) Guidance SPD (adopted July 2015).

- E. Amendments to Condition 4 – Construction Method Statement, as set out in appendix 2 of the main report, as follows;
 - i) Removal of bullet point five, which commences ‘Proposals for monitoring noise and....
 - ii) That existing bullet point six be amended to read ‘Where works are likely to lead to noise and/or vibration impacts on surrounding residential properties, and in particular including Babbage Point, proposals for monitoring noise and/or vibration and procedures to be put in place if agreed noise and/or vibration levels are exceeded.
 - iii) That existing bullet point 11 be amended to change ‘Reference shall be made to;’ to ‘Consistent with:’

- F. Amendments to Condition 67, as set out on the addendum to change the world building to development in the first line, so that it shall read; ‘Operational use of the development could generate noise affecting local residents use.’

The meeting closed at 09:30pm

Chair