

London Borough of Islington

Planning Committee - 29 November 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held at Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 29 November 2022 at 7.30 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Klute (Chair), North (Vice-Chair), Poyser (Vice-Chair), Clarke, Convery, Hamdache, Hayes, Ibrahim, Jackson and McHugh

Also Present: **Councillors:** Ward.

Councillor Martin Klute in the Chair

27 INTRODUCTIONS (Item A1)

Councillor Klute welcomed everyone to the meeting. Members of the Committee and officers introduced themselves.

28 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item A2)

None.

29 DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item A3)

None.

30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item A4)

None.

31 ORDER OF BUSINESS (Item A5)

The order of business would be as per the agenda.

32 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item A6)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting on 8 November 2022 be agreed as a correct record and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

33 BARNSBURY ESTATE, LONDON, N1 (Item B1)

Hybrid planning application seeking detailed permission for Phase 1a, 1b and 3a and outline planning permission for all future phases 1c, 2a, 2b and 3b comprising:

In full, demolition of existing buildings and undertaking of groundworks and the erection of 401 residential units (Use Class C3) within seven buildings of 3, 7, 9, and 11 storeys comprising 144 x 1 bed, 192 x 2 bed, 46 x 3 bed, 14 x 4 bed and 5 x 5 bed over 42802sq.m (GIA) floorspace in phases 1a, 1b and 3a; hard and soft

landscaping works including public open space and new public realm, access and highway formation and alterations, car and cycle provision with associated ancillary works.

Outline planning permission (all matters reserved) for the demolition of all remaining buildings, undertaking of ground works and the construction of a phased redevelopment of new buildings of up to 9 storeys and incorporating up to 69773sq.m (GIA) to include up to 513 residential units (Use Class C3), up to 1500sq.m of replacement retail and town centre floorspace (Use Class E), and 1275sq.m of replacement community use floorspace including community centre and nursery (Use Class F2), within phases 1c, 2a, 2b and 3b, hard and soft landscaping, new public open space, access and highway formation and alterations, new pedestrian means of access, car and cycle parking provision and ancillary works.

(Planning application number: P2022/1898/FUL)

In the discussion the following main points were made:

- The planning officer reported two updates to the report: (i) an alteration to condition 31 expressing that an updated fire statement would be required for the detailed application phase; and (ii) to note that additional representations of support had been received since the publication of the report.
- A member queried the quality of communal spaces proposed to be provided on the development. In response, it was advised that the development would feature communal courtyards and two public parks. These would be tenure blind spaces of equal quality and would be maintained through a landscape maintenance plan. It was confirmed that the multi-use games area (MUGA) would be wheelchair accessible.
- A member queried the financial viability of the scheme, noting that the applicant expected a significant deficit, and sought assurance that the applicant could see the development through to completion. In response, it was advised that the applicant, the GLA and the council had undertaken viability assessments; the council's assessment identified a deficit of £19m which the applicant indicated would be achievable to overcome. The proposed S106 agreement secured a number of viability review mechanisms which would allow viability to be monitored through a transparent "open-book" basis.
- Following a question, it was clarified that, if development stopped for a period of 12 months, then this would trigger a further review of viability. Officers assured the committee that this could not decrease the amount of affordable housing provided, and could only result in an uplift.
- A member noted that on-site parking would only be provided for residents currently living on the development site and this would decrease over time as permits were relinquished. It was queried if any alternative use of those parking spaces had been considered. In response, officers advised that the development would be subject to a Car Parking Management Plan. As spaces were forfeited, it could be possible to provide additional accessible parking by merging spaces, or these unused spaces could provide additional cycle parking, storage space, or greening.

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- A member noted that a survey of residents found 72% in favour of the development, with a turnout of 79%, and queried which organisation had carried out the survey. In response, it was advised the ballot was commissioned by the applicant, but undertaken by a third party.
- In response to a question, officers advised that six different meetings of the Design Review Panel (DRP) had considered aspects of the application and had been influential in helping to shape the development, including reducing the scale of some buildings. The DRP had concluded that issues of scale and massing remained a concern in the final scheme, however planning officers considered that, on balance, the scheme was acceptable as a whole.
- A member raised concerns about the loss of sun on the ground north of Carnegie Street Park due to the development of blocks B8 and B9 and asked if these blocks had been subject to discussion at the DRP about reducing massing. In response, it was confirmed that these blocks had been the subject of discussion on massing, and following negotiation, the applicant had reduced the proposed height of these blocks and this had substantially increased the amount of sun on ground. The member asked if the development would result in a community centre with limited access to light; in response, officers advised that the community centre was south-facing and scored highly on daylight/sunlight assessments.
- A member queried the objection submitted by Thames Water. Officers advised that Thames Water were largely supportive of the scheme and their concerns related to the capacity of water infrastructure. The proposed conditions required the applicant to work with Thames Water to demonstrate that their requirements would be met.
- A member noted that 20% of the properties were single aspect and asked if they would have sufficient ventilation in both hot and cold weather. In response, officers advised that the development would include a heat recovery system to address such concerns.
- A member asked about the specification of social rent homes on the site. In response, the planning officer advised that the homes would meet standards on unit size and had protections on noise and vibration, air quality, and all had access to amenity space. Further detail would be included in future reserved matters applications, however it was expected that the development would meet modern standards.
- A member asked about the proposed reduction in retail floorspace in comparison to the existing development. In response, it was advised that the lost floorspace was in basement areas which were not considered to be attractive spaces. It was noted that the reduction in retail floorspace was contrary to the council's agreed policy, but there was scope to increase retail floorspace elsewhere on site.
- The Committee heard objections from eight residents. The concerns raised included: the height, density and scale of the development; the adverse impact on nearby properties, including loss of light; how the development impacted on the nearby canalside nature reserve and historic monument; an ongoing dispute relating to leaseholder interests in the land; insufficient greenspace; the design of the development; tall buildings overlooking properties on the other side of Regent's Canal; loss of amenity space currently solely used by leaseholders; and emergency access to the site.

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- An objector also queried if there was scope for ecological improvements, for example using rainwater to flush toilets.
- The applicant was allowed the same amount of time to address the Committee. A resident spoke on behalf of the applicant, emphasising the community engagement undertaken by the applicant, and how the proposed development would alleviate overcrowding and provide high quality housing for local people. The Committee was then addressed by senior representatives from the applicant and the architect.
- The main points made by the applicant included: the scheme would deliver 135 additional social rent homes; all current residents would have an opportunity to be rehoused in the new development; accessible homes would be provided for those with medical needs; the development would feature a new larger community centre; the energy efficiency of the scheme was emphasised; the scheme included a 23% net increase in open space; the applicant was committed to the viability review mechanisms in the S106 agreement. The applicant also addressed health and safety concerns raised by objectors, including the issue of emergency access.
- The Legal Officer advised that the ongoing dispute relating to leaseholder interests in the land was a private legal matter. Officers were satisfied that all statutory requirements in relation to the planning application had been complied with, and the ongoing dispute was not a material planning consideration.
- Following a question, the applicant advised that they would continue to seek grant funding to maximise the affordable housing provision on the site.
- A member noted the council's policy to protect and promote retail floorspace. In response, the applicant advised that they could look to increase the available retail floorspace up to a maximum of 2,400 square metres.
- Responding to the objection related to overlooking properties on the other side of the canal, it was advised that the distance between properties was approximately 40 metres. The council's policy on overlooking referred to a distance of under 18 metres.
- In response to a question on the environmental sustainability of the development, the applicant advised that they would be open to exploring the possibilities for the reuse of greywater on site.
- Members welcomed the extensive public consultation undertaken by the applicant.

The Committee considered the application and the representations made by the objectors and the applicant.

Councillor Klute proposed an amendment, seconded by to amend the description of the application to include up to 2,400 square metres of retail floorspace. This was seconded by Councillor Convery and carried.

Councillor Klute proposed an amendment for an additional condition that the applicant investigate the feasibility of the inclusion of a greywater scheme in the development. The exact wording was to be delegated to officers. This was seconded by Councillor Clarke and carried.

RESOLVED:

That following consideration of the case officer's report (the assessment and recommendations therein), the presentation to Committee and submitted representations, permission be granted subject to the conditions and informatives set out in Appendix 1 of the officer report; and subject to the amendments set out above; and subject to the prior completion of a Deed of Planning Obligation made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 securing the heads of terms as set out in Appendix 1 of the officer report.

The meeting ended at 10.15 pm

CHAIR