

## **MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 25 March 2021  
(6:00 - 7:40 pm)

**Present:** Cllr Muhammad Saleem (Chair), Cllr John Dulwich (Deputy Chair), Cllr Sanchia Alasia, Cllr Faruk Choudhury, Cllr Irma Freeborn, Cllr Cameron Geddes, Cllr Mohammed Khan, Cllr Olawale Martins, Cllr Foyzur Rahman and Cllr Dominic Twomey

### **51. Declaration of Members' Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **52. Town Quay, Abbey Road, Barking**

The Principal Development Management Officer (PDMO), Be First Development Management team introduced a report on an application from Weston Homes seeking a planning permission for the redevelopment of the site at Town Quay, Abbey Road, Barking, involving the clearance of the existing structures and the erection of three new buildings ranging from 7 to 11 storey in height to provide 147 residential dwellings comprising a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom flats and associated private amenity space with child play space, cycle and refuse stores and car park with a new vehicular access point from Abbey Road; and 980 sqm (GIA) flexible commercial floorspace (Use Class E(a) – (g) inclusive) with commercial refuse stores, together with ancillary management facilities and plant rooms. Re-alignment of Town Quay/Highbridge Road and all associated highways alterations. Formation of public realm with hard and soft landscaping including pedestrian plaza and riverside walk with other associated work.

Further to the publication of the agenda two supplementary reports relating to the application were published and circulated and referred to by the officer at the meeting.

In addition to internal and external consultations, a total of 5896 notification letters were sent to neighbouring properties together with the requisite statutory press notice. Five representations of objection were received by the closing date together with further late neighbour objections including a collective response from the River Roding Trust, the details of which were set out in the above-mentioned supplementary reports, the full material planning considerations relating to which were set out in the planning assessment detailed in the reports.

The officer's overall assessment of the application was that the principles of development were supported, creating a valuable contribution towards LBBB housing delivery targets as well as delivering public realm enhancements and a commercial offer as part of this mixed-use development.

The application would realign the site, simplifying the road layout and open up the area adjacent to the River as a key open space that would be enlivened by ground floor commercial activities. Officers acknowledged that the planned closure of the connecting road bridge across the Roding as part of the application and the subsequent re-routing of traffic via London Road would likely cause additional traffic congestion, but on balance it was considered this was outweighed by the wider benefits to the development and surrounding area of increased pedestrian connectivity and reduced traffic.

Opening the application up for discussion the Chair suggested that it might be necessary to instigate a further traffic impact assessment to test the potential for increased traffic problems and air pollution in and around Barking Town Centre. The PDMO stated that officers were satisfied that the traffic studies carried out to date had confirmed that the development would not exacerbate the amount of traffic and that the road closure would in fact improve air quality in the locality, and that further detail in both the Section 106 and Section 278 agreements would make sure it was a safe development in that respect. That said Be First acknowledged the members' concerns and would continue working closely with transport colleagues in LBBD to make sure there were sustainable solutions to enable developments in this locality to flourish.

Referencing the consultations on the application and the valid points made by the River Roding Trust, the Deputy Leader as a local ward councillor, was concerned at what appeared a breakdown in communications between the applicant and the Trust. Given one of the development aims was to create a new focal point for the new river community connecting to Barking Town Centre, he offered to broker a meeting between the two. The representative of Weston Homes stated that they had engaged in constructive dialogue with the Trust but nevertheless welcomed the offer for a further meeting as they were keen to work positively with the local community on this scheme.

Other questions which arose with officer responses were summarised as follows:

*Looking at the proposed housing mix the fact that just over 10% were 3-bed family units was disappointing and fell well short of the Council's aspirations.*

Whilst the emerging Local Plan sought to achieve a greater proportion of family sized housing across the borough, in areas close to Barking Town Centre such as the Town Quay, which was designed for higher density development, a lower number of 3-bed units was seen as acceptable.

The applicant added that the size of the proposed 2 bed 4 persons units within the development could each accommodate one double or two single bed spaces and therefore could be classified as family units, which if included within the overall calculation would up the provision from 10% to 55% family sized accommodation.

*Why had the applicant contested the method of calculating the level of child play space provision and to that end the proposed contribution of £22,200 was considered very low when compared to other development contributions elsewhere in the Borough?*

The Borough did not currently have a set formula to apply to child play space provision, relying on the GLA calculator when linked to public transport accessibility levels (PTAL's). The applicant had challenged the PTAL level on this site (2), when in their view, given the site's good connectivity to transport links, it should have had a higher PTAL of 5.

Notwithstanding this, given the concerns raised, the applicant agreed to increase their contribution to child play space to £50,000 as suggested by Members.

Accordingly, the Committee **RESOLVED** to:

1. Agree the reasons for approval as set out in the report, and
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Inclusive Growth in consultation with Legal Services to grant planning permission, subject to the completion of a legal agreement under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) based on the Heads of Terms identified at Appendix 7, and subject to an amendment to *Section 13-Playspace* to indicate that the sum of £50,000 will be paid, and the Conditions listed in Appendix 6 of the report, and
3. That, if by 25 September 2021 the legal agreement has not been completed, the Director of Inclusive Growth was delegated authority to refuse planning permission or extend this timeframe to grant approval.

### **53. Temporary Tesco site - Highbridge Road, Barking**

The Principal Development Management Officer (PDMO), Be First Development Management Team introduced a report on an application for the construction of a temporary Tesco store with pharmacy on the southern part of the existing Tesco car park, comprising 1,369sqm gross internal area (GEA) with 980sqm of net sales area (NSA) located within the southern end of the existing Tesco car park. The proposal would provide 75 car parking spaces including 6 blue badge and 4 parent and child spaces. 50 cycling spaces would also be provided (42 short stay and 8 long stay), service yard, associated cage marshalling and trolley bays. A new vehicular access was proposed off West Bank, connecting to Highbridge Road to the south.

In addition to internal and external consultations, a total of 2432 notification letters were sent to neighbouring properties together with the requisite statutory press notice. No objections were received, although additional representations were received after the closing date, which were detailed in supplementary reports as presented, the full material planning considerations

relating to which were set out in the planning assessment detailed in the reports.

This was a procedural application submitted as part of a wider approach to planning, which sought to ensure that the operation of a Tesco store at this site could be retained to allow, yet to be presented, wider development across the site, to fulfil the emerging site allocation. This would involve a residential led redevelopment, which would include the re-provision of a Tesco store in the same location as the existing store.

Officers considered that the proposal accorded with the development plan, and therefore,

The Committee **RESOLVED** to:

1. Agree the reasons for approval as set out in the report; and
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Legal Services to grant planning permission based on the Conditions & Informatives listed in Appendix 5 of the report.

#### **54. Coopers Arms, High Road, Chadwell Heath, Romford**

The Principal Development Management Officer (PDMO), Be First Development Management Team introduced a report on an application for planning permission for the demolition of the existing public house and construction of a 4 storey building, comprising of 20 flats and 4 ground floor commercial units (Use Class E) and associated access, parking and landscaping at 2 High Road, Chadwell Heath, Romford.

In addition to internal and external consultations, a total of 635 notification letters were sent to neighbouring properties together with the requisite statutory press notice. Two objections were received, the full material planning considerations relating to which were set out in the planning assessment detailed in the report.

Following careful consideration of the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Development Plan and all other relevant material considerations officers have found the proposals to be acceptable. They were satisfied that any potential material harm in terms of the impact of the proposal on the surrounding area would reasonably be mitigated through compliance with the listed conditions and associated legal agreement, and therefore,

The Committee **RESOLVED** to:

1. Agree the reasons for approval as set out in this report,
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Legal Services to grant planning permission subject to the completion

of a legal agreement under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) based on the Heads of Terms identified at Appendix 6 and the Conditions listed in Appendix 5 of the report, and

3. That, if by 25 September 2021 the legal agreement has not been completed, the Director of Inclusive Growth was delegated authority to refuse planning permission or extend the timeframe to grant approval.

## **55. Eastbrookend Park**

The Development Management Officer (DMO), Be First Development Management Team introduced a report on an application for planning permission for the proposed creation of five swales and three ponds, involving two embankment breaches, to create new wetland habitats as part of the river restoration of the River Rom at Eastbrook Country Park.

Following the statutory publication of the agenda the applicant sought to alter the application description to provide additional clarity, which was detailed in a supplementary report subsequently published and presented at the meeting. This concerned a change from two to three embankment breaches to existing manmade bunds. The consideration of the number of swales and ponds which would form the new wetland habitats themselves were regarded as more significant than the number of breaches, which represented a subservient element of the proposal. Consequently, officers considered that the change provided additional clarity but did not materially change the description of development or how the application had been assessed.

In addition to internal and external consultations, a total of 263 notification letters were sent to neighbouring properties together with the requisite statutory press notice. No objections were received.

Officers concluded that the proposal would strengthen the role of the Green Belt at this location, improve the enjoyment of the public open space, enhance a site of importance of nature conservation, create new and enhance existing ecological and biodiversity habitats along strategic waterways, as well as reduce the risk of flooding in this location.

The proposal was therefore highly supported by planning policies detailed within the report and therefore,

The Committee **RESOLVED** to agree the reasons for approval subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 5 of the report.