

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> November 2005 at 7.00 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor Cribbin (Chair) and Councillors Freeson, Kansagra, J Long, H M Patel, Singh and Sayers

Apologies for absence were given on behalf of Councillors Harrod and Sayers.

Councillor V Brown attended the meeting.

**1. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

None

**2. Variation of Order of Business**

The Committee agreed to give early consideration to the report relating to Population Growth & New School Requirements in the Borough.

**3. Population Growth and New School Requirements in the Borough**

The Committee received a report setting out the initial work being undertaken to assess the need for new school places as a result of current and future population and new housing growth. This had fed into some site allocations within the Local Development Framework (LDF). The report showed how different growth options currently being considered as part of the LDF Issues and Options stage, would require a differing number of new school places and would therefore have implications over sites required for new schools over the next 10-15 years.

The Head of Policy & Projects Dave Carroll informed the Committee that it had become necessary to identify new sites for schools and school expansion sites within the Council's emerging Local Development Framework (LDF), in view of future housing growth. The Planning Service, working with officers in the Children and Families Department (CFD) had been assessing the need for extra school places and re-evaluating the current methodology for predicting school places. The areas likely to face the greatest pressure for new school facilities were South Kilburn and Wembley with new housing developments of 1,500 and 3,700 respectively. Although it may be possible to expand some primary school provision (rather than providing new schools), that at least one new secondary school and new primary school would be required, alongside expansion at existing secondary schools as a first phase. The Council's Executive was therefore being recommended that this should be at the former London Transport Sports Ground site at Wembley Park.

Mr Robert Dunwell in addressing the Committee stated that there was a fundamental oversight in the list of sites assessed for potential school expansion. He urged that the Guinness site and the Preston Manor High School site be added to the list of potential sites identified and listed in the report (appendix 1).

During debate, Councillor Freeson raised concerns about the selection process for sites identified for possible school expansion. Furthermore, he objected to the inclusion of sports grounds and playing fields on the list attached as appendix 1 to the report as these would mean the loss of those facilities within the Borough. He also enquired whether there had been any consultation with Quintains and the College of North West London on possible expansion of 6<sup>th</sup> form education and other vocational activities. He indicated to move amendments in those terms to the report's recommendations. Councillor Kansagra agreed with the views expressed above adding that there was already a concentration of schools within a 2 mile radius in the Wembley area. He suggested that consideration be given to the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) to acquire sites other than Wembley for school expansion. Members voted on the amendments in the name of Councillor Freeson which were declared carried.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the initial approach of the Planning Service to the issue of increased demand for school places and the allocation of potential sites within the Local Development Framework be supported subject to playing fields, sports grounds and other public open spaces being considered not to be suitable sites;
- (ii) that officers be requested to bring forward further school site allocations (within the LDF) where necessary based on housing growth and an agreed school expansion strategy;
- (iii) that the importance of protecting existing school sites within current UDP policy be noted.
- (iv) that any new school provision should take into account the need to protect playing fields from development
- (v) that the Council pursue specific discussions with the College of North West London on the expansion of 6<sup>th</sup> form education and vocational activities and report to a future meeting of this Committee

4. **Marks & Spencer, 492-498 High Road, Wembley  
Planning Statement**

The Committee had before them a report which sought approval for a Planning Statement prepared by the Planning Service in August 2005. The statement set out both partial and comprehensive approaches to the redevelopment of the site and provided guidance to the developers on the form of the development that the Council considered acceptable. The Planning Statement was intended to be informal only

The Head of Policy & Projects stated that the Planning Service was responding quickly to interest from developers and making clear to them the Council's expectations for the site. As Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) take over 6 months to produce, it was felt that a Planning Statement was the most appropriate form of guidance under the circumstances. Although this had less weight than a SPD, it was cost effective and most suited to smaller sites where urgent issues were required to be addressed to give guidance to developers. He referred to the main planning issues as set out in the report which included the retention of a single retail unit with residential uses on upper floors, a car free development which would maintain the residential amenity of Elm Road and enhance the townscape of the High Road. In view of the timescale, it was not planned to carry out public consultation as the document was only intended to be a guide for developers unless this was requested by the Committee.

Councillor V Brown the ward member stated that in view of the likely impact of any development on the residents in Elm Road, there was a need for consultation. She expressed concerns about the 'car free development' as it would cause vehicular problems for residents, visitors and delivery vehicles. Councillor Brown felt that the piecemeal approach to the redevelopment of the Town Centre was least helpful in regenerating the area.

In response to member's queries, Dave Carroll said that a further report was time tabled to go to the Executive meeting in March/April 2006 and that work on the key development sites would be concluded in 12-18 months time. Councillor Freeson expressed a view that in order to address the narrowness of the pavements and the poor provision for pedestrians, a set back of buildings be written into any master plan for the area. It was also expressed that the parking situation in the Wembley area needed to be resolved if major retailers were to be attracted to the area.

RESOLVED:-

that the Marks & Spencer Planning Statement be agreed as informal planning guidance.

## 5. **Wembley West End – Planning Brief**

There is currently significant developer interest in the Curtis Lane Opportunity Site and neighbouring buildings within the High Road. This larger site is collectively known as Wembley West End. It was therefore proposed to bring forward planning and urban designed guidance in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for this site which would then feed into the overall SPD for Wembley Town Centre. This report sought the Committee's agreement to start work on this element of the overall SPD including early consultation.

Dave Carroll stated that the development of an SPD for the Wembley West End site would assist in bringing this key site in the town centre forward for development and assist in regenerating the town centre. Currently the function and appearance of the site detracted more than enhanced the High Road and despite its status as a major opportunity site, it had proven difficult, notably because of the fragmented land ownership on the site, to bring forward beneficial development. Officers therefore proposed to bring forward planning and urban design guidance in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document for this site which would then feed into the overall SPD for Wembley Town Centre. He drew attention to the timetable set for producing detailed SPD guidance and the possibility to apply compulsory purchase powers in order to bring the site into a single ownership

In welcoming the report, Councillor Freeson requested that future designs should take into account improvements for pedestrian safety. Dave Carroll confirmed that schemes for pedestrian safety including bus lay-by and adequate set back of buildings from the road line would be incorporated and that a report would be brought forward to Committee addressing those concerns.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the production of a detailed draft SPD covering the Wembley West End development site as SPD to the UDP and as a first phase of the Wembley High Road Framework be agreed;
- (ii) that initial (pre-production consultation of the SPD with local traders, residents and other stakeholders be agreed

## 6. **Guinness Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and Planning Position Statement**

The Committee received a report which sought approval for adoption for a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which had been prepared by the Planning Service in conjunction with interested parties following a period of consultation from 16<sup>th</sup> September 2005 to 14<sup>th</sup> October 2005. The SPD sought to secure the prompt redevelopment of the site and provided guidance to potential developers on the form of the development that the Council considered acceptable. The SPD also set out the planning justification for a Section 106 agreement associated with any future planning application for the site.

Dave Carroll referred to the consultations undertaken with key and local stakeholders as well as local residential and business communities around the site both with Brent and Ealing and organisations that were involved in the pre-production consultation process. He drew attention to comments received from the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the London Development Agency (LDA) relating to the promotion of non Strategic Employment Location (SEL)

uses (the hospital and education led options) contained within the Planning Position Statement. Officers supported the LDA's preference that a comprehensive framework be produced for the whole of Park Royal but felt that the mid to long term production timeline would be too slow to guide the redevelopment of this site, thus resulting in the loss of a significant opportunity. It was therefore proposed that guidance be brought forward for the former brewery site alone. Officers had taken on board the comment by the GLA that the guidance document should include an indication of the level of work likely to be required of applicants to justify the release of employment land on this site for other uses.

In response Councillor Freeson's enquiry, Dave Carroll stated that it was not possible to push the energy efficiency level beyond 10% until current policy was changed. Councillor Kansagra argued for inclusion of educational/school uses of the site and although officers were not convinced about this option, it was put to the vote as an amendment and declared carried.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (i) that the Guinness Brewery site combined SPD and Planning Position Statement incorporating revisions following consultation (as set out in appendix 1 to the report) be agreed and that the Executive be recommended to adopt that part of the document which constitutes a Supplementary Planning Document as a Supplementary Planning Document to Brent's Unitary Development Plan and the remainder of the document as a Planning Position Statement (subject to iv below).
- (ii) that the Sustainability Appraisal incorporating revisions following consultation (as set out in appendix 3 to the report) be noted;
- (iii) that delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning to approve editorial and other minor changes to the combined SPD and Planning Position Statement prior to its publication.
- (iv) that the Committee recommends to the Executive that the SPD be amended to say that the Guinness Brewery site be considered for educational uses.

**7. Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPD)**

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) issued a revised Planning Obligations Circular 05/2005 obliging local authorities to set out in a Supplementary Document, the implications for planning obligations of topic-based Development Plan Documents policies (eg transport, open space, etc), based on the policies of the Circular. The Circular also encouraged local planning authorities to adopt standard formulae and charges where possible.

A number of problems were currently being experienced in the use of planning obligations by Brent Council, some of which could be addressed through adopting a standard formulae/charges approach. A Planning Obligations Planning Document for Brent would develop a standard charge approach where appropriate as an alternative to the current system of negotiating a unique set of planning obligations on a case by case basis.

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) currently identified the need for the production of such an SPD to commence during summer 2006. However, the release of Circular 05/2005 prompted the commencement of this work sooner than previously identified. Therefore, the LDS must be amended to reflect this.

Dave Carroll outlined the key provisions of Circular 05/2005 and some of the problems inherent in the current practice. He added that the proposed standard charges and formulae would make the system more efficient and promote transparency. He proposed that planning obligations sought by the Council be reviewed, revised and a standard charges approach developed through the drafting of a Planning Obligations SPD.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that it be recommended to the Executive that an amendment be made to Brent's Local Development Scheme to bring forward the drafting of a Planning Obligations SPD originally planned for summer 2006;
- (ii) that it be agreed officers produce a proposed SPD covering both planning obligations based on topic led Development Plan Policies and the standard formulae/charges approach.

## 8. **Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing**

The Committee received a report informing them of the Government's further proposals to revise Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (Housing Development), together with the proposed cancellation of Circular 6/98 (Affordable Housing) and consider their implications for the Borough's planning and housing strategies. The report also included the response submitted by officers as the Council's submission to the Government's consultation.

Michael Maguire, Assistant Planning Policy & Research Team Manager informed the Committee that as the Government required responses to the consultation to be submitted by 9th September, there was not an opportunity to seek Members views in advance. Officers had therefore submitted responses on behalf of the Council, a copy of which was attached as Appendix 1. He added that although the proposed revision of PPG 3 and the proposed cancellation of Circular 6/98 were to be generally welcomed, officers raised concerns on the following aspects of the revision; housing markets; identifying land for

housing; sustainability; monitoring and managing land supply; resource implications. Concerns were also expressed that the eight week long consultation period was unduly short, particularly as most of this occurred during the summer recess period.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that Government's proposals to revise Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (Housing Development), together with the proposed cancellation of Circular 6/98 (Affordable Housing) and their implications for the Borough be noted
- (ii) that the Response to the Government's consultation (appendix 1 to the report refers) be approved

**9. Draft Alterations to the London Plan: Housing Provision Targets**

The Committee had before them a report setting out the Mayor of London's proposals to alter the London Plan's new housing target for Brent and assessing the potential implications for the Borough's planning strategy. The proposals which would alter the Borough's targets from 13,500 additional homes for a 20 year period (1997-2017) to 12,700 for a 10 year period (2007-2017) would represent an increase of 88%. The report also outlined the 2004 London Housing Capacity Study from which the proposed new housing target had been derived.

Officers considered that the London Housing Capacity Study was conceptually and methodologically flawed to provide an acceptable basis for the Draft Alterations to the London Plan; Housing Provision Targets. Officers were undertaking a detailed examination of the Study's sectoral outputs and exploring the possibility with other boroughs of producing a 'consensual critique' of the study. He added that the Borough had the capacity to substantially increase its current annual target of 680 additional homes, as indicated in Brent's designation as a Housing Opportunity Borough. Officers were not satisfied that the proposed additional 12,700 homes could be delivered between 2007– 2017 given current and projected Borough infrastructure constraints

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the Borough's proposed new housing target was considered excessive and had not been satisfactorily substantiated by the Mayor of London's proposals;
- (ii) that it be agreed officers prepare a draft Response to the Mayor's consultation for consideration by the Executive,

10. **Local Development Framework – Issues and Options Update**

In preparing the new Local Development Framework the Council is required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement as well as the Development Plan Document which would form the new development plan and ultimately replace the UDP. This report before Members informed them of the stages reached in the preparation of these documents and the likely revisions to the timetable that would be put to the Executive for approval in December.

He summarised the themes that emerged from the consultations as set out in the report and added that the draft Annual Monitoring Report would be submitted to the Executive (12<sup>th</sup> December) for their approval prior to formal submission and publication. By 30<sup>th</sup> December 2005, a copy would be sent to the Secretary of State informing about the progress in preparing the LDF, including any proposed changes to the LDS, and reviewing the key development trends during 2004-05.

RESOLVED:-

that the preliminary results of the Issues and Options consultation, the progress with the Statement of Community Involvement and the timetable for submitting the Annual Monitoring Report be noted.

11. **Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

12. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next ordinary meeting of the Committee, to consider planning applications only, is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2005 at 7.00 pm. The site visit for this meeting will take place on Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2005 at 9.30 am when the coach leaves from Brent House.

The meeting ended at 9.40 pm

M CRIBBIN  
Chair

S:\COMMITTEES\Minutes 05-06\Council\Planning\pln16nk.doc