



# LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

## MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE Wednesday 14 October 2015 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Marquis (Chair), Agha (Vice-Chair), S Choudhary, Colacicco, Ezeajughi, Mahmood, Maurice and M Patel

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Wilhelmina Mitchell Murray and Councillor Keith Perrin.

### 1. **Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests**

None.

### 2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2015**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2015 be approved as an accurate record subject to amending the date in the final paragraph of item 2 to "23 August 2015".

### 3. **Matters Arising**

*Minutes of the meeting – 23 July 2015*

The Chair pointed out that it was disappointing that the minutes of the meeting of 23 July were not available for consideration by the Cabinet at its meeting in August. An internal investigation had been completed and steps were being taken to ensure that this did not recur in future. She understood that a complaint about the delay in publishing the minutes had been made by representatives of the Save the Queensbury group which was being investigated separately.

*Proposed programme for the review of the Local List of buildings*

Paul Lewin, (Planning Policy and Projects Manager) updated members that the review which involved a 2 stage process had commenced. He added that following receipt of responses a local list had been compiled and the owners of relevant buildings or structures had been written to informing them of the proposed addition to the list and requesting feedback either on the details included in the draft listing or reasons why they should not be added to the list.

*Pub protection policy*

Clarity was sought by Councillor M Patel on when the pub protection policy would take effect. Paul Lewin responded that it would depend on the objections received at publication stage. If these were limited then significant weight could be placed

on it, otherwise it would be after public examination had been completed. A draft form of wording had now been discussed with CAMRA and it was proposed that this would be published by the time of the Examination early in 2016.

#### **4. Affordable housing position statement**

Members considered a report on Brent Affordable Housing Position Statement which was in response to the Committee's resolution on 23 July 2015 when members considered the report providing an Affordable Housing Update. The position statement also sought to address the main priorities indicated by the Committee in the wide ranging discussion that occurred in relation to that report.

Paul Lewin (Planning Policy and Projects Manager) introduced the report and referred members to their decision at the meeting on 23 July 2015 when they agreed to the publication on the website of a position statement and closer working with other London Boroughs on an affordable housing protocol. He referenced the draft Islington Development Viability Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) issued for consultation in early July 2015. Members heard that the production of an SPD, essentially duplicating much of the existing relevant guidance, against a background of resource constraint and a rapidly changing environment was not recommended as appropriate at present. On that basis, he recommended the endorsement of the Affordable Housing Position Statement attached as Appendix 1 as a proportionate response. Paul Lewin added that subsequent minor changes could be updated by the Head of Planning but more significant changes would be brought back to Committee for review and endorsement.

Members considered in detail, each paragraph of the proposed position statement:

##### ***Affordable Housing Need***

It was suggested that in the interest of clarity, reference be made to amounts when referencing house prices, rents and wages in the Borough.

##### ***Recent housing delivery***

In response to a member's enquiry as to why targets had not been met, Paul Lewin stated that the statistics were blurred by start and completion dates of developments which differed in any period, adding that Brent was one of the highest delivering local authorities in the London area.

##### ***Policy context***

Stephen Weeks (Head of Planning) clarified that it was not possible to insist on 50% affordable housing on all developments including those for 10 or lesser dwellings without taking viability issues and government policy into account. which could undermine the delivery target of 50%. He added that some local authorities and the Mayor of London had reduced their affordable housing thresholds. Members agreed that the following words be added to the statement to reflect Brent's determination to deliver affordable housing against a background of change in national policy; "Notwithstanding recent national planning policy changes".

***Priority borough needs and tenure blind***

It was suggested that the split of 70/30 social or affordable rent/shared ownership or intermediate housing could be amended to place more emphasis on social rent. Paul Lewin explained the difficulties as private developers would bear the cost of the subsidy for this tenure with likely reduction in overall affordable housing numbers, adding that a degree of flexibility had been built into the wording to reflect circumstances of different sites.

***Maximum amount that can be achieved***

Members agreed that the first sentence should be made more robust through replacing 'be expected' with either 'need' or 'required'.

**Modelling and Land Value**

The Head of Planning informed members that the Council supported the Residual Land Value valuation model to identify the viability of a development and went on to clarify instances where Existing Use Value + incentive to sell (EUV+), GLA Affordable Toolkit and ARGUS model would be used. Members heard that for more complicated assessments, the Council would expect the developer's support in appointing external viability consultants to assist with the modelling review. He added that Islington Council was proposing to challenge an appeal decision which may have future implications and had sought support from local authorities to assist the case. With that in mind, the Head of Planning advised that a letter would be sent within the next week and requested members to endorse the request by Islington Council which was agreed.

**Review mechanism and phasing**

Members agreed to remove the whole of the 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence and the following words in the succeeding sentence "In these scenarios" in this part of the statement.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Brent Affordable Housing Position Statement as set out in appendix 1 to the report as amended in the discussions above be endorsed for publication on the Council's website;
- (ii) that the Head of Planning periodically review and make minor updates as required to the Brent Affordable Housing Position statement in relation to new evidence and changes to interpretation of policy.

**5. Sudbury Court Conservation Area Design Guide Update - Consultation Responses and Proposed Amendments**

The report before Members considered the comments received from residents on the draft Sudbury Court Conservation Area Design Guide (the Design Guide) following public consultation. Stephen Weeks (Head of Planning) informed members that the updated document would provide clearer advice on the interpretation of guidance, given current legislation and the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Head of Planning outlined the key changes as set out in the report which included more detailed diagrams, clarification on windows and details on how to infill and extend porches in a way that was sensitive to the architecture of the host building. He gave a summary of the consultation results and concluded that the Design Guide had been revised to include the construction of porches within certain parameters and to accept PVCu as a material provided it was suitably designed along with the retention of original front doors or a suitable timber replacement where unsympathetic designs had been installed in the past.

Councillors Wilhelmina Mitchell-Murray and Perrin (ward member) spoke in full support of the revised Design Guide. In response to an enquiry by Councillor Wilhelmina Mitchell-Murray, the Head of Planning explained that roof lights flush with the roof on side elevations were acceptable. He added that it would not be possible to take retrospective enforcement action against works without permission if they had been done over 4 years ago but that a pro-active approach to enforcement was being pursued.

Councillor Perrin clarified that on balance, the approach to allowing porches provided this secured the retention or improvement of the front doors was supported by the residents he had discussed the issue with.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the consultation responses, officer responses and proposed revisions to the Sudbury Court Conservation Area Design Guide as set out in Appendices 1-4 to the report be noted;
- (ii) that the Sudbury Court Design Guide attached as appendix 5 to the report be endorsed for adoption by Cabinet.

## **6. Any Other Urgent Business**

### *Mapesbury Conservation Area Design Guide*

Members agreed that an updated report on Mapesbury Conservation Area Design Guide be submitted to the next meeting that considers reports on policy issues.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm

S MARQUIS  
Chair