



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Held as an online virtual meeting on Monday 29 March 2021 at 4.00 pm

PRESENT (in virtual attendance): Councillor Kelcher (Chair), Councillor Johnson (Vice-Chair) and Councillors S Butt, Chappell, Dixon, Kennelly, Maurice and Sangani

Also present (in virtual attendance): Councillor Donnelly-Jackson

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Mitchell Murray who was substituted by Councillor Sangani.

1. Declarations of interests

None.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 March 2021 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. 20/0700 - Land adjacent to Northwick Park Hospital, Nightingale Avenue, London, HA1

PROPOSAL:

Outline planning permission (with all matters reserved apart from the means of access) for demolition of existing buildings on site and provision of up to 1,600 homes and up to 51,749 sqm (GIA) of new land use floorspace within a series of buildings, with the maximum quantum as follows:

- (Use Class C3) Residential: up to 1,600 homes
- Up to 50,150m² floor space (GIA) of new student facilities including Student Accommodation, Teaching facilities, Sports facilities, and ancillary retail and commercial (Use Class A1, A2, A3)
- Up to 412sqm floorspace (GIA) of a replacement nursery (Use Class D1)
- Up to 1187sqm (GIA) of flexible new retail space (Use Class A1, A2, A3).

Together with an energy centre, hard and soft landscaping, open space and associated highways improvements and infrastructure works.

This application is subject to an Environmental Statement.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission subject to stage 2 referral to the Mayor of London and the prior completion of a legal agreement to secure the planning obligations set out within the report.

That the Head of Planning is delegated authority to negotiate the legal agreement as set out in the report.

That the Head of Planning is delegated authority to issue the planning permission and impose the conditions and informatives to secure the matters set out within the report.

June Taylor, Principal Planning Officer introduced the report, set out the key issues and answered members' questions. She highlighted that the application was made on behalf of Northwick Park Partnership, which comprised Network Homes, the University of Westminster, Brent Council and the NHS Trust who were working together to redevelop the site. The application related to the overall masterplan for this site but there were a number of other applications that were complementary to the site and would be linked together through s106 agreements.

In reference to the supplementary report, the Principal Planning Officer drew members' attention to the following points:

- Planning obligation no 10 had been removed from the Heads of Terms.
- Further representations had been received from Sudbury Court Residents Association since the publication of the main report.
- There had been a point of clarification regarding affordable housing and housing mix on paragraph 76 of the main report.
- Further representations had been received from Brent Cycling Campaign and Harrow Cyclists since the publication of the supplementary report regarding sustainable transport and cycling layouts.

Mark Connell, the agent, then addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- The application was for up to 1,600 homes and over 50,000 square metres of facilities for the expansion of the University of Westminster all set within new areas of open spaces, public realm and improved infrastructure.
- A design code had been submitted to ensure a high standard of future reserved matters submissions, and all homes meet or exceed space standards.
- The parameters of the outline application ensured no less than 40% affordable housing would be delivered across the site.
- The construction phase would directly support 635 jobs and once operational the development would support a further 440 jobs. The

estimated CIL funding arising from the scheme would be around £15 million.

In response to questions from members, Mark Connell made the following points:

- Green roofing and solar panels would be installed and were stipulated by the design code.
- Construction traffic into the site would be from Watford Road only, and there would be no vehicular access into the site from the residential roads to the south of Northwick Park.

In the ensuing discussion, members raised several issues including the loss of green space and biodiversity, the loss of community space, increased traffic and parking demand, green infrastructure, fire safety and affordable housing and housing mix. Officers clarified a number of key points including:

- The removal of trees and disturbance caused by construction work would be mitigated by new tree planting. The loss of any meadow area would be compensated for by offsite biodiversity measures and there would be an increase in the provision of green infrastructure on site.
- Whilst there was no explicit commitment to provide additional community floorspace within the application site, demand for community floorspace may emerge at a later stage and a detailed assessment of such demand would be undertaken if required.
- It was proposed that the applicant would submit a Construction Environmental Management Plan prior to the commencement of construction to avoid, minimise or mitigate effects on the environment. The applicant also would be subject to the requirements of protected species legislation.
- The application would facilitate an expansion of University of Westminster Harrow Campus that would in turn provide new sporting and leisure facilities that would also be made available for local community use. It was also proposed that Northwick Park pavilion be refurbished which would provide benefits to existing local communities.
- Brent Cycling Campaign had reservations about the cycle layout on the spine road. It had requested for the cycle lane be segregated, but officers did not deem this to be feasible. It had also requested that the crossing over the north and south entry roads be a single crossing, but officers considered this would increase traffic queueing times and congestion.
- Planning obligation No 10 had been removed as it was not deemed necessary or reasonable to secure it through the consent (if granted) as permission had been granted for the new hospital energy centre and the delivery of this centre was being driven by the NHS. The applicant had also advised that there was a separate lease agreement between the NHS Trust and Network Homes governing this which obligated the NHS to deliver the new energy centre before 2023.
- There was only one tree of high quality on site which would need to be removed to allow for junction improvements on Watford Road. New tree

planting would see a substantial increase in the number of trees on site, which were expected to contribute more to carbon capture over the medium-term.

- Prior to the commencement of works on any building or Phase, a Fire Strategy relevant to that building or Phase would need to be submitted and approved by the local authority. The requirements of the Fire Strategy would need to be in compliance with Policy D12 of the London Plan and Part B of the Building Regulations.
- Northwick Park health services would not be negatively impacted by the population growth in the area, as identified through the Local Plan process.
- It had been demonstrated that the scheme would deliver the maximum reasonable number of affordable homes on a policy compliant basis, but with additional affordable homes delivered, lowering the levels of profit associated with the scheme. These would be delivered as intermediate rented homes, London Living Rent homes and shared ownership homes, and would including housing for NHS keyworkers.

Councillor Sangani expressed a pecuniary interest in the application as she was an employee of the NHS (the applicant). As such, she advised that she would not participate in the vote.

Councillor Maurice advised that he had lost connection to the meeting during the members' discussion. Having been updated by officers on the discussion he had missed, he advised that he would participate in the vote.

With no further issues raised and having established that all members had followed the discussions, the Chair thanked all speakers for their contributions and asked members to vote on the recommendation. Members voted unanimously to approve the application.

DECISION: Granted planning permission subject to Stage 2 referral to the Mayor of London, s106 agreement and conditions and informatives as set out in the report.

(Voting on the recommendation was as follows: For 7, Against 0)

4. 20/2257 - Willesden Green Garage, St Pauls Avenue, London, NW2 5TG

PROPOSAL:

Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) to allow for:

- Internal alterations to facilitate the creation of six additional residential units
- External alterations to include additional windows, winter gardens and roof
- Terrace
- Reduction in size of basement and repositioned ramp

As well as Variation of Condition 17 (Mix) of full planning application 17/5291, allowed on appeal dated 17 December 2019 (amended under non-material amendment application 20/1873) for Demolition of MOT garage and erection of a part seven-storey and part four storey building with basement level to provide residential units with ground, third and fourth floor amenity spaces and ground floor play area, provision of basement car parking, cycle and refuse storage, alterations to vehicular accesses and associated landscaping

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission subject to the prior completion of an appropriate legal agreement to secure the planning obligations set out in the report.

That the Head of Planning is delegated authority to issue the planning permission and impose conditions and informatives to secure the matters set out within the report.

That the Head of Planning is delegated authority to make changes to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions, informatives, planning obligations or reasons for the decision) prior to the decision being actioned, provided that the Head of Planning is satisfied that any such changes could not reasonably be regarded as deviating from the overall principle of the decision reached by the committee nor that such change(s) could reasonably have led to a different decision having been reached by the Committee.

Paige Ireland, Principal Planning Officer introduced the report, set out the key issues and answered members' questions. She advised members that the extant scheme had been refused by the Committee but later allowed on appeal. She highlighted an omission on paragraph 36 of the main report which should refer to 51 single aspect units and an error on paragraph 30 of the main report which referred to 76 St. Paul's Avenue but instead should refer to 75 St. Paul's Avenue. In response to a member question, she advised that the nature of the external alterations would unlikely result in any material reduction in light to neighbouring properties over that which had already been deemed acceptable.

In reference to the supplementary report, the Planning Officer drew members' attention to the following points:

- Further representations had been received since the publication of the main report regarding transport and the external appearance/landscape.
- An additional condition and revisions to the conditions and informatives had been proposed.

Peter Hale, objector, raised several concerns including:

- The positioning of the blocks and the height of the walls of the frontage of the ground floor units would have a negative impact on the street scene.

- The insufficient provision of family sized units and the reduction in the size of some units.
- The traffic safety of the basement layout, particularly the ascension to the basement.
- The excessiveness of the increase in units, which were deemed to be out of character with immediate properties.
- The insufficient provision of external amenity space and lack of green infrastructure and biodiversity measures.
- The lack of a loading bay for servicing, especially in light of the continued increased use of online deliveries.

In response to a questions from a member, he then made the following point:

- The application was substantially worse than the extant scheme.

Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson, ward member and objector, raised several concerns including:

- The increase in units had not led to a change in the number of affordable units and there was insufficient provision of family sized units.
- Disabled parking spaces were being lost and the provision did not meet the London Plan requirement of 10% for the flats and the requirements of Condition 6.
- The provision of outdoor amenity space had a bigger overall shortfall and five units would fail to meet the London Plan's minimum requirements. The reduction in landscaping elements would not mitigate noise levels in the amenity spaces.
- The proposal to replace the iron railings with vegetation behind the extant scheme with a solid brick wall would have a negative impact on the street scene and the changes in palette and landscaping were not in keeping with the urban character and appearance of the area.
- Issues around parking, servicing and deliveries had not been addressed from the extant scheme, which was deemed especially important in light of the increased use of online deliveries.
- The omission of landscaping features which were in the central space as well as around the perimeter and the large open spaces on the 3rd and 4th levels.
- The application would result in a density above the London Plan matrix range and as such the further intensification proposed did not represent sustainable development.
- The significant changes to the internal layout and the increase in units beyond the reduction to 70 from the extant scheme exceeded the scope of a 'Minor Amendment' and should require a new planning application.

In response to questions from members, she then made the following points:

- The application would be acceptable as a car free development as long as there was adequate disabled parking provision.

- While accepting the need to develop the site, the application, as well as the extant scheme, represented over intensification. The area would be better served by a residential housing development.

Mark Gibney, the agent, then addressed the Committee on several matters including:

- The increase in unit numbers from 70 to 76 within the existing building envelope and a reduction in the size of the basement whilst making the layout more efficient.
- The maintenance of the consented 13 affordable homes and tenure split of 70% affordable rent and 30% intermediate, as well as an increase in size of a 2-bedroom rented unit to a 3-bedroom rented family unit.
- The setting of the building 1.2 metre away from 75 and 75a St. Paul's Avenue and the retention of the boundary wall which would improve the relationship with the neighbours and reduce any sense of enclosure.
- The continued provision of 10% wheelchair homes, all play provision on site and an assurance to secure planning obligations for public realm works, carbon offset payment and highways.

In response to questions from members, he then made the following points:

- Benefits to the proposed application included; moving the building further away from its neighbours so there would be no noticeable change in daylight/sunlight, measures to ensure there was no undue noise disturbance, increasing the unit numbers from 70 to 76 and the maintenance of the consented 13 affordable homes and tenure split of 70% affordable rent and 30% intermediate.
- While other options were considered, increasing the size of a 2-bedroom rented unit to become a 3-bedroom rented family unit was deemed the most viable.
- The application included a contribution of approximately £2 million in Borough and Mayoral CIL payments. The s106 agreement included a review process that could give way to an increase in the contribution if appropriate.
- The proposed winter gardens had been amended from the extant scheme in respect of their design and fire safety. A number of green infrastructure provisions had also been proposed.

In the ensuing discussion, members raised several issues including the size of the basement, parking and servicing, increased traffic and affordable housing and housing mix. Officers then clarified a number of key points including:

- The proposed reduction in the size of the basement was deemed acceptable and would not result in any reduction in accessible parking provision. The number of Eurobins had been reduced to 14 to allow flexibility and was deemed satisfactory.

- It was considered appropriate to consider the proposed changes to the scheme through an application made under Section 73 (to vary conditions relating to the approved plans and unit mix) as it did not constitute a fundamental alteration given the scale and nature of the changes.
- The provision of car parking spaces accorded with maximum standards. While the number for spaces for bicycle parking had been reduced, the provision still satisfied London Plan standards.
- The development would provide some off-street parking which could be utilised for servicing. On-site parking provision had been considered but was deemed unviable. A traffic safety assessment could be carried out to determine whether an on-street loading bay was necessary.
- The number of affordable units remained the same as the extant scheme although the percentage would reduce. The applicant had submitted an FVA to demonstrate that the scheme would be in financial deficit with the 13 affordable units retained.

With no further issues raised and having established that all members had followed the discussions, the Chair thanked all speakers for their contributions and asked members to vote on the recommendation. Members voted to approve the application.

DECISION: Granted planning permission subject to conditions and informatives as set out in the main report, including an additional condition and revisions to the conditions as set out in the supplementary report and a planning obligation for the applicant to carry out a traffic safety assessment for on-street servicing and to fund the provision of an on-street loading bay if subsequently deemed necessary.

(Voting on the recommendation as amended: For 7, Against 1)

5. Any Other Urgent Business

None.

The meeting closed at 18.30

COUNCILLOR KELCHER
Chair