



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE Wednesday 19 February 2014 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Ketan Sheth (Chair), Aden, Adeyeye, Baker, Cummins, Hashmi, Kabir, Kataria(alternate for Councillor CJ Patel), Ogunro (alternate for Councillor John) and Powney

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John, CJ Patel and Singh

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

None.

2. **Brent Local Plan - Development Management Policies & Minor Alterations to Core Strategy**

The Committee received a report that presented a draft Development Management Policies document (DMPD), a proposed set of Minor Alterations to the Core Strategy, and proposed changes to the Proposals Map of Brent's Local Plan. Ken Hullock, Head of Planning and Transport Strategy explained that the reasons for producing the Development Management Policies document was to bring up-to-date the Unitary Development Policy (UDP policy), first drafted in 2000 and adopted in 2004.

He continued that the DMPD was the final step in drawing up the folder of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that would make up the borough's development plan and as the basis for determining planning applications would ultimately supersede the UDP. Members heard that this round of consultation on the draft Development Management Policies document would provide an opportunity for the community and businesses to comment on the policies. He then outlined the key changes, drawing attention to the following;

Betting shops, Pawnbrokers/Payday Loans

It was proposed that a cap should be set to prevent an overconcentration of and clustering of Betting shops, Pawnbrokers/Payday Loans. He continued that in order to ensure these uses did not dominate any single length of frontage, a limit on the proximity of these uses to each other was proposed. Members heard that given the rapid increase in the number of these uses and the need for expedient action, consideration should be given to introducing an Article 4 Direction, to remove national permitted development rights. Introducing an Article 4 Direction has financial implications in terms of loss of fees and potential compensation claims and it was therefore recommended that a more detailed report on the implications be submitted to a future Planning Committee meeting for members' consideration.

Takeaways

To promote healthy eating and support the Brent Obesity Strategy (2010) it was proposed to introduce a policy which prevented an overconcentration of takeaways and restricted their proximity to schools.

Shisha Cafes

It was proposed to restrict the proximity of shisha cafes to schools. This proposal was in light of the evidence from the Brent Young Persons Cigarette and Shisha Audit (2012) which found that students from a school in Brent that had more than one shisha café within a 0.5 mile radius were twice as likely to be current shisha smokers than students from schools that had no shisha cafés within a 0.5 mile radius.

Frontage

It was proposed that the limit on the proportion of primary frontage in non-retail use be increased from 35% to 40%, in recognition that projected demand for comparison floor space had reduced and that with the exception of Ealing Road Brent's town centres were currently exceeding the limit

Retail impact assessment

It was proposed that a local threshold that would require retail impact assessment be set at 500sqm, as it was felt that the national threshold of 2,500sqm would potentially allow developments which could cause harm Brent's town centres.

Visitor accommodation

Conditions would be applied to ensure visitor accommodation was not permanently occupied by requiring applications for hotel development to be accompanied by an Accessibility Management Plan.

Protection of open spaces

The revised Policies Map circulated with the report showed all open space of local value that should be protected.

Local Employment Sites

A more flexible approach was proposed in policy DMP31 for Local Employment Sites of up to the maximum threshold of 7.5ha to be released with the intention of allowing these sites to contribute to housing supply, and meet the identified need for affordable workspace in the borough.

Ken Hullock informed members that wide publicity would be given to the six week long public consultation with advertisement in the local press and the Brent Magazine. Leaflets would be made available in the Council's libraries and published on the Council's website.

In response to members' questions, Claire Jones, Planning Policy Officer stated that currently the UDP had no specific policy for controlling betting shops pawnbrokers/payday loans. To counter that, it was proposed to introduce a policy in the DMDPD and consider also taking forward an Article 4 Direction which would remove national permitted development rights that allowed betting shops to open

without the need for planning permission in units previously used by restaurants and cafés (A3), drinking establishments (A4) and hot food takeaways (A5). Members heard that it was not possible to control the sale of “paan” tobacco as there were no controls on what could be sold within A1 retail use. Officers clarified that although there was no local policy on crematoriums, there was a national policy on minimum distances between a crematorium and residential properties.

In reference to the document setting out the list of locally listed buildings members sought a justification for the proposal not to add The Queensbury in Walm Lane to the list. Members were informed that the building was suffering from deterioration and as it was not considered a sufficiently unique building, it was not worthy of protection. Officers clarified that policy DMP39 introduced a minimum dwelling size for all houses where a conversion was proposed. Additionally, a new policy DMP44 had been introduced which would resist the loss of social infrastructure without adequate justification or provision for its replacement in terms of equivalent quantity and quality.

Concern was expressed about noise nuisance caused by minicabs and obstruction to highways and pavements caused by skip trucks during construction and officers were asked to convey this to the Environment and Neighbourhoods so that it could be considered as part of any review of the operation of this service. Officers were also requested to print copies of the policy map in A3 sizes for members.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that Executive be recommended to agree the draft Development Management Policies document, and the proposed Minor Alterations to the Core Strategy and changes to the Proposals Map, for public consultation starting on 26 May 2014 for 6 weeks;
- (ii) that the Strategic Director, Regeneration & Growth be authorised to make further editorial changes to the document prior to finally issuing it for public consultation.

3. Further Alterations to the London Plan- Public Consultation by the Mayor of London

Members considered a report that explained the key changes from the existing London Plan, highlighted the implications for Brent and suggested some basic responses to the key planning issues on Further Alterations to the London Plan which was currently being consulted upon by the Mayor of London. Ken Hullock, Head of Planning and Transport Strategy highlighted the key changes to the London Plan which had the biggest implications for Brent.

Population

The population projection that underpinned the Alterations to the London Plan showed that London’s population would grow from 8.2 million in 2011 to 10.11 million in 2036. This represented a growth of nearly 10% but for Brent, the

projected expected population growth was 25% which would present huge implications for planning in Brent. There would be a lot of pressure on the use of scarce land, particularly for housing and also the supporting infrastructure such as schools and health facilities and the need to accommodate job creating activities in a sustainable way.

Housing

The need to plan for this growth had the most significant implications for individual boroughs in terms of the housing targets that the London Mayor was setting through the Alterations. Brent's increase was 34% for conventional housing but this rose to 43% when account was taken of non-self-contained housing, almost completely attributable to student housing consents granted in the Wembley area.

Town Centres

Members heard that in response to previous GLA consultation, the Council made the case that, in light of the development of the London Designer Outlet and consented major retail street, Wembley and Wembley Park town centre would be effectively one centre, of a scale and with an offer characteristic of a Metropolitan centre as defined in the London Plan. As it was not acknowledged that both Wembley and Wembley Park could potentially change in status to one combined Metropolitan centre, officers were recommending that Brent made representations so that it was acknowledged within the London Plan that Wembley had the potential to expand as a single Metropolitan centre

Employment

It was proposed to focus release of land around transport nodes and town centres. Members heard that the proposed major release of industrial land in Park Royal at Old Oak, just over the borough boundary south of Willesden Junction station, had been accepted by Brent through the process of agreeing a draft Vision for the Old Oak area, although it was expected that this release would be compensated for by the intensive development in the area for alternative employment opportunities. Although Brent supported the identification of Old Oak as a new Opportunity Area with the potential to deliver 55,000 new jobs it was felt that the overall job creation figure could be higher as the Vision drawn up for the area estimated that up to 90,000 jobs could be created.

In the ensuing discussion, members noted that the housing target figure of 1,525 per annum would be difficult to achieve in the current economic climate and particularly due to scarcity of land in the Borough. It was pointed out that transport infrastructure to support increases in housing development and population increases was inadequate. Concern was expressed about inadequate parking facilities in and around the Wembley area which had seen a phenomenal increase in housing and retail developments. This was considered a major defect in attracting shoppers to the town centre and the retail facilities.

In responding to the above, the Head of Planning and Strategy stated that the Council would continue in its efforts to identify transport infrastructure to support the housing developments across the borough through the Development

Infrastructure Project Study (DIPS) and in liaison with Transport for London (TfL). He added that the Council was aware of the need to identify more sites for new housing allocations in the borough than previously estimated, or that development should be at higher densities than previously allowed, or both. Members heard that consents had been granted for new car parks including multi-storey car parks and that recent estimate showed that there were approximately 8,000 homes with planning consent in the borough which had not been implemented.

The Head of Planning and Transport Strategy added that following the Mayor's consultation period, officers of the GLA would make changes to the draft Alterations and then submit the proposed changes with the Alterations to the Secretary of State for Examination, which was scheduled to take place later in 2014. He requested members to agree the basic response to the key areas outlined in the report and to authorise officers to compile further comments based on the council's own planning and growth objectives to be submitted to the Mayor before 10 April 2014.

RESOLVED:

that the proposed alterations to the London Plan as outlined be noted and that the Strategic Director, Regeneration & Growth be asked to respond to the Mayor's consultation based upon the council's own planning objectives.

4. Any Other Urgent Business

None.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm

K SHETH
Chair