



Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

**Developer Presentation
to Strategic Planning
Committee Members**

9th July 2020

Pre-Application Reference: PE/00038/20

Location: BEAM PARK, FORMER FORD ASSEMBLY PLANT SITE, DAGENHAM AND RAINHAM

Ward: SOUTH HORNCHURCH

Description: UPLIFT OF 162 NEW HOMES IN PHASE 2A OF DEVELOPMENT FOLLOWING APPROVAL UNDER THE OUTLINE PERMISSION P1242.17 (APPROVED BY GLA UNDER REF: GLA/2933a/05)

Case Officer: NANAYAA AMPOMA

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The proposed development is currently the subject of pre-application discussions since January 2020. Since then, a number of meetings have been undertaken between the developer and LB Havering's planning officers with written pre-application and urban design comments being provided throughout the process. The proposal has also been reviewed by the Havering Quality Review Panel.
- 1.2 The proposal is being presented to Committee for the first time to enable Members to provide their initial comments prior to the submission of the formal planning application.
- 1.3 In particular, Members may wish to consider the following areas:
- Loss of houses and their replacement with Block/flats

- Scale/height of new Block and additional storeys
- The proposed amended layout as it relates to the wider context
- Affordable Housing
- Number of family units (3beds)
- Car parking

1.4 For clarification, the pre-application proposals referred to in this report are not yet subject to any current application for planning permission. Therefore comments made in response to the developer's presentation are provisional, non-binding and are given without prejudice to the determination of any subsequent planning application. Any formal submission shall be subject to the normal planning legislation procedures.

2 PROPOSAL AND LOCATION DETAILS

Site and Surroundings

2.1 The application site covers a large site in Rainham that falls between LBH and LBBD.

Proposal

2.2 The application aims to increase the number of housing units within Phase 2A of the development from 184 to 346 units. Plot 16 of the development, currently benefiting from houses, would be replaced with the residential Block Y. In addition Blocks I and T would see additional storeys added. The below table summaries' the changes:

| Item | Currently | Proposed Amendment |
|---|----------------------------------|--|
| Affordable homes %(Phase 1/2A) | 50% | 50% |
| Family homes | 70 | X 10 3B units** |
| Total affordable homes units | 70 | 143 |
| Block T Storeys | 5-7 | 5-8* |
| Block I Storeys | 4-8 | 4-13* |
| Plot 16 | 21x houses | New Block Y (12-13 storeys)* |
| Parking Ratio | 0.7 | 0.4 |
| Materials | Wide range | Simplified palette |
| Landscape | Comprehensive landscape plans | Amend landscape details to include new access walkways to the south of Block Y and I. (Further details to follow) |

**Note, the building heights referred to on page 5 of the applicant's document merely refer to the original discussions on height between officers and the applicant during the current pre-application. These do not reflect what was originally approved under the scheme. Block I was not 14-15 storeys, additionally Block Y refers to Plot 16 of the existing scheme which has houses on.*

***Note: the applicant has stated that there would be 10 additional family homes, however the count remains the same as the current scheme. Therefore further clarification is required.*

Planning History

- 2.3 P1125.19:** Variation of conditions 5 (Approved Plans) 7 (Phasing Plan) and 33 (Landscaping) of planning permission P1242.17 (GLA Ref: GLA/2933a/05) to allow amendments to the site area located within the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. No changes are proposed within London Borough of Havering's site area. ***Committee Approval with S106 Agreement November 2019***
- 2.4 P0290.18:** Cross boundary planning application for enabling works of Phase 2 of the wider Beam Park site to prepare it for development, including clearing of on-site structures, addressing contamination, importation and positioning of crushed material on site for up to 24 months (preventing future settlement), localised piling and installation of band drainage. ***Committee Approval with conditions, August 2018***
- 2.5 P1242.17:** Cross boundary hybrid planning application for the redevelopment of the site to include residential (50% affordable); two primary schools and nursery (Use Class D1); railway station; supporting uses including retail, healthcare, multi faith worship space, leisure, community uses and management space (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, B1, D1 and D2); energy centres; open space with localised flood lighting; public realm with hard and soft landscaping; children's play space; flood compensation areas; car and cycle parking; highway works and site preparation/ enabling works (UPDATED AUGUST 2018) – ***Approved subject to S106 and conditions, February 2019 (GLA Ref: GLA/2933a/05)(LBBB ref: 17/01307/OUT).***

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1** At this stage, it is intended that the following will be consulted regarding any subsequent planning application:
- London Fire Brigade
 - Environment Agency
 - TfL
 - HS1
 - Network Rail
 - The Mayor of London (GLA)
 - Health and Safety Executive
 - Historic England
 - Natural England

4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

4.1 Details of community involvement have not been provided at this stage.

5. QUALITY REVIEW PANEL

5.1 The pre-application proposals were presented to the QRP Panel on 19th March 2020. A summary of their comments are detailed below:

The panel has no objection to increasing the height of Block T by one storey and agrees that it would help with the framing of the central park from New Road. But while there is no in principle objection to converting the housing at Plot 16 to the warehouse Block Y, it is not clear why these southern blocks need to be as high as proposed, creating a stark wall that relates poorly to the housing at the centre of Phase 2. The panel also questions the extent to which a 16 storey building could be considered to follow a warehouse typology, and feels that the architectural narrative around Block Y needs to be stronger. The architectural language of the both the villas and the warehouse blocks should be more clearly differentiated, as currently the elevations proposed appear very similar.

The panel has a number of concerns about the ground floor condition of Blocks Y and I. It would like to see higher quality public realm here, as well as active uses to encourage passive surveillance and to make the spaces around the blocks more welcoming. Overall, the panel feels that more thought needs to be given to the composition of streets and spaces, in terms of design, materials and movement, rooted in an analysis of the pedestrian experience. These issues are explored in greater detail below.

Heights and massing

- The panel supports the increase in height of Block T by one storey, and feels this does help to frame better the central park at the northern edge of the development.
- However, it is unconvinced by the rationale for increasing the height and massing of Blocks Y and I to the current proposed height, where the framing effect is far less effective. The panel questions whether the primary consideration here is one of viability rather than improving the quality of the scheme.
- The increased height and massing of Blocks Y and I will have a negative impact on housing immediately to their north and on the wider public realm.

Connectivity and wayfinding

- While unavoidable, the level changes, road and gas pressure-reducing station significantly impact upon the quality of the central park. The panel urges the design team to think further about mitigating these impacts and ensuring better connectivity.
- The absence of a clear and comfortable link between the south garden and the central park is a missed opportunity, which undermines the connectivity of the scheme and risks creating an underused and fragmented public realm here.
- The panel is also concerned about the quality of the connecting route along the southern edge of the site, from the underpass beneath Thames Avenue towards the station. This could be mitigated by pulling back the wings of Block I in order to create a wider, more appealing green route.

- Finally, the panel questions whether the heightened villa block (Block T) creates a sufficient marker at the termination of the diagonal route to and from the new station; without visualisations it is difficult to make a firm judgement. This is clearly a significant point in the streetscape and the panel feels that the design team need to give further consideration to its wayfinding role and the public realm around this block.

Public realm, landscaping and car parking

- The panel feels strongly that the tightly-drawn red line needs to be relaxed to bring in those areas of public space adjacent to the proposed buildings, in order to achieve a higher quality environment in these areas, especially around the park and the gas facility.

Family Friendly

- The panel questions the extent to which a neighbourhood of this density is truly family-friendly. In particular, the main movement axes have very narrow pavements and the route to the south of Block Y is particularly constrained.
- Opportunities to increase pedestrian priority and improve the quality of the public realm across the phase as a whole have should be taken, including pavements widths and materials, traffic slowing/calming measures, crossings, and shared surfaces.

Architectural expression.

- There is insufficient differentiation between the form and materials of the villa blocks and the warehouse blocks, which the panel feels are closer in language to point blocks than warehouses.
- In particular, the design team need to give further thought to the architectural response of the taller warehouse point blocks to the housing at the centre of the scheme, giving as much attention to this transition as has clearly been given the east-west transition.

Family housing units

- The panel has concerns about the reduction in the proportion and quantum of family housing within this phase.
- Even if the absolute numbers of family units are not to be reduced, the change in proportion will impact on the character of the place.
- 3-bed units may be occupied by sharers rather than by families, changing the demographic mix of the new neighbourhood – and its ability to respond to Havering's housing needs.

6 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main planning issues for consideration are:

- Principle
- Design
- Amenity
- Environment
- Parking
- Affordable housing

Principle

- 6.2 In principle, the loss of houses in place of the proposed flats is acceptable as it would still result in housing. However the original permission contains a number of stipulation on family housing numbers and affordable housing provisions that it is expected would be complied with.
- 6.3 This includes the need to provide 50% affordable in London Borough of Havering's part of the site and ensuring 25% of the total units in LBH area represents 3 bedroom units.
- 6.4 The proposals as submitted would meet the required 50% affordability requirement.
- 6.5 Condition 77 of the original permission requires 25% 3 beds and it is expected that any new proposal for Phase 2A includes at least 25% 3 bed units in compliance with the Hybrid permission. Any other provision would be considered in conflict with the Beam Park Masterplan. However, given the strong policy position and housing needs in Havering, it would be expected that any uplift in unit numbers has a corresponding uplift in 3 bed units to maintain the required mix. This interpretation is also supported by the GLA. Officers would need confirmation of this.
- 6.6 In addition, the implications of the increase in units has not been fully considered and an assessment of the wider implications is required. For example, impact on parking ratio (it is unclear whether the new ratio of 0.4 is for Phase 2A only or includes Phase 1), total overall residential units as it relates to the maximum 3000 in the outline, implications on the proposed school pupil numbers and increased education contributions. It is also important that consideration of the Grampian condition 79, which limits occupation of the development until the station is operational is understood in relation the proposals. Phase 3 was selected as the limit of development prior to the opening of the station due to the number of people that the existing transport network could absorb. So if the uplift in Phase 2A triggers the maximum capacity of the existing transport network then it is likely that TfL and the GLA may revise the trigger for the station.

Design

- 6.7 The proposed development was considered by the Havering Quality Review Panel on 18th March 2020. Following this, further design work is required to help improve the quality and appearance of the proposed Block.
- 6.8 There are some details within the submission that still need to be clarified such as the total number of family units. The applicant has stated that they have increased the number of family units by 10. However the original total number

of family units remains the same (see page 9 of applicant's document). Confirmation that all proposed family units would be 3 bedroom units and not 2 bedroom units is also required.

- 6.9 The applicant has argued that the increase in units is to create a composition around the central park that would mirror the development at Barking and Dagenham. However officers have questioned these justification as it does not appear that there would be a uniformed composition around the park from the proposals.
- 6.10 Further works are needed in regards to the pedestrian underpass to the west of the site (within Barking and Dagenham).
- 6.11 Officers welcome the reduction in the height of Blocks I and Y since the initial pre-application discussions. However officers still consider that the proposed heights have not been properly justified as acceptable at the location. There is particular concern that the introduction of wholly new Block (Y) this distance away from the Station, which would be the main thoroughfare (as designed under the original scheme) would create some conflict in design and legibility. Therefore while the introduction of larger flatted blocks in place of the houses may be acceptable in principle, officers are yet to be convinced regarding the proposed storey heights or design.
- 6.12 In addition, the strategy to replace low-rise buildings with 12-13 storey towers within the original plot boundaries and street layout may lead to unacceptable adjacencies between buildings. Overshadowing and overlooking issues are a concern in some areas. For example, the junction between plots I and Y shows two 13 storey towers separated only by the width of a typical street. This is at variance to the principles adopted in Phase 1.
- 6.13 Officers had requested more details as to whether alternative densities could be explored. However these details have not yet been submitted. Officers had considered that perhaps the housing typology could be changed to stacked maisonettes for example. Furthermore, the proposed height increases do not necessary add to the quality of the scheme an officers consider that any amendment should do more than simply increase the number of units.
- 6.14 Careful consideration also needs to be given to the pedestrian experience on the roads immediately in front of Blocks Y and I. The applicant has described the development as a family led scheme. However comments from the QRP and officers have questioned whether the narrow roads, which are similar to standard layouts, do anything to encourage a family feel at that part of the development.

- 6.15 Officers notes that the redline of the site has been drawn very tightly and this limits the ability to seek improvements to the wider site should these be considered necessary in the light of increases in density.
- 6.16 Lastly, further details regarding Daylight/Sunlight, air quality would be required to ensure the private and public open space is of sufficient quality.

Amenity

- 6.17 Further details are required in order to allow officers to consider whether there would be increased overlooking to the garden areas and residential houses in front of Block Y and I. Therefore, officers will be requesting Sunlight and Daylight studies and confirmation of the position of windows.
- 6.18 Further details are also required as to whether the newly proposed green area to the south of site (see Block Y) would be for the private use of the residents of Block Y or whether any other private shared amenity space is being proposed at roof level for example. However it should be noted that there is a very large central park as part of the scheme so amenity could be provided here.
- 6.19 In addition, it is important for the development to ensure that a complementary relationship is created between the newly proposed Block and other residential uses at the site. Therefore a Noise Assessment will be required as part of the formal submission.

Environment

- 6.20 No assessments of environmental impact or energy efficiency were provided with the pre-application enquiry. An energy statement needs to be submitted with the application to demonstrate that the proposal can achieve London Plan requirements for carbon reduction (zero carbon emissions for all residential buildings constructed after 2016). In accordance with policy, a financial contribution for carbon offsetting might be sought to address any shortfall in achieving those targets.

Parking

- 6.21 The application site aims to reduce the overall car parking ratio for Phase 2A from 0.7 to 0.4. Further justification will be required to ascertain the impact of this reduction.

Affordable housing

- 6.22 It is required under the original scheme that at least 50% affordability is reached. The proposed amendments would continue to meet this.

7. FINANCIAL AND OTHER MITIGATION

7.1 The proposal would likely attract the following section 106 contributions to mitigate the impact of the development:

- Deed of Variation to Outline permission with subsequent uplifts in contributions and necessary changes to triggers for payment
- Reasonable legal fees
- S106 Monitoring fee

7.2 The Havering Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) has been adopted as of the 1st September 2019. Therefore the development is likely to be CIL liable for both the Mayoral and LB Havering. As such subject to the resulting floor space, the following charges would be applicable:

- Mayoral CIL would be applied at a rate of £25 per square metre
- LB Havering CIL would be applied at a rate of £125 per square metre, should it be implemented

8. CONCLUSIONS

8.1 The development is still in the pre-application stage and additional work remains to be carried out on it.