MINUTES OF THE PLANNING SUB COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, 10 MARCH 2015

Councillors: Ahmet (Chair), Basu, Beacham, Bevan, Carroll, Carter, Gunes, Mallett (Vice-Chair), Patterson and Rice

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION
PC01.	**APOLOGIES** There were no apologies for absence.
PC02.	**URGENT BUSINESS** There were no items of urgent business.
PC03.	**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** Councillor Gunes stated that she was a ward councillor for the ward in which the site was located and also that she lived very close to the application site, but did not have any pre-determined views regarding the application. Councillor Mallett stated that she lived close to the application site, but did not have any pre-determined views regarding the application.
PC04.	**PRE-APPLICATION BRIEFINGS** This meeting was scheduled to consider pre-application presentations to the Planning Sub-Committee and discuss proposals related thereto. Notwithstanding that this was a formal meeting of the Sub-Committee, no decisions were taken at the meeting, and any subsequent applications will be the subject of a report to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee in accordance with standard procedures.
PC05.	**APEX HOUSE, SEVEN SISTERS ROAD, LONDON, N15 5PQ** The Committee provided views on a proposed redevelopment, comprising the demolition of the existing former Council office and erection of new buildings up to 21 storeys in height, providing 152 residential units and 1,182sqm of retail floor space. Neil McClellan, the Case Officer for the application and Majors Team Leader, stated that the pre-application briefing document which had been included in the agenda contained a number of errors and omissions, and consequently a corrected version of the briefing was appended to an addendum report that was tabled at the meeting. Councillor Bevan expressed concern that an addendum report, and amended briefing document, had been circulated at the meeting because this did not give councillors sufficient time to consider the information provided therein.

It was anticipated that the design for the scheme would go before a Development Management Forum in the latter part of May 2015.

Members made the following comments on the scheme:

- It was queried how much consultation had taken place and if more was planned. The applicant said that there had been three focussed public consultations with interest groups, namely the Ward's Corner Conservation Coalition, market traders and ward councillors, and a public consultation on two days. Further consultations would take place later in the week with the market traders, and it was anticipated that in the last week of March that there would be another public consultation at the applicant's studio in N17 where they would give their response to the comments which had been received from councillors at this meeting, from the previous public consultation and from the Design Review Panel.
- There is currently a public lavatory building on the site - is there any intention to re-provide that facility in the new scheme? The applicant said that they were waiting to see what the outcome of public consultation was, because feedback had been mixed as some people were not keen to have them. It also depended largely on what commercial use went back into the proposed development at ground floor level.
- Proposed Cycle Superhighway Route 1 currently passes next to the site at a point where the pavement is currently not as wide as would be desired; has this been taken into account during the design of the scheme? The applicant advised that the proposed development would be pulled-back from the railing which ran along Tottenham High Road so that the width of the pavement would be approximately 15m wide and this would create sufficient space for the super-cycle highway to come past the site.
- It was queried how much time was left before the planning permission which had been granted for the Ward's Corner site lapsed. The applicant stated that planning permission had been granted in 2012, at which time the section 106 Agreement was signed, and that it was valid for 5 years.
- Concern that the proposed development should be carried out with regard to the adjacent lower-rise properties and consequently a 21 storey building would be very contentious for the site. The applicant said that the adjacent site was not within their ownership; consequently it was their responsibility to demonstrate within the planning submission how a new building on that site could work with and compliment the proposed development for the Apex House site.
- It was queried what factors drove the thinking that a large tower was needed and would be appropriate for the site, rather than a much lower level density scheme, when taking into account that the Ward's Corner site would also have tall buildings on it. The applicant was of the opinion that the site enjoyed extraordinary visibility and significance and was at the end of a remarkably long access. Both the length of the access, and the width of the access, as well as the adjacency and significance of the site as an important entrance into Tottenham, gave the opportunity for a building of significant scale, and that this had been

identified in previous urban studies. The judgement as to what was acceptable and desired in regard to height was a consideration and evaluation which took a number of efforts and visual analysis to understand, but the proposition at the moment was for a building which the applicant felt makes the most of the opportunities of this extraordinary site, but also created a genuine and valuable piece of real-estate. The height evaluation was a consideration which they would continue to look at, and respond to comments and observations on, and they intended to find a datum on this which people would feel was appropriate and would be comfortable with. The applicant hoped that there would be support for a building of some height on the site.

- The applicant said that in regard to infrastructure, studies had been undertaken looking at the impact in engineering terms for constructing a building of this stature on this site, and that construction would be underwritten by a significant technical evaluation of the construction implications of the site.
- Concern that there would be overlooking of Seacole Court properties, resulting in loss of privacy. The applicant said that overlooking was unlikely to be a problem as the apartments faced towards the road in easterly and westerly directions and consequently there would be no direct overlooking of existing properties in Seacole Court.
- Concern about the proximity of the Victoria Line and the possible impact thereon caused by the design, construction, and associated building costs. It was put to the applicant that any increased costs in building would be passed on to the prospective purchasers, and this raised the issue that people may not be able to afford the affordable housing units in the scheme. The applicant said that 40% of the current scheme was affordable accommodation, subject to negotiations to be had with Council officers over tenure, but that they were looking at affordable rents and trying to prioritise larger units as well, in the form of 2 and 3 bed, and perhaps 4 bed units. In regard to the affordability of the units, the applicant stated that when constructing a building there was a budget that had to be worked within in order to make sure that the end units were affordable, whether it be for rent or for sale, and that it was something that they were conscious of as they would not want to build something that they would struggle to rent or sell.
- Concern that there should be sufficient provision of affordable housing. The applicant said that details were still to be discussed with Council officers, but in regard to the current scheme approximately 40% of the accommodation would be of affordable rent housing, which equated to approximately 50 units out of the 150 or so that would be included in the scheme, and that Granger Trust was likely to be the housing association that would manage these units.
- It was queried why the applicant did not want to erect a building higher than the twenty one proposed. The applicant stated that there was an economic rationale behind the number of storeys, in that if buildings were significantly above twenty floors the number of lifts and the challenge of vertical circulation became another order of cost and another order of sophistication. The applicant went on to say that like-wise the requirements of the rigidity of the structure as a building also becomes more complex in technical terms, so there were economic

parameters for residential design in terms of height.

- Concern about the shadow the proposed building would cast, especially in winter months. The applicant stated that the tall building strategy for the site would be augmented by a significant technical evaluation which would include sunlight, daylight and shadows and that there would be a complete presentation of the performance of the preferred option as consultation was carried out to give every confidence that the environmental impact of a tall building on this site had been properly understood and mitigated as they moved towards the preparation of a planning application for the site.
- Concern that the building was too high in relation to the surrounding buildings. The applicant felt that the site enjoyed extraordinary visibility and significance, and was at the end of a long access, and that consequently there was an opportunity for a memorable building of significant scale on the site, and that this had been identified in the emerging urban character study which the Council were currently consulting on. Consequently the scheme complied with emerging planning policy.
- Concern that the proposals for the Ward's Corner site indicated that a similar tall building would be erected on that site, resulting in the 'Manhattanisation' of the Seven Sisters area. The applicant stated that the Ward's Corner proposal had some very unique constraints attached to it which drove the design of it. It had four Victoria line tunnels running underneath it and it also had a very restraining right-of-light envelope which meant that there was only a certain quantum of development that could ever get developed on that site. Also, the proposed development for the Ward's Corner site could by no means be classed as a tower as it would be no more than seven storeys at its highest point.
- It was queried if economics were driving the need for having a tall building. The applicant said that in regard to the economics and viability of the proposal, it was not the financial aspects that drove the desire to have a tall building, but the fact that it was an appropriate location to have a tall building and therefore this was an excellent opportunity to deliver a building on a site where the constraints and opportunities backed up this vision.
- It was queried if all the affordable housing would be in the lower block. The applicant stated that the affordable housing provision would be split between the proposed buildings, with the lower seven storey block on Seven Sisters Road being comprised of 100% affordable housing, and some being in the lower floors of the taller building and the terrace of houses on Stonebridge Road.
- Concern that the affordable element of housing would be evident and obvious, as in some schemes which were not very well designed there were some quite bad examples where, depending on the floor one was on, it was really evident which was the affordable element and which was not. The applicant stated that the intention was very much for tenure blind, and that it was in their interests as both developer and affordable housing provider, and the owner of private development, to keep it as a building that was well managed and well presented. The applicant further stated that it was very rare for the developer of the private element of a scheme to also be developing the affordable

element of the same scheme and managing them both together. The applicant stated that Granger was unique business in being able to do this and the reason it had set up its own registered provider for affordable housing was purely that from a management perspective it was a long-term developer, investor and manager in residential property and Granger wanted its buildings to look as good in the future as when they were finished, both in regard to the affordable and private housing elements.

- It was queried what community benefit would be provided in the proposed scheme. The applicant stated that during construction there would be many jobs created on-site for the local community, that an exemplary building would be created with new accommodation which would be available for local people, including a high level of 40% of affordable housing, that the building would bring about a vast improvement to the public realm, and the potential to make this a place where people could stop and enjoy whatever there was on the ground floor level from a commercial point of view would also benefit the community.
- Does the applicant consider itself to be a business partner of the Council? The applicant stated that they had a partnership agreement with the Council in regard to the Ward's Corner site development, but not the Apex House site development.
- It was queried as to where in the scheme amenity space was going to be provided for families. The applicant stated that there would be two types of amenity space accessible to residents: a landscaped rooftop and the ground-floor courtyard area. The rooftop space would be more private, and which perhaps would be more suitable for older people, rather than children. The ground-floor area was being enlarged to be suitable for a more public and child-friendly space. The applicant also said that there was a landscaped roof-deck accessible to the tenants in the interior of the scheme and that this, along with the ground floor courtyard area, provided amenity to local tenants and that these features provided opportunities for 'greening' the landscape at the heart of the development.
- Concern was expressed that this was not a suitable location for family housing due to the traffic, pollution and lack of amenity space.
- Was the applicant aware of the 'poor door' report recently produced by Mathew Taylor, Chair of the Social Integration Commission, and would the scheme be designed not have separate doors for the social housing so that all the tenure mixes were using similar entrances and that there was consequently a more joined-up community? The applicant stated that they had had some involvement in the discussions on 'poor doors' and that it originally the 'poor door' idea came about from having doors of a lesser quality, and a building of a lesser quality, rather than actually having separate doors. They would discuss with officers about how this issue would be dealt with in the proposed scheme.
- In terms of density, would it not be possible to have two buildings linked together of no more than ten-story height, rather than one building of twenty storeys? The applicant responded that there was an issue of critical distances between adjacent buildings in terms of privacy and sunlight issues, and that there was not enough space on

	the site to meet the statutory requirements for the separation of accommodation to avoid overlooking and loss of daylight and sunlight. • It was queried whether any decision had been made regarding the provision of balconies. The applicant said that they had followed the legal requirements of the London Plan in providing private accessible space for every unit which varied from 5 to 9sqm per flat, and that they had generally tried to enclose these as much as possible because of noise and wind at high levels they should not be open and therefore they were fully enclosed on every side except one. • It was queried that in regard to the planning permission already granted to the Ward's Corner Community Coalition, does the Planning Department take into account when recommending other applications, planning consent given on nearby sites, but not yet executed? The Assistant Director, Planning, stated that the Council was obliged to take this into account, particularly when considering the effects of new development on those buildings. • If planning permission was granted for a 21 storey building on this site, would planning officers accept that this would create a dramatically different precedent for future building in the area? The Head of Development Management and Enforcement did not believe that this would be the case as every planning application was considered on its own merits, and also in relation to what the Council's urban characterisation study stated and what the emerging policies coming forward were coming forward in the Area Action Plan.
PC06.	**NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS** There were no new items of urgent business.
PC07.	**DATE OF NEXT MEETING** The Committee noted that its next meeting would be held on Monday 16 March 2015.

COUNCILLOR AHMET

Chair