



London Borough of Haringey Quality Review Panel

Report of Formal Review Meeting: Selby Urban Village

Wednesday 6 May 2020

Video conference

Panel

Peter Studdert (chair)	Haringey Panel Member
Phil Jones	Enfield Panel Member
Dieter Kleiner	Haringey Panel Member
Esther Kurland	Enfield Panel Member
Lindsey Whitelaw	Haringey Panel Member

Attendees

Robbie McNaugher	London Borough of Haringey
Philip Elliot	London Borough of Haringey
Richard Truscott	London Borough of Haringey
Shamiso Oneka	London Borough of Haringey
Michael Kennedy	London Borough of Enfield
Maria Demetri	London Borough of Enfield
Angela McIntyre	Frame Projects
Kiki Ageridou	Frame Projects

Apologies / report copied to

Emma Williamson	London Borough of Haringey
Dean Hermitage	London Borough of Haringey
Maurice Richards	London Borough of Haringey
Deborah Denner	Frame Projects

Confidentiality

This is a pre-application review, and therefore confidential. As a public organisation Haringey Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOI), and in the case of an FOI request may be obliged to release project information submitted for review.

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1. Project name and site address

Selby Urban Village, Selby Centre, Selby Road, London, N17 8JL

2. Presenting team

Paul Karakusevic	Karakusevic Carson Architects
Mark Smith	Karakusevic Carson Architects
Sohanna Srinivasan	Karakusevic Carson Architects
Patrick Shannon	Karakusevic Carson Architects
Azom Choudhury	London Borough of Haringey
Rodney Keg	London Borough of Haringey
Paul Butler	Selby Trust
Graeme Sutherland	Adams & Sutherland Architects
Jennifer Ross	Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design

3. Planning authority briefing

The project aims to be an exemplar of how the local authority and the third sector can work together towards shared goals including the Councils' ambition to build council housing as well as a new community hub, sports and recreational facilities.

The application site includes, the Selby Centre, a sports hall, a strip of land located to the north of Devonshire Primary School playing fields and Bull Lane Playing Fields to the north / northeast of the centre which falls within the London Borough of Enfield.

The Selby Centre is operated by the Selby Trust and is held on a lease from Haringey Council. The centre is spread over six blocks with associated car parking. Bull Lane playing fields is a four hectare site located directly northeast of the Selby Site and is designated as 'Local Open Space'. Whilst located within the London Borough of Enfield, Bull Lane is owned by Haringey. The borough boundary with Enfield runs along the southern boundary of Bull Lane playing fields, and to the north of the strip of land that connects the application site to Weir Hall Road.

The Haringey Local Plan recognises the Selby Centre as an Asset of Community Value. It is identified as allocated site SA62 in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document and allocated for a 'community use-led mixed use development' which includes the 'consolidation of community uses with potential housing development'.

In March 2019 Haringey Council and the Selby Trust signed a Memorandum of Understanding. This sets out joint aspirations and agreed ways of working to ensure the successful re-provision and development of the Selby site.

Officers asked for the panel's views on: the development strategy; the proposed development scenarios; and their block / building heights, massing and design quality. It also asked for the panel's comments on the relationship of the scheme to the surrounding area, the public realm proposals, and links to the surrounding area.



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4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The Design Review Panel welcomes the strategic thinking that has gone into the preparation of options for the development of Selby Urban Village. The options presented form a good basis for consultation with the local community, but they highlight the challenge of arriving at a development strategy that is attractive, viable and deliverable. All three versions of the preferred Scenario 1 propose housing along the north and west edges of Bull Lane Playing Fields. The deliverability of this radical intervention will depend on the view taken about the existing mature poplar trees along these edges. If they are to be retained, they will sit awkwardly against the new housing, but their removal may be resisted by the local community in spite of their limited future life. Their removal may also be resisted because of the biodiversity that they support. If the perimeter housing is therefore undeliverable in the short-term Scenario 1a may be unviable because of the limited footprint available for new housing on the Selby Centre site. Scenarios 1b or 1c (minus the perimeter housing) may therefore be preferable (and more viable) as they free up all of the existing Selby Centre site for new housing. The Panel therefore recommends that the implications of the retention or removal of the poplar trees is carefully considered alongside more detailed design studies for the perimeter housing, together with a detailed capacity study of the existing Selby Centre site. Given that the immediate context of the Selby Centre site is three or four storeys a strong urban design case will need to be made for new housing to significantly exceed this height. The Panel welcomes the analysis that has been made of the wider context of the site, but suggests that further work is required to ensure routes to and around the sites are clear, and well connected to the wider area. There is potential for the Selby Centre to act as a beacon which sits on clear sight lines and helps draw people to the site. The panel suggests that a more diverse range of activities should be considered for Bull Lane playing fields to ensure that a wide spectrum of the population is catered to. This should include those who want to enjoy the outdoors, but do not participate in organised sport. There is a tension between the efforts to enhance the site's ecology and the need to provide space for sports and wellbeing. The panel suggests this could be eased by collaboration with Devonshire Primary School to share facilities.

Overall approach

- The panel urges the applicant team to continue testing the scheme's viability as designs progress to ensure that what is being proposed is deliverable.
- The panel is pleased to see a masterplan which is ecologically and landscape driven.
- Scenario 1 seems the most suitable masterplan to develop further. Within the panel opinions varied across Scenarios 1a, 1b and 1c, aspects of which are outlined below.



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Relationship to surroundings: routes and legibility

- The panel emphasises the opportunity for this development to improve routes through and around the site. While this is beginning to happen successfully, especially on the Haringey side of the proposals, further work is needed to ensure that these routes are clear and legible.
- The design team should ensure that new routes are well connected to the wider area.
- The panel emphasises the importance of the 'front door' of this new urban village. This should be visible within the wider context to help to increase footfall and draw people to the site. It therefore recommends the design team think of the Selby Centre as a beacon for the site, creating clear site cues and desire lines along main routes to the site.
- Scenario 1a creates a clear visual link to the Selby Centre which makes the site welcoming from Selby Street and may help drive footfall, whereas in Scenarios 1b and 1c the Centre and Sports Hall relate more strongly to Bull Lane.
- As proposed the panel finds the route eastward which connects the centre of the site to Bull Lane confusing in all three Scenarios. It suggests that if this route was solely for pedestrians and cyclists it would be stronger.
- The panel supports improvements along Bull Lane, however it recommends that the proposed segregated cycle route should be removed unless there is certainty that it can be implemented to the north and the south of the site. A better approach would look at ways of managing the parking along Bull Lane to create a safer route for cyclists in both directions.
- The panel urges further consideration of the hard edge conditions created by uses such as sports pitches and halls. It commends the scenarios where the sports hall is wrapped in other more active uses to ensure a positive impact on the surrounding public realm.

Bull Lane playing fields

- The design team should consider if a more diverse range of outdoor activities would be more appropriate at Bull Lane playing fields. As proposed the scheme caters most specifically towards organised sport.
- The panel emphasises the importance of ensuring the space provided is inclusive and welcomes as broad a span of the local population as possible. It highlights that many people will want to walk outside and enjoy nature without partaking in organised sport.



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- The proposals are struggling to achieve a balance between the protection and enhancement of the local ecology and the provision of sports facilities. The panel suggests some of this pressure could be relieved by opening a dialogue with Devonshire Primary School to allow for collaboration and sharing of existing sports infrastructure.
- The panel considers that scenarios where fences and barriers to the pitches and multi-use games area are reduced or eliminated, through strategic placement, are most successful and should be further explored.

Bull Lane housing

- The panel commends efforts to maintain the existing poplar trees along the northern and western edge of the Bull Lane playing fields. However, doing so pushes the proposed housing into the site, reducing the space for sports and wellbeing proposals.
- The panel is not convinced that adequate space has been allowed for the access road and parking for the houses, and this is likely to further reduce the size of the retained sports field.
- The proposed scenarios show a protected landscaped zone between the back gardens of the existing and proposed housing to enable access to the poplars for maintenance. This may work if it is managed as a private communal garden for the new houses, but it pushes the housing further into the playing fields and may also lead to problems of security.
- The panel therefore encourages further thought around the lifespan of the existing poplar trees to avoid compromising the masterplan. The design team should weigh up their ecological value and age, versus the impact that they have on the overall scheme layout.
- The panel considers that based on the limited life span the poplar trees have remaining, they could be removed and replaced with new trees that would be more appropriate in the back gardens of the new houses. This would allow the new houses to be pushed back to nearer the site boundary and improve the security of back gardens. This approach may be supportable if there can be shown to be a net gain in biodiversity across the whole development. However, the panel recognises that such an approach could be unpopular with local residents and would need to be tested through consultation.
- Understanding the timeline for delivery of the homes proposed here may be helpful in deciding how to deal with the existing poplar trees. If the delivery of these homes is a long-term aspiration the timescale may allow for the poplar trees to live out their lifespan and for more appropriate replacement trees to be planted which facilitate the best design.



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Selby site massing and development density

- The panel is concerned that the inclusion of the Selby Centre in the southern portion of the site in Scenario 1a will lead to an increase in the height and density of homes needed to provide the required quantum of housing.
- In the panel's view heights of five to seven storeys may feel overbearing in the context of surrounding homes which are two to three storeys. It suggests urban design studies are required to understand what heights and densities are possible in this context without creating a hostile environment.
- Scenarios 1b and 1c are likely to allow for lower densities and a more relaxed urban scale by locating the Selby Centre north of the borough boundary.

Public realm and landscape design

- The panel encourages the creation of playable streets, suggesting the design team can be creative with the street design given that the streets are unlikely to be adopted.
- The panel suggests where possible streets should be green and playful with blurred boundaries between the streets and the green spaces.
- Proposed links between internal and external spaces are welcomed. The panel is especially encouraged by green elements incorporated into the Selby Centre kitchen, café and foodbank.
- The panel suggests that outside the Selby Centre there is an opportunity to create a public square which forms an arrival point to the site, links to the green spaces, and creates excitement.
- Further thought is required to establish how residential car parking is integrated into proposed streets and public realm. The panel encourages a healthy travel and healthy streets approach, and suggests the design team engage with the North Middlesex Hospital to establish a holistic travel strategy.
- The panel commends the flexible parking strategy to the Bull Lane playing fields.

Weir Hall Road link

- While the panel is encouraged by the inclusion of allotments along the Weir Hall Road link, it cautions that this area already appears to be quite a rich wildlife corridor. Changes here should be carefully considered in terms of their impact.



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Architecture

- The panel enjoys the precedent imagery which shows the aspiration for the inside of the Selby Centre. It commends the practical and imaginative approach to space efficiency, which will become more relevant as working from home increases, and people spend more time in their local neighbourhoods.
- The panel suggests that it could be exciting to reflect some of the adaptability and flexibility of the building design in the landscape proposals. For example, sports pitches could be less 'carved up' and more flexible.

Local engagement

- The panel welcomes the community engagement strategy that is planned, and believes that this will be crucial to achieving a successful outcome.

Next steps

The panel looks forward to reviewing proposals again as they proceed to the next stage of design.



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Appendix: Haringey Development Management DPD

Policy DM1: Delivering high quality design

Haringey Development Charter

- A All new development and changes of use must achieve a high standard of design and contribute to the distinctive character and amenity of the local area. The Council will support design-led development proposals which meet the following criteria:
- a Relate positively to neighbouring structures, new or old, to create a harmonious whole;
 - b Make a positive contribution to a place, improving the character and quality of an area;
 - c Confidently address feedback from local consultation;
 - d Demonstrate how the quality of the development will be secured when it is built; and
 - e Are inclusive and incorporate sustainable design and construction principles.

Design Standards

Character of development

- B Development proposals should relate positively to their locality, having regard to:
- a Building heights;
 - b Form, scale & massing prevailing around the site;
 - c Urban grain, and the framework of routes and spaces connecting locally and more widely;
 - d Maintaining a sense of enclosure and, where appropriate, following existing building lines;
 - e Rhythm of any neighbouring or local regular plot and building widths;
 - f Active, lively frontages to the public realm; and
 - g Distinctive local architectural styles, detailing and materials.

