

## **Pre-application briefing to Committee**

### **1. DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT**

**Ref:** PRE/2015/0189

**Site Address:** 109 Fortis Green, London N2 9HR

**Ward:** Fortis Green

#### **Description of Development:**

Demolition of the existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site to provide 9 residential units (Use Class C3) (4 x 3 Bed, 3 x 2 bed and 2 x 1 bed) and flexible retail/office unit (Use Class A1- A3/B1).

**Applicant:** Fortis Properties Limited c/o KA Investments and Development Company Limited

**Agent:** DP9 Ltd

**Ownership:** Private

**Case Officer:** Valerie Okeyi

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The proposed development is being reported to Planning Sub Committee to enable members to view it at an early pre-application stage. Any comments made are of a provisional nature only and will not prejudice the final outcome of any planning application submitted for formal determination. It is anticipated that the proposal will be presented to the Planning Committee at the end of this year or early next year.

### **3. SITE AND SURROUNDS**

- 3.1 109 Fortis Green is currently occupied by two single storey buildings located to the front and rear which are in use as a car wash, valet service and MOT Centre which received planning permission in May 2004.
- 3.2 Directly to the rear of the site is a short row of terrace houses fronting Annington Road. To the east is a former office building that has been converted into flats on the rear ground floor and adjacent to the office building is the former Muswell Hill Police Station. To the west is a single storey structure occupied by Majestic Wines, and beyond this, is no. 105 which is the Clissold Arms, a public house that is locally listed. Directly north is The Alexandra Public House.
- 3.3 The site is located in close proximity to the Muswell Hill Town Centre and it is situated within the Fortis Green Conservation Area.

### **4. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

4.1 The proposal is for the redevelopment of the site to provide 9 residential units (Use Class C3) (4 x 3 Bed, 3 x 2 bed and 2 x 1 bed) and flexible retail/office unit (Use Class A1- A3/B1) of 209 sq.m

## **5. PLANNING HISTORY**

5.1 There is no relevant planning history for the site relevant to this application.

## **6. CONSULTATION**

### **6.1 *Internal/external consultation:***

6.2 This scheme is currently at pre-application stage and therefore no formal consultation has been undertaken. There has been no external consultation as yet as the planning application has not yet been submitted.

6.3 The applicant has followed the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (2011), which sets out the need and importance of the developer engaging and consulting, at a very early stage, with the local community on a scheme for the development of a site in the locality. The applicant has undertaken two exhibitions with the developer presenting their scheme to those who attended (in excess of 40 people at each event). The applicant has reported that the scheme has been broadly well received by local residents.

### **6.4 Development Management Forum**

6.5 The proposal was presented to a Development Management Forum on 15 October 2015. Feedback from the Forum will be included within the written report to the planning sub-committee dealing with the application when received. The Forum was attended by 3 people. The principle of development was well received. The main issues raised at the forum were as follows;

- Overlooking/loss of privacy
- Excavation
- Construction process
- Contamination from the former petrol station
- Materials
- Lorries egress and ingress
- Traffic light system
- Parking
- Design and appearance
- CPZ
- Affordable housing provision

### **6.6 Quality Review Panel**

6.6 The proposal was presented to a Quality Review Panel on 15 July 2015. Feedback from the Panel will be included within the written report to a forthcoming planning sub-committee. In summary, the Quality Review Panel supported the layout and massing of development proposed for this site, providing apartments on Fortis Green, with commercial use at ground level and mews houses accessed via a shared courtyard. The panel also welcomed the simple, elegantly proportioned design of the Mews Houses, with textured brick providing subtle decoration. The apartments on Fortis Green were at that time designed as a pastiche of nearby Arts and Crafts mansion blocks. The panel think a simpler approach would be more successful. The panel also thought there was scope to improve the landscape design of the courtyard, and minimise the impact of the car park ramp.

## **7. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

7.1 The main planning issues raised by the proposed development are:

1. *Principle of the development* – The site is currently occupied by a hand carwash and an MOT garage. Generally, carwashes and MOT uses are encouraged within designated employment areas. This site is not located within such an area but is an employment site given its existing uses occupying the site. The principle of the redevelopment of the site for mixed-use purposes is considered to be broadly acceptable, subject to the re-provision of existing employment generating floor space and/or robust land use policy based justification for the loss of employment generating floor space (car wash and MOT). Officers have advised that affordable and flexible B1 units would be favourably considered as part of any redevelopment of the site.
2. *Impact on Conservation Area, design and appearance* – The scheme in terms of height, scale, bulk and appearance have been subject to design changes as pre-application discussions and processes have progressed. The bulk, scale and massing of the proposal has now reached a point where it is considered to be broadly acceptable in design terms, subject to a full daylight and sunlight assessment to ensure there are no impacts on the neighbouring properties. The design, which is an improvement to the previous scheme (now a contemporary concept rather than pastiche), has been further explored using a more simplified approach similar to the mews houses rather than a pastiche design concept as advised by the Quality Review Panel. Officers have yet to form a view on the design changes. The impact on the conservation area will need to be assessed when the design has been refined.
3. *Basement development* - Given the scale of the basement proposed and concerns about the number of developments in the area with basements

and their cumulative effect, the LPA will require sufficient investigation of ground conditions to ensure that ground stability and ground water issues are sufficiently understood at the planning application stage, as opposed to post consent.

4. *Affordable housing* – Local Plan Policy SP2 requires developments of less than 10 units to provide 20% of the scheme as affordable housing or to make an equivalent financial contribution. Whilst in most cases Affordable Housing, as part of a S106 Agreement, is located on the application site, there is provision in the newly adopted Planning Obligations SPD (2014) to allow for an off-site contribution on sites for 1 - 9 units where it would not be practicable to provide on-site affordable housing. A viability report would be required to be submitted with any planning application if the full off-site tariff is not proposed.
5. *Density* – The density of the scheme in terms of habitable rooms per hectare would be approximately 370 habitable rooms per hectares (HRH). The London Plan categorises density ranges in terms of location, setting, existing building form and massing. The site is viewed to be an area characterised by buildings of typically two to three storey high and as such the density of 200-450 HRH is a guideline for areas with a PTAL of 3. The density proposed is well within the guidelines.
6. *Housing mix* – The scheme as presented will provide 4 x 3 bed mews houses, 1 x 3 bed, 2 x 2bed and 2 x 1 bed units. Although there aren't any 4 bed units proposed the proposal has a mixture of family size and smaller units and given the size of the scheme and limitations of the site the mix is considered acceptable.
7. *Impact on residential amenity* –The proposal should consider the impact on the amenity of the surrounding properties, particularly those adjoining the site. The submission should include an annotated site plan showing the distance between the proposal and dwellings on the neighbouring sites, together with a robust daylight and sunlight assessment. Design solutions are being explored in order to mitigate overlooking/loss of privacy issues.
8. *Quality of accommodation* – London Plan policy 3.5 and Local Plan policy SP2 require high quality development to meet the standards of the Mayor's Housing SPG. From the plans provided, it appears that the proposed units would be of a good size and layout, with good sized rooms and access to amenity space. The distance, however between both proposed buildings to the front and rear of the site is a concern in terms of impact on amenity. A robust daylight and sunlight assessment showing how the scheme accords with BRE Guidelines will be required. As mentioned above, design

solutions are being explored in order to mitigate overlooking/loss of privacy issues.

9. *Parking and highway safety* – There are no objections to the parking provision proposed for the residential element of the scheme. The commercial element which has been revised is currently being discussed, as the previous proposed use as a gym raised significant concerns, in particular with parking.

10. *Accessibility* – All units would comply with the relevant standards and 10% of the number of residential units would be wheelchair accessible.

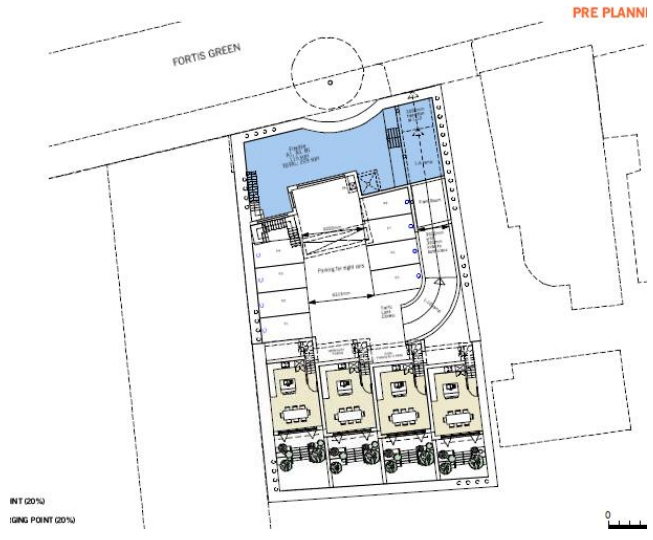
11. *Sustainability* – The London Plan requires all new homes to achieve a 35 per cent carbon reduction target beyond Part L 2013 of the Building Regulations. This would be expected to be outlined in an Energy Strategy to be submitted with any application.

7.2 These matters are to be assessed prior to the application being considered at Committee.

Site Location Plan



# Proposed basement plan



# Proposed ground floor plan



### Proposed front elevation of main building



### Proposed rear elevation of main building





### Rear elevation of mews houses



### Front elevation of mews houses

