

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SPECIAL REGULATORY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY, 4 JANUARY 2016

PRESENT:

Councillors: Peray Ahmet (Chair), Vincent Carroll (Vice-Chair), David Beacham, Clive Carter, Toni Mallett, Peter Mitchell, James Patterson and Elin Weston

191. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein.

192. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Basu, Cllr Bevan and Cllr Gunes.

193. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

194. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mitchell declared a personal interest as living within the safeguarding area for Crossrail 2, and in the vicinity of the Palace Gates disused railway, identified as a site for development in the report.

Cllr Patterson declared a personal interest as living in the vicinity of Alexandra Palace station.

Cllr Beacham declared a personal interest as living close to Alexandra Palace station, and possibly within the Crossrail 2 safeguarding area.

195. WOOD GREEN INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK & AREA ACTION PLAN: BROAD OPTIONS FOR REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION

The Committee considered the report on the Wood Green Investment Framework and Area Action Plan (AAP): Broad Options for Regulation 18 Consultation, introduced by Stephen Kelly, Assistant Director, Planning. Attached to the report was a draft Wood Green AAP Issues and Options document, which set out four broad development options and a preferred option for how regeneration might take place in Wood Green. The report asked Regulatory Committee to recommend to Cabinet that the draft Issues and Options document be approved for publication and public consultation.

The report set out the strategic context and background to the development of the Wood Green Investment Framework and AAP, an overview of the four options and the preferred option, details of the public consultation exercises undertaken, a summary of responses arising from the consultations to date, and details of the proposed consultation.

In addition to those sites set out in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD), the Issues and Options document identified a number of additional sites viewed as making a significant contribution to growth in the area and Mr Kelly advised the Committee that the differences between the four options in the document largely focussed around proposals for these sites and those set out in the Site Allocations DPD. The preferred option, Option 4, was the most radical of the options in terms of the number of residential units and degree of change but also had the longest delivery period and consequent disruption. Each option had been scored against the criteria and objectives as set out on page 39 of the document, which were based on the vision for the area. It was assessment against these core objectives which formed the basis of the conclusions of the document.

Mr Kelly thanked Cllr Mitchell for having identified a number of typographical errors in the report and draft Issues and Options document in advance of the meeting, and advised that these would be addressed before the report went to Cabinet.

The Committee expressed disappointment that, having followed a similar process in respect of the Tottenham AAP and learnt lessons from that exercise, the Wood Green AAP Issues and Options report did not contain specific details at site level for each option. Mr Kelly noted that additional detail would be required before any proposals could be submitted to the Secretary of State, and that additional public consultation may be required on any additional details.

The Committee welcomed that a summary version of the document would be produced, as this would be more broadly accessible. Concern was expressed regarding some of the technical planning language used in the document, as it was felt that some terms would not be meaningful to the majority of people. Mr Kelly accepted this point and advised that a glossary would usually be provided as part of such a document. The Committee encouraged the use of plain English wherever possible, although it was accepted that some specialist terms were unavoidable in specific cases, and it was agreed that this would be taken into consideration. In respect of concerns regarding the use of the term 'Placemaking' specifically, Mr Kelly advised that this was used as the title for one of the key objectives and if the Committee felt that this was not a meaningful term, consideration would be needed as to the use of this term. It was noted, however, that in setting out the strategic objectives (on page 39 of the Issues and Options document) a number of bullet points set out what was meant by this term and it was hoped that this would help to address the concern.

The Committee noted that the Issues and Options document set out anticipated gains arising from the development options, for example increased business rate receipts, but did not give any indication of the costs associated with each option, for example the infrastructure costs associated with the provision of new school places and that it would be helpful for this detail to be included. Matthew Patterson, Head of Strategic

Planning and Policy, advised that there was a need to fully analyse the current infrastructure provision in order to understand what the current surpluses and deficits were. Once this work was complete, the additional infrastructure requirements and associated costs would be identified.

Specific points raised by the Committee in respect of the text of the Issues and Options document included:

- Page 15, under Key Boundaries, Harringay and West Green wards should be added.
- Page 16, under Public Spaces, the description of the High Road public spaces as 'poorly defined' despite recent improvements was felt to be inappropriate.
- Page 16, on the map of Greenspaces and Waterways, number 9 should be listed as Crescent Gardens and the George VI Memorial Gardens, and number 10 should be amended to read White Hart Lane Recreation Ground, not Woodside Park as currently listed.
- Page 34, the picture under the heading 'Civic Centre and Trinity Green' did not depict Trinity Green.
- Page 35, the final bullet point under The Mall, it was felt that stronger language than 'considered' should be used in relation to existing residents.
- Page 37, the description of Lordship Lane as being well-placed to support new residential development should be clarified to explain that this related specifically to Hollywood Green.
- Page 52, first paragraph, the second sentence referring to Crouch End to be deleted.
- Page 52, second paragraph, reference to the library should be reworded to say that it will be re-provided, not 'could' be, to provide assurance that there would continue to be library provision. Assurance that the library would be re-provided should also be included on page 58 in the overview of Option 3.
- Page 60, under the Mall and High Road new retail heading, it was agreed that this paragraph could be amended to clarify that there were separate issues relating to the Mall and to the rest of the retail along the High Road.
- Page 73, Financial performance, concern was expressed regarding the implications of the phrase 'better quality tenants' and whether this could be reworded.
- Page 74, it was suggested that the table relating to urban renewal and intensification could be revised to make clearer that density and height were distinct issues, albeit related to one another.

In response to a question from the Committee regarding the significance of Metropolitan Town Centre status, Mr Kelly advised that this was a category within the London Plan, and was secondary only to those areas identified as International Centres. Wood Green was defined as a Metropolitan Centre, indicating an area with a high concentration of metropolitan activity.

The Committee also asked about the issue of the ownership of Alexandra House; Mr Kelly confirmed that the Council is the leaseholder and that the freehold of Alexandra House was in private ownership but that there was no suggestion that this would cause an issue in respect of the deliverability of any development on this site. Mr Kelly

agreed that he would look into whether this was inconsistent with the options as set out in the document, however.

In response to a question from the Committee regarding the location of the Crossrail 2 station in Option 4, Mr Kelly advised the Committee that the proposed site for the station in the current consultation was on the site of the Vue cinema, but that discussions were being held with TfL regarding the possibility of providing access to this station close to the current library site. In response to a comment from Cllr Carter that a Crossrail 2 station at Alexandra Palace would be preferable as this would help to support regeneration at the Palace, for which the Council had responsibility, Mr Kelly agreed that there was a range of views on this subject, but it was the Council's position that the preferred option was for a single Crossrail 2 station based in Wood Green from a deliverability perspective, and due to the contribution this would make to Wood Green as a town centre.

The Committee also asked whether 'civic functions' and 'democratic services' referred to in the document were the same thing, as if so there was some inconsistency in the proposals relating to these. Mr Kelly advised that he understood that these were distinct, as there were some matters dealt with, for example, by customer service centres which could be classified as civic functions, and these were different in nature from the democratic Council services such as public committee meetings.

In respect of Option 4, the Committee asked about the range of heights, given as 18-35 storeys under the first Output bullet point on page 64 of the Issues and Options document, and whether this meant that 18 storeys was a minimum height, or whether this should be read to mean a range between 'up to 18 and up to 35 storeys'. Mr Kelly advised that he understood this to mean 'up to 18 and up to 35 storeys' depending on location, and that the illustration on page 67 of the document could be improved to make the proposed heights clearer.

In response to a question from the Committee regarding the possibility of a swimming pool, Mr Kelly advised that this was not a suggestion that had emerged from the initial consultation work, and that it would be a challenge for the Council to demonstrate the financial sustainability of such a project. The Committee also asked about the assumptions for continued demand for physical shopping spaces, given the recent changes in shopping patterns. Mr Kelly reported that the options set out in the report aimed at broadening the offer from just retail, given changes in what people wanted from an area such as Wood Green, however it was important that the retail units that were in place were suitable for the current market. In relation to retail provision, Mr Kelly advised that the Council did receive advice from commercial agents, and that retail provision had also emerged as an important issue from the consultation with residents so far.

The Committee noted that Harringay residents had raised concerns regarding the possible impacts that Wood Green development might have on traffic elsewhere, for example Wightman Road, and that this was something that should be taken into consideration. Mr Kelly advised that the Council was working with TfL on traffic modelling and improvements that could be made to junctions, etc, but that there were wider traffic management issues that needed to be addressed and there was no guarantee that any development of Wood Green would improve the traffic situation in

the borough, especially taking into account population growth. The rationale behind each of the options, however, was to provide homes in areas where ownership of a car was unnecessary, as part of wider strategies to reduce the level of traffic.

In respect of the wards affected as set out in the report, the Committee noted with concern that ward Councillors for only some of the wards listed had been consulted prior to this point, and that West Green ward was not even mentioned. Cllr Mallet, as ward Councillor for West Green, advised that there was significant interest in her ward in relation to the Crossrail 2 consultation. It was felt that it would have been helpful for ward councillors for all wards affected to have been engaged at an earlier stage. Going forward, it would be important to agree how all the wards affected would be consulted as part of the formal consultation process.

The Committee further advised that consultation needed to take into account that the location of democratic and civic functions, such as registry services, affected all residents in the borough. It was noted that the locations of these services was linked to the Council's Accommodation Strategy, and the Committee emphasised the need for as wide consultation on the Accommodation Strategy as possible, including all Members, and for the Cabinet Member for Resources to take this into consideration in planning the consultation on this strategy.

In relation to the consultation itself, the Committee felt that a period of longer than the minimum of six weeks would be preferable, given the extent of the changes the consultation related to. It was also suggested that consultation should be as broad as possible, rather than limited to those who were already on the Council's databases as having expressed an interest in such matters. Promotion of the consultation and the adoption of as inclusive an approach as possible was strongly encouraged. Mr Kelly advised that the available consultation period was limited by purdah for the London Mayoral elections and, in response to a query from the Committee, agreed to confirm the start date for the purdah period. The Committee asked whether there was any scope either to begin the consultation period earlier, or to wait until after the elections rather than limit the duration of the consultation.

Mr Kelly reported that they were working with the Council's communications team on ways of promoting the consultation as widely as possible, and via a range of media, and that the comments of the Committee would be taken into consideration as part of the exploration of how best to engage more broadly. Claudette Forbes, Interim Head of Regeneration, further advised that the Council was working with its consultants on how to ensure that the consultation went beyond the statutory minimum requirements. The Committee emphasised that it was essential that the consultation be comprehensive and meaningful, and that there should not be any perception of things being 'rushed through'.

The Committee emphasised the importance of the affordable housing proposal in any of the options, as this would be a crucial factor and should be highlighted to Cabinet. The feedback from the consultation so far, especially residents' and businesses' concerns about being priced out by any redevelopment also needed to be addressed. The Committee felt that the content of what was being consulted on was just as important as the way in which the consultation was undertaken, and concern was

expressed that at this point residents were being asked for their views on a document which did not set out what the implications would be in terms of affordable housing.

The Committee noted that the outcome of the Crossrail 2 consultation would ultimately determine which of the options were deliverable and suggested that the report should reflect this. Concern was expressed that it would not be possible to progress in respect of any of the options until the outcome of the Crossrail 2 consultation was known.

In considering the recommendations of the report, the Committee expressed some concern at agreeing to recommend to Cabinet that the draft document be approved for consultation, bearing in mind the issues that had been raised during the discussion. In addition to the specific revisions that had been requested to the draft Issues and Options document, the Committee considered the key areas of concern that they wished Cabinet to take into consideration, and summarised these as the adequacy of the consultation period, the content of the consultation and whether there was sufficient detail in the documentation to make consultation meaningful, and whether it was premature to be consulting on these options at the present time, given that the Crossrail 2 decision would have a significant impact on what would ultimately deliverable. Taking these issues into consideration, the Committee agreed to vary the wording of the recommendations of the report and it was

RESOLVED

- i) That the Committee note the content of the draft Regulation 18 Wood Green Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report.
- ii) That the Committee recommend to Cabinet that the draft Regulation 18 Wood Green Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report, as amended in accordance with the discussions held at the Committee meeting on 4 January 2016, be approved for publication and public consultation for a period of at least 6 weeks, provided that before approving it for consultation the Cabinet satisfy itself that:
 - a) The consultation period is sufficient.
 - b) The Area Action Plan contains sufficient detail to permit meaningful consultation.
 - c) The consultation is not premature, having regard to other consultations.

196. PLANNING SERVICES 2015 REVIEW

The Committee considered the report on the review of the work of the Planning Service in 2015, presented by Emma Williamson, Head of Development Management. The report covered performance in respect of Development Management and Building Control, as well as updates on planning policy, Member development and challenges facing the Service. A separate planning appeals report also set out performance against appeals and details of individual appeal cases.

In response to a question from the Committee regarding the number of enforcement notices issued compared with the number of complaints received, and why this

appeared so low, Ms Williamson advised that the level of enforcement notices issued had been fairly consistent, at around 100 per year. Stephen Kelly, Assistant Director, Planning, advised that around 60% of enforcement cases were resolved by agreement and that of the complaints received, some would not turn out to be breaches, some would be very minor and some would be resolved by means other than enforcement notices. It was clarified that each complaint related to an individual breach – multiple complaints relating to the same breach would still count as a single complaint. Looking at the figures for the issuing of enforcement notices across the London boroughs, it was noted Haringey was performing relatively well, and the Committee felt that it was important to promote this. Ms Williamson advised that the Enforcement policy was something that the Committee should review later in the year, including a review of the indicators used in relation to enforcement policy to ensure that performance reports contained meaningful data and comparators.

The Committee asked whether there were plans for another Planning Conference, and it was confirmed that the Council had committed to holding this as an annual event and the next was planned for September 2016.

The Committee asked for more information about the protocol for assessment of viability in respect of affordable housing, as mentioned in the report. Mr Kelly advised that this was a cross-London project, aimed at establishing a new protocol for all London Boroughs and the GLA, and that Haringey had committed to engaging with this project. It was felt that having a consistent methodology across London would be a sensible way forward and it was hoped that consultation on this would be launched later in 2016. The Committee welcomed the Council's proactive involvement in this work, and felt that this was also something that it would be good to promote. The Chair noted that information on positive performance in respect of affordability had been circulated to Members previously and that this could be repeated.

In response to a question from the Committee regarding the pre-application service and whether the Government would consider increasing the chargeable fee to cover the cost of offering the service, it was reported that the Council was making a case for an increase in fees to cover costs, but that it was unlikely that this would be agreed.

Cllr Mitchell requested that further details be provided to him outside the meeting regarding the appeal against the delegated decision in relation to the use of the site at 743-744 Lordship Lane as a mini cab office.

RESOLVED

That the content of the report be noted.

The Chair expressed the Committee's thanks to the Planning Service for all their work during 2015.

197. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

15 February 2016.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

CHAIR: Councillor Peray Ahmet

Signed by Chair

Date