

Planning Committee

Meeting of held on Tuesday, 14 November 2017 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall,
Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Paul Scott (Chair);
Councillor Humayun Kabir (Vice-Chair);
Councillors Jamie Audsley, Bernadette Khan, Jason Perry, Joy Prince,
Wayne Trakas-Lawlor, Sue Winborn, Chris Wright and Richard Chatterjee

Also Present: None

Apologies: Councillor Luke Clancy

PART A

A184/17 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2017 be signed as a correct record.

A185/17 **Disclosure of Interest**

There were no disclosures of a pecuniary interest not already registered.

A186/17 **Urgent Business (if any)**

There was none.

A187/17 **Development presentations**

There were none.

A188/17 **Planning applications for decision**

A189/17 **16/05418/OUT Whitgift Shopping Centre and Surrounding Land, Croydon, CR0 1LP**

A planning officer gave a presentation, after which the Committee Members were invited to look at a model of the development.

Members then asked a number of technical questions and officers responded:

- What will the name be? No name has been agreed yet.
- Car park access – how will it work? There is a single car park across the top of the development and both entrances can be accessed for entering or exiting. Traffic coming from the north will be able to enter

the northern access and traffic exiting from the northern access will exit in a northbound direction. Traffic coming from the south will enter the car park at the southern entrance and exit in a southerly direction. For traffic coming from the south and travelling in a northbound direction, there is a failsafe to prevent queues, so traffic would be able to access the northern access point on an intermittent basis. This would be controlled by the car park management plan.

- Is the residential amenity strip across the top of the car park? It is and will be accessible from the towers.
- Poplar Walk - only one way in or are there plans to change the one way aspect? There are no proposals to change it from one way. The basement is a possible location for residential parking but disabled spaces could be provided in the main retail car park.
- Will there be more to the leisure offer? The application does not say there will definitely be a cinema. The leisure floor space could be for other uses. Whether proposed uses are acceptable would be for the Committee to decide. They would be approved on the basis of use class. That level of detail will come forward in reserved matters. There is a separate regime for uses such as casinos, (which is a sui generis use and does not fall within the uses proposed by the application), which means it would also be dealt with by Licensing if such a proposal were to come forward.
- How are the parameter issues managed and determined? In some places minimums and maximums make a big difference. This would be covered under reserved matters.
- Control around 24 hour access - with a covered street, how will this be controlled? Does the Council have total control or could the developer come back and ask to secure the entrances and remove 24 hr use? The conditions ensure 24 hour use. The developer would need to bring back a further application to change this which would be resisted.
- Use of the galleria - could people sit there for 24 hrs? The conditions require estate management plan, which the Council would approve. The developer would probably have security provision. Licensing restrictions would cover alcohol consumption.
- What opportunities are there within the Section 106 agreement? The uses are specified. Some are financial and some not. For example:
 - TV mitigation; restriction on parking permits; ensuring the quality of architects; public realm - requiring highways agreement, including the pedestrian route through store A; min 20% affordable units; transport - highway works; car club contribution; disabled badge parking; £2.5m for employment and training strategy - job brokerage for construction period and initial operational period; air quality mitigation measures; reducing carbon emissions; commitment that, if the site is demolished and the development does not proceed, there is a commuted sum for public realm improvements.

Children's play space for shoppers could be included within the conditions regarding internal use of spaces. Officers can take this on board and push the developer towards a child friendly environment in reserved matters.

- Where are the affordable homes located and can it come forward in the same proportions? We do not have specific details about the affordable housing. It could be pepper potted throughout the scheme. How it is brought forward can be secured through the Section 106 agreement and through the reserved matters applications.
- Could the affordable housing percentage be increased? 15% is the bare minimum in the opportunity area (with review mechanisms). Officers have worked hard with the developer to secure 20% deliverable. The GLA requires a series of review mechanisms, so it is possible it could increase, but this would be capped at 50% in line with policy. However we need to get the Section 106 resolved, which is time consuming. To sort out review mechanisms would extend this time and there is a deadline of September 2018 to complete the Compulsory Purchase Order.
- In terms of the London living rent, what is the % of market rent? Currently overall it is about 66% (but the percentages are different for different sizes of units).
- Is the affordable housing to rent in perpetuity? This is covered in the Section 106 agreement and they would be affordable in perpetuity.
- Disappointing only 5% of the units are 3-bed. This number is in compliance with the level required in the retail core, as specified in the OAPF (Opportunity Area Planning Framework).
- Is there a faith space in the community area? A faith space could fall within this as the type of community floorspace provision has not yet been determined. This detail would be provided in the reserved matters applications.
- Air pollution – with 3000 car parking spaces, how will it be managed? How can we incentivise people not to drive? Funds will be secured to go towards an initiative in the borough. It is an accessible location so there are alternatives not to use cars. The previous consent granted 3500 spaces, so this is a reduction. Car parking is being rationalised across the centre.
- Is there a possibility of a park and ride scheme? There have been discussions about optimising the park and ride in existence. The travel plan will look at ways to incentivise its use.
- What level of electric charging points are there in the parking area? A planning condition requires 5% parking spaces have charging points (and 15% passive provision, which could be upgraded in line with demand).
- Is there a possibility of a cycle hub for storage and riders to shower and have a drink? There is a condition requiring a travel plan and the cycle hub option can be explored.
- Is it possible for individuals to wheel bikes along the east-west route and what about the north-south route? Bikes can be wheeled east-west but there has been no discussion about the north-south route which is more mall-like, for pedestrian use. Wellesley Road and North End run parallel which would be an easier option for cyclists to travel north/south. Cycle parking is proposed (and controlled by planning condition) in and around the development.

- Design of the towers – will they be all the same or a variety of styles? There is no detailed design at this stage but provision for design to be articulated will come forward in reserved matters. The Design Guidelines require difference in the expression of the towers.
- Why hasn't there been a sequential test for retailing? What is the impact on other town centres? The application proposes town centre uses in a town centre location which is in line with policy. There is a small area outside the Primary Shopping Area, but this is included in the area in emerging policy. The approach is consistent with that taken with the 2014 planning permission.

Mr Sean Creighton, a resident of Norbury, spoke in objection, on behalf of a number of Croydon residents. He raised the following concerns:

- Are details sound and do they address the serious issues raised?
- Economic viability - providing reasonably priced homes and jobs for local people is vital and paying London living wage
- The scheme is offering very little benefit to residents
- Moving footfall from North End where it should be
- More imaginative approach would be to spread new homes across the centre and reduce the roof height
- Roof space should be for public access
- Major leisure facility should include a swimming pool and dance hall – do not need another cinema
- Impact on TV reception - will Section 106 provide for developers paying the cost of mitigation measures which could be more expensive than in the opportunity area?
- Psychological impact during building leading to increased crime and disillusionment
- Suggested rejection, deferral with reasons or approval with reserve matters to be considered by committee

Mr John Burton from Croydon Limited Partnership spoke on behalf of the applicant and made the following points:

- This scheme has increased affordable housing
- Rise of digital opportunities – vital to keep abreast of current trends
- Shopping centres which have failed to invest have become redundant
- Substantial changes to suit the next generation which is more interested in experiences
- The scheme should be measured by its ability to attract large scale investment to Croydon
- Career opportunities with 7,000 new jobs
- Reflecting a community which values its assets
- Lot to be done within next 12 months
- Cross-party support

The Director of Planning & Strategic Transport stressed that the entire block is a huge and significant development. Consideration should be given to the previous consent and the CPO enquiry. There have been some objections and negative impact but the public benefit outweighs them. There are

significant controls within the parameter consent. Play space is covered by the design which provide a commitment for this. The Place Review Panel will further scrutinise it. Public benefits include significant regeneration benefits, social improvements and a catalytic effect on the wider town centre. The development will provide confidence for other developments in Croydon. Working in partnership with the GLA, the development will provide up to 967 new homes (20% affordable), 2 new department stores, leisure space and a £1.4 billion investment.

The Members then debated and commented as follows:

- Several thousand new jobs will incentivise further regeneration of the town centre.
- Outline applications are somewhat frustrating but this is a major scheme and will make a huge difference to residents of Croydon.
- There is a need to balance the impact on heritage assets.
- Almost 1,000 new homes are welcomed.
- Preference for a single phase rather than being drawn out over several phases
- Delivery of the 24 hour east-west link via a galleria will be very positive.
- Public scrutiny must continue with reserved matters coming back to Committee.
- Student accommodation is welcomed and will add to the vitality of the town.
- This is a second chance for a scheme with potential to put Croydon back on the map, to be a destination shopping centre.
- The increased public realm will be beneficial.
- This is an archaeological site, so there is a need to ensure it is surveyed before digging commences.
- TfL comments indicate a massive strain on public transport when completed, particularly buses, trams and West Croydon station.
- A lot of office space is being lost - office use adds to the retail.
- Play area and need for water features – with colour and music, so children can be entertained
- Swift nests requested.
- Park and ride – possibility of linking in with surrounding boroughs.
- Training will be an important element – fulfilling the aspirations of the young
- Approval must not be regarded as carte blanche - we must insist on quality.

Having considered the officer's report and addendum, Councillor Humayun Kabir proposed and Councillor Jason Perry seconded the officer's recommendation and the Committee voted unanimously in favour (10), so planning permission was **GRANTED** for development at Whitgift Shopping Centre and surrounding land, Croydon CR0 1LP, with a requirement for reserved matters to be brought back for consideration by the Committee; that there should be nesting boxes as part of the biodiversity provision and that, in pre-application discussions with the developer, officers should seek play

space within the shopping centre itself and encourage water features/fountains.

A190/17 Other planning matters

There were none.

A191/17 Items referred by Planning Sub-Committee

There were none.

The meeting ended at 8.39 pm

Signed:

Date:

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