

Former St Georges Hospital

in the London Borough of Havering
planning application no. P.1917.18

Strategic planning application stage II referral

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended); Greater London Authority Acts 1999 and 2007; Town & Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008.

The proposal

Demolition of existing buildings, conversion of the former St Georges Hospital Administrative Building and the erection of new buildings to provide 162 residential units (class C3) along with the refurbishment of the Suttons Building for use as a Heritage Centre (Class D1) and associated works.

The applicant

The applicant is **Bellway Homes Limited (Thames Gateway)** and the architect is **PRP**.

Key Dates

Stage 1 report: 24 June 2019

Planning Committee meeting: 10 October 2019

Strategic issues

Principle: Limited infilling and redevelopment of an existing developed site remains consistent with the exemptions to inappropriate development on Green Belt land as outlined in paragraph 145 of the NPPF. Delivery of new housing is supported in accordance with Policy 3.3 of the London Plan and H1 of the Intend to publish London Plan.

Housing: Amended scheme to deliver 162 units, with 20% affordable housing by habitable room – tenure split 44% affordable rent / 56% intermediate (shared ownership). Quantum and tenure supported following robust FVA review. Early and late stage review mechanisms secured.

Transport: Cycle parking, blue badge parking, electric vehicle charging, Delivery and servicing, construction logistics and travel plans are all suitably secured in conditions of approval and the s106 agreement; along with a CPZ and traffic management review. Parking levels remain high, but are accepted on balance in the context of chapter 10 of the Intend to publish London Plan.

Other matters relating to **urban design, sustainable development** have been satisfactorily resolved.

The Council's decision

In this instance Havering Council has resolved to approve the application.

Recommendation

That Havering Council be advised that the Mayor is content for it to determine the case itself, subject to any action that the Secretary of State may take, and does not therefore wish to direct that he is to be the local planning authority.

Context

1 On 21 February 2019, the Mayor of London received documents from Havering Council notifying him of a planning application of potential strategic importance to develop the above site for the above uses. This was referred to the Mayor under Categories 1A, 1B(c) and 3D of the Schedule to the Order 2008:

- *1A: “Development which comprises or includes the provision of more than 150 houses, flats, or houses and flats.”*
- *1B(c): “Development (other than development which only comprises the provision of houses, flats, or houses and flats) which comprises or includes the erection of a building or buildings outside central London and with a total floorspace of more than 15,000 square metres.”*
- *3D: “Development on land allocated as Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land in the development plan, in proposals for such a plan, or in proposals for the alteration or replacement of such a plan; and which would involve the construction of a building with a floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres or a material change in the use of such a building.”*

2 On 24 June 2019 the Mayor considered planning report GLA/4755/01, and subsequently advised Havering Council that the application did not comply with the London Plan and the draft London Plan, for the reasons set out in paragraph 65 of the above-mentioned report.

3 A copy of the above-mentioned report is attached. The essentials of the case with regard to the proposal, the site, case history, strategic planning issues and relevant policies and guidance are as set out therein, unless otherwise stated in this report. On 10 October 2019, Havering Council decided that it was minded to grant planning permission for the application. Under the provisions of Article 5 of the Town & Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008 the Mayor may allow the draft decision to proceed unchanged, direct Havering Council under Article 6 to refuse the application or issue a direction to Havering Council under Article 7 that he is to act as the Local Planning Authority for the purposes of determining the application and any connected application.

4 The Mayor’s decision on this case, and the reasons, will be made available on the GLA’s website www.london.gov.uk.

Consultation stage issues summary

5 At the consultation stage, Havering Council was advised that the application did not comply with the London Plan and then draft London Plan, for the following reasons set out in paragraph 65 of the above-mentioned report:

- **Principle:** The scheme constitutes the limited infilling and redevelopment of an existing developed site and is therefore consistent with the exceptions to inappropriate development on green belt land which are outlined in paragraph 145 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposed development will contribute towards the delivery of new homes within the London Borough

of Havering, and is supported in line with Policies 3.3 of the London Plan and H1 of the draft London Plan.

- **Housing:** The scheme proposes 13% affordable housing by habitable room which is below the public land threshold and is wholly unacceptable in the absence of a verified viability position. GLA officers are robustly scrutinising the viability appraisal to maximise the provision of affordable housing in accordance with the London and draft London Plan. Both early and late stage review mechanisms must be secured.
- **Urban Design:** The layout, scale, height and massing is commensurate with the previous masterplan and the existing buildings which is supported. The adaptive re-use of the a local heritage asset for community use as an interpretive heritage centre is strongly supported in accordance with Policies 7.8 of the London Plan and HC1 of the draft London Plan. The public benefits of the development would outweigh the harm caused by the demolition of some lower order non-designated heritage assets on the application site.
- **Sustainable Development:** Further revisions and information are required before the energy proposals can be considered acceptable and compliance with Policy 5.2 of the London Plan and Policy SI2 of the draft London Plan confirmed. The surface water drainage strategy does not comply with London Plan policy 5.13 and policy SI.13 of the draft London Plan. No water consumption data has been provided to meet the requirements of London Plan policy 5.15 and Policy SI.5 of the draft London Plan. The applicant must embed urban greening as a fundamental element of site and building design in line with Policy 5.10 of the London Plan and Policies G1 and G5 of the draft London Plan.
- **Transport:** The transport assessment complies with Policies T1 and T2 of the draft London Plan. Car parking should be reduced in line with Policy T6 and Table 10.4 of the draft London Plan. Cycle parking, Delivery, Servicing, Construction Logistics and Travel Plans must be secured by conditions and s106 agreement.

Application and policy update

6 The Report of the Examination in Public of the draft London Plan was published in October 2019, and the London Plan – intend to publish version (December 2019) was subsequently submitted to the Secretary of State. This should be taken into account on the basis described in the NPPF.

7 On 13 March 2020 the Secretary of State issued a set of Directions under Section 337 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (as amended) and, to the extent that they are relevant to this particular application, these have been taken into account by the Mayor as a material consideration when considering this report and the officer's recommendation.

8 As part of the Council's draft decision on the case, various planning conditions and a s106 legal agreement have also been proposed to address previous concerns and ensure that the development is acceptable in planning terms.

Principle of development

9 As identified at consultation stage, the scheme represents the limited infilling and redevelopment of an existing developed site, and is therefore consistent with the exceptions to inappropriate development on green belt land outlined in paragraph 145 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The delivery of new homes remains supported in accordance with Policy 3.3 of the London Plan and H1 of the intend to publish London Plan.

Housing

10 At consultation stage, the scheme proposed 13% affordable housing by habitable room in this phase of the St Georges Hospital development (phase 2 of 2), which resulted in an overall affordable housing provision of 18.3% across both phases of the St Georges Hospital residential re-development site. The proposed tenure split for affordable housing in this phase (phase 2) was 67% Affordable Rent / 33% intermediate (shared ownership). The low level of affordable housing provision was not supported.

11 Since consultation stage, robust review and discussion surrounding the financial viability of the scheme and the level of affordable housing has occurred between GLA officers, Havering Council and the applicant. The scheme has subsequently been amended as described in the following table:

Tenure	Extant Permission (Phase 2 of 2)	Stage 1 Scheme	Stage 2 Scheme
Private Market Sale	96 units	141 units	130 units
Affordable Rent (LAR)	0 units	14 units (67% of affordable housing by habitable room)	14 units (44% of affordable housing by habitable room)
Shared Ownership	0 units	7 units (33% of affordable housing by habitable room)	18 units (56% of affordable housing by habitable room)
Total housing	96 units (0% affordable housing by habitable room)	162 units (13% affordable by habitable room)	162 units (20% affordable housing by habitable room)

12 The extant permission for both phases of the Former St Georges Hospital residential development provided 15% affordable housing by unit (44 of 290 units), all of which was contained within phase 1 of the application. No affordable housing was previously provided in the current application boundary (Phase 2 of 2).

13 As amended the application represents an overall uplift 66 units on the extant consent permission, and the inclusion of 20% affordable housing by habitable room within this phase, at a tenure split of 44% Affordable Rent / 56% intermediate product (shared ownership). Robust review of the submitted viability information has confirmed that the current offer is the most which can viably be provided within the development. On this basis, the revised proposal is now supported in accordance with Policies 3.11 and 2.13 of the London Plan, Policies H5 and H6 of the intend to publish London Plan and the Mayor's Affordable Housing and viability SPG. Affordable Rent products area secured at London Affordable Rent levels.

14 Notwithstanding the above, the scheme remains ineligible for fast track consideration as it fails to achieve the 50% affordable housing threshold for development on public land, as outlined in policy H6 of the intend to publish London Plan. Subsequently both early and late stage review mechanisms have been secured in the s106 agreement.

15 All other matters related to housing raised at consultation stage have been addressed, the application is broadly compliant with the housing policies of the London Plan and Intend to Publish London Plan.

Urban design

16 As outlined at consultation stage, the proposal would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the presently existing development on the site. The scheme meets the exception tests for limited infilling and redevelopment of existing developed sites on green belt land as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework.

17 The layout, scale, height and massing of the proposed development remain supported, being consistent with the previously approved masterplan for the site, Policy 7.5 of the London Plan and Policies D1 and D2 of the Intend to Publish London Plan. The provision of wheelchair accessible and adaptable dwellings is secured in the s106 agreement.

18 Comments provided by Historic England regarding the loss of original 1930's hospital buildings are acknowledged. Notwithstanding this, GLA officers are satisfied, as at consultation stage, that the public benefits of the development (most notably the delivery of additional housing and affordable housing) would outweigh the harm caused by the demolition of these structures. The scheme is consistent with Policies 7.8 of the London Plan, HC1 of the intend to publish London Plan and considerations of heritage significance as required under the NPPF.

19 On balance, matters raised at consultation stage regarding urban design are satisfactorily addressed and the application is in accordance with the policies of the London Plan and the intend to publish London Plan.

Sustainable development

20 Since consultation stage, amended overheating analysis and glazing information has been provided to support the previous energy strategy submitted in relation to Policies 5.2 of the London Plan and SI2 of the intend to publish London Plan. The carbon dioxide savings meet the on-site target set within Policy 5.2 of the

London Plan, and a carbon offset contribution of £266,800 has been secured in the s06 agreement.

21 Whilst the use of individual gas boilers is not supported. It is accepted that alternative low carbon alternatives such as air source heat pumps would result in greater building massing and subsequent impact on the openness of green belt. In light of this the current proposal is considered, on balance, to be acceptable.

22 At consultation stage, the submitted flood risk and drainage report was broadly supported in accordance with policies of the London Plan and Intend to Publish London Plan. Whilst no further sustainable urban drainage measures have been incorporated. The application is supported in accordance with the policies of both current and Intend to Publish London Plan.

Transport

23 Policy compliant cycle parking and blue badge parking and electric vehicle charging have all been secured. Delivery and servicing, construction logistics and travel plans are also suitably secured in conditions of approval and the s106 agreement. The s106 also includes a financial contribution towards the introduction of a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) and permit free arrangements together with the costs of a traffic management review.

24 The level of car parking has not been reduced and remains at 179 spaces for the 162 units (a ratio of 1:1). As outlined in policy T6.1 and table 10.3 of the intend to publish London Plan, the standard for sites with a PTAL 3 is 0.75, which should be taken as the starting point for this site, and 1.5 maximum for PTAL 1b. It is acknowledged that much of this large site has relatively poor public transport accessibility of 1b with 3 only in close proximity to the Suttons Lane bus stops. It is further acknowledged that the car parking requirements will be assessed again at the detailed stage taking account of usage at the already implemented phase 1 part of the development. In addition, as all spaces are 'at grade' spaces, the land could therefore be used for other more sustainable purposes if not required for parking. Use of public transport and walking and cycling would be promoted by the Travel Plan, which is accepted.

25 There are no other outstanding transport concerns and the proposal is, in the circumstances on balance acceptable in the context of chapter 10 of the Intend to publish London Plan.

Response to consultation

26 Havering Council publicised the application by site and press notices, as well as letters to surrounding landowners and occupiers. In total two representations were received, of which one comprised a letter of objection and one was a petition in support of the application (with 42 signatories).

27 The letter of objection raised the following concerns:

- Traffic and parking issues caused by development
- Noise impact from increased vehicle traffic.
- Impact on school places for infant, junior and secondary schools in the area.

- 28 The petition in support of the application raised the following matters:
- Support retention of the central administration building and Suttons building.
 - New community space for Hornchurch Aerodrome Society.
 - Public open spaces.
 - Contributes towards local facilities.

29 The following responses were also received from statutory bodies and other external organisations.

- **Natural England:** No objection.
- **The Environment Agency:** No objection, subject to condition (adopted).
- **London Fire Brigade:** Satisfied with Firefighting Access Arrangements as per ADB B5 Section 16: Vehicle Access.
- **Thames Water:** No objection, subject to conditions regarding network augmentation (adopted) and further detail on foul and surface water connection points.
- **National Grid Cadent:** No objection, subject to protection of existing Cadent Assets.
- **Designing out crime:** No objection, subject to conditions (adopted).
- **Historic England:** Loss of local heritage asset should be challenged. Conditions for archaeological investigation and historic building recording to be included, along with condition for public outreach and site interpretation.
- **Essex County Council:** No comment or objection.
- **EDF Energy (Network PLC):** No comment or objection.
- **NHS:** No comment or objection.
- **Essex Wildlife:** No comment or objection.
- **Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB):** No comment or objection.
- **Essex and Suffolk Water:** No comment or objection.

30 GLA officers are satisfied that the statutory and non-statutory responses to the public consultation process do not raise any material planning issues of strategic importance that have not already been considered in this report, or the Stage 1 report ref GLA/4755/01.

Draft Section 106 agreement

31 The draft s106 agreement includes the following provisions:

- Affordable Housing – 20% affordable housing by habitable room, comprising:
 - 14 x Affordable Rented units (56% by tenure) secured at London Affordable Rent Levels.
 - 18 x Shared ownership units (44% by tenure).
- Early and late stage financial viability review mechanisms.

- TFL cycle provision at Hornchurch Station (£69 per dwelling).
- Hornchurch County Park contributions (£517.24 per dwelling).
- Public open space access, phasing and management.
- Submission and implementation of an approved Training and Recruitment Plan, with preferred use of local suppliers and apprentices during construction.
- Travel Plan – including phase 1 survey results and car and cycle parking monitoring.
- £10,000 bond for security against the implementation of the Travel Plan.
- Travel Plan monitoring fee of £5,000.
- Carbon offset payment of £266,800.
- Reasonable endeavours to agree terms for connection to any future decentralised energy network.

Legal considerations

32 Under the arrangements set out in Article 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008 the Mayor has the power under Article 6 to direct the local planning authority to refuse permission for a planning application referred to him under Article 4 of the Order. He also has the power to issue a direction under Article 7 that he is to act as the local planning authority for the purpose of determining the application and any connected application. The Mayor may also leave the decision to the local authority. In directing refusal, the Mayor must have regard to the matters set out in Article 6(2) of the Order, including the principal purposes of the Greater London Authority, the effect on health and sustainable development, national policies and international obligations, regional planning guidance, and the use of the River Thames. The Mayor may direct refusal if he considers that to grant permission would be contrary to good strategic planning in Greater London. If he decides to direct refusal, the Mayor must set out his reasons, and the local planning authority must issue these with the refusal notice. If the Mayor decides to direct that he is to be the local planning authority, he must have regard to the matters set out in Article 7(3) and set out his reasons in the direction.

33 In this instance, the Council has resolved to grant permission with conditions and a planning obligation which satisfactorily address the matters raised at Stage 1, therefore there are no sound planning reasons for the Mayor to intervene in this case.

Financial considerations

34 Should the Mayor direct refusal, he would be a principal party at any subsequent appeal hearing or public inquiry. Government Planning Practice Guidance emphasises that parties usually pay their own expenses arising from an appeal.

35 Following an inquiry caused by a direction to refuse, costs may be awarded against the Mayor if he has either directed refusal unreasonably; handled a referral from a planning authority unreasonably; or behaved unreasonably during the appeal. A major factor in deciding whether the Mayor has acted unreasonably will be the extent to which he has taken account of established planning policy.

36 Should the Mayor take over the application he would be responsible for holding a representation hearing and negotiating any planning obligation. He would also be responsible for determining any reserved matters applications (unless he directs the council to do so) and determining any approval of details (unless the council agrees to do so).

Conclusion

37 The strategic issues raised at consultation stage regarding principle of development, affordable housing, design, sustainable development and transport have been appropriately addressed; as such, the application complies with the London Plan and the intend to publish London Plan and there are no sound reasons for the Mayor to intervene in this particular case.

for further information, contact GLA Planning Unit (Development & Projects Team):

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