

VCR:

Date: Wednesday, 27 April 2016

Location: Chamber, City Hall

Hearing: Alpha Square Representation Hearing

Start time: 2.00pm

Finish time: 3.27pm

Panel:

Sir Edward Lister, Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning

Steen Smedegaard, Transport for London Solicitor (Legal Adviser)

Speakers:

Nick Ray, Senior Strategic Planner, Greater London Authority (Case Officer)

Paul Buckenham, Development Manager, Tower Hamlets Council

Guy Bransby, Lead Director, Planning and Development, JLL Planning

David Chesterton, Councillor, Tower Hamlets

Floyd Macdonald, local resident

Andrew Wood, Councillor, Tower Hamlets

Anthony Harris, Partner, GIA

Fred Pilbrow, Partner, Pilbrow & Partners

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Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): Good afternoon. We are here this afternoon for a representation hearing about Alpha Square. I should say that I am determining the planning decision this afternoon. This is in accordance with the Mayoral Scheme of Delegation. The Mayor has delegated to me his powers to determine this application under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Without more ado I will pass you over to Steen to explain the procedures.

Steen Smedegaard (Solicitor, Transport for London): Thank you. My name is Steen Smedegaard and I am the legal adviser to the Deputy Mayor today. We are following an agenda today and I hope you all have a copy of this. If not you will find copies, together with copies of the report and the addendum report to the Deputy Mayor on the planning applications, on the desk near the entrance to the Chambers.

The site visit. The Deputy Mayor carried out a site visit on 22 April and was accompanied by officers, representatives from Tower Hamlets Council and the applicant. The site visit was conducted in accordance with the Greater London Authority's (GLA) procedure for representation hearings and no representations were made to the Deputy Mayor during the visit.

All speakers today have been given an allocated time to speak, as set out in the agenda. When it is your turn to speak you will be asked to come forward to the table. Please clearly introduce yourself before you begin to speak because a transcript of the proceedings is being produced. All speakers will be notified 30 seconds before their time is due to run out. When speakers are finished addressing the Deputy Mayor there will be no further opportunity to speak unless the Deputy Mayor asks a direct question.

If a member of the public interrupts the hearing at any point the Deputy Mayor will warn them and may order their removal from the Chambers.

Having heard all the representations the Deputy Mayor may decide he is able to make a decision today. However, if he decides he needs more time to consider the application, he will make his decision within five working days of today and a decision will be posted on the GLA's website. Thank you.

Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): Thank you very much. The first item is Nick Ray is going to explain scheme. Nick Ray is the planner responsible for this particular scheme.

Nick Ray (Senior Strategic Planner, Greater London Authority): Thank you, Deputy Mayor. For the purpose of the record my name is Nick Ray and I am a Strategic Planner at the GLA. The content of this presentation will set out a description of the application site and its surrounding in a spatial planning policy context. I will then run through a description of the site and its existing buildings, the relevant case history, the proposed development itself, the response to public consultation, Tower Hamlets Council's reasons for refusal, key issues the Deputy Mayor must consider, and finally the recommendation to the Deputy Mayor.

Starting with the site and its surroundings in a spatial policy context. The site location is highlighted in red. It is located just to the south of Canary Wharf on Marsh Wall on the Isle of Dogs. The site is very well served by public transport in the form of South Quay Docklands Light Railway (DLR) Station and Canary Wharf Underground Station which is 750 metres to the north, as well as local buses running along Marsh Wall. Accordingly the site records a good rating in terms of its accessibility to the public transport network.

This view shows the site location circled in red, and the South Quay Master Plan area lightened and outlined in yellow, in the context of large-scale predominately office development stretching along the north side of South Dock around Canary Wharf. The lower rise scale of the Barkantine Estate and surrounding areas to the south can also be seen in the foreground.

This slide gives an overview of the existing site layout - the site outlined in red - which comprises a private health centre, some warehouse units and the North Pole Public House. The majority of these buildings are single or two-storey equivalent, except for the pub which is three storeys. As can be seen, Manilla Street bisects the two parts of the site. The existing Lenanton Steps lead from Marsh Wall to Manilla Street, where there is a drop in level of about one-storey. Surrounding buildings include single-aspect two-storey dwellings on Byng Street and Bellamy Close backing onto the site to the west and south, as well as the adjacent motel/hotel development at 40 Marsh Wall. To the east are three-storey office buildings with surface car parking.

This is a view looking west along Marsh Wall. The Bupa private health centre is the building on the left. In the centre of the picture is the locally designated open space, known as Wayside Gardens. The warehouse at 63 Manilla Street is just visible. On the right you can see the 39-storey hotel development.

This is a view looking east along Manilla Street into the site. The Novatel is under construction on the left. To the right are warehouse buildings within the site. The North Pole pub can also be seen above and to the right of the hoardings.

This is a view from the corner of Byng Street and Bellamy Close. In the foreground can be seen the single-aspect two-storey housing that backs onto the existing warehouses within the site. The Novatel is again visible in the background.

This is a view into the site, looking north along Manilla Street, showing the warehouses within the site on either side of the road. The Novatel is again visible in the background. In the centre of the view can be seen the existing Lenanton Steps that are hoarded off as part of the construction site. Tall buildings of the Canary Wharf cluster are also visible in the top right of the image.

Finally, this is the North Pole Public House. This building is not a designated heritage asset but does have merit through its social and historic associations with the era of passing development and community in this part of the Isle of Dogs.

We will now look briefly at the spatial policy context. The site falls within the Isle of Dogs Opportunity Area, which also constitutes part of the Central Activity Zone for the purposes of local plan policies. The London Plan envisages the Opportunity Area delivering at least 10,000 new homes and 100,000 new jobs up to 2031. The site also falls within the Canary Wharf Activity Area, as set out in the Tower Hamlets Local Plan, being on the periphery of Canary Wharf major centre. The closest station is South Quay DLR, some 500 metres to the east, whilst Canary Wharf Underground is accessible by footbridge and is located some 750 metres away. Bus services also operate along Marsh Wall. Accordingly the site has a very good public transport accessibility level of 4.

GLA officers are working with the Council to deliver an opportunity area planning framework (OAPF) for the Isle of Dogs although this document has not yet been consulted upon. However, the Council has adopted a master plan for the South Quay area in the form of a supplementary planning document (SPD). The SPD sets out the vision for the area, providing guidance for the delivery of a high-quality new urban neighbourhood. The site is located on the western side of the master plan, as highlighted.

The site also falls within a number of strategic views and river prospects, as identified in the Mayor's London View Management Framework (LVMF), most notably the view from the General Wolfe statue in Greenwich Park. This view, pictured in the slide, takes in the formal axial arrangement between Greenwich Palace and the Queen's House with the tall buildings on the Isle of Dogs visible beyond. The site is therefore within the wider setting of the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site.

I will now take you through the planning history of the application site, as well as the history of neighbouring sites where relevant. Prior to the applicant assembling the plots that make up the current site a number of applications were submitted for smaller schemes. In May 2007 planning permission was granted on 63 to 69 Manilla Street for a four to ten-storey building comprising office space, retail and 11 flats. The permission was never implemented. In November 2009 planning permission was refused on 68 to 70 Manilla Street, the site surrounding the North Pole pub, for a six to nine-storey building comprising 36 flats and commercial space. An appeal was subsequently submitted which the Inspector dismissed. In 2014 an application was submitted for the redevelopment of the North Pole pub with an eight-storey building comprising nine flats. This application was withdrawn.

Following on from this case history the applicant acquired the sites 50 Marsh Wall, 63 to 69 Manilla Street, and 68 to 70 Manilla Street and submitted a comprehensive application for the demolition of all the buildings and construction of two buildings of 32 and 63 storeys, comprising 727 residential units and a 273-bedroom hotel, together with a two form entry primary school, replacement health care facilities, commercial floors pace and basement parking. Notably this application did not include the North Pole pub within its boundary. This application was withdrawn by the applicant in June 2015.

This plan shows a number of the neighbouring developments that are either consented, in orange, or currently under consideration, in yellow. The other scheme close by is the Cuba Street scheme, which is not shown on the plan but its location is labelled. I will give a brief overview of each of these developments.

Looking first at Arrowhead Quay. The site is just to the north on the opposite side of Marsh Wall. Planning permission was granted in February 2015 for two buildings of 55 and 50 storeys, up to 187 metres, comprising 756 residential units, ground floor retail and public realm. Ground works for the implementation of this scheme have recently commenced. The site 40 Marsh Wall is immediately to the north-west between Manilla Street and Marsh Wall. Planning permission was granted in 2010 for a 39-storey, 127 metre, building comprising a 305-bedroom hotel which is currently in the last stages of construction. The site 30 Marsh Wall is located to the north-west, beyond Cuba Street, and is the subject of a current application for a 43-storey building comprising 271 residential units. The Cuba Street site is also to the north-west on the opposite of Manilla Street. There is a current application for the redevelopment of the site with two buildings of 41 storeys and 26 storeys, 136 metres and 87 metres, comprising 448 residential units, community uses and open space. The site at 54 Marsh Wall abuts the eastern boundary of the site. An application was submitted in December 2014 for a part-29 and part-39-storey building comprising 240 residential units with commercial space. This application was subsequently withdrawn. The developer has entered into pre-application discussions with both the Council and GLA with a view to submitting a revised scheme. Discussions are ongoing. Many of these schemes are visible on the model in front of you as well.

Having provided some background and context to the application site I will move on to the current proposal. The proposal entails the comprehensive redevelopment of the site involving the demolition of all buildings, except the North Pole, and the construction of two new buildings of 34 and 65-storeys, 124 and 217 metres respectively. The taller building is equivalent to an extra storey in height on Manilla Street due to the drop in levels. I will set out a more detailed description of the uses in each building on the next slide. However, in summary, the proposal would deliver 634 residential units, 125 of which would be affordable; a two form entry primary school; a 231-bedroom hotel; a 398 square metre health centre; a 200 square metre restaurant; and a new public realm with associated parking and servicing.

This slide provides an overview of where the uses are located within the buildings. The west tower accommodates the primary school on the ground to fifth floors - coloured in yellow - with 139 residential units above, 90 of which would be affordable rent shown in orange, 35 for intermediate tenure in red and 40 market units at the top. The east tower comprises 495

market units in the main tower shown in blue, with a hotel accommodated in the 20-storey southern wing in green. The health centre and restaurant are located on the ground and first floors. In between the two buildings would be the new public square and the retained North Pole pub. Public realm would also be delivered in the form of widened Lenanton Steps whilst the reinstated Manilla Street would run through the new public square.

I will now look at a summary of the key responses in the consultation process. The full details of consultation responses and representations is included in the hearing report. We will begin with the Mayor's initial representations of 24 November 2015 in respect of the application. This concluded that the principle of the housing-led mixed-use redevelopment of the site is strongly supported, and the proposals are consistent with the sites location within the Opportunity Area and the South Quay Master Plan Area. A number of strategic planning issues were identified as needing to be addressed before the application could be recognised as being compliant with the London Plan. Following these representations the application was referred back to the Mayor on 7 March 2016 following the Tower Hamlets Planning Committee meeting which resolved to refuse planning commission in line with their officers' recommendation. You will recall, Mr Deputy Mayor, as set out in the Stage 2 report of 10 March, the Mayor indicated that the strategic issues raised at the initial consultation had been satisfactorily resolved.

Hearing responses from statutory consultees. Historic England commented that the scheme would be taller than its immediate context, being close to the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site, than other buildings of this scale. It was concerned that it would set an unwelcome precedent and could result in a wall of development in the setting of the world heritage site and around the axis view. It requested the tall tower be reduced in height. Historic England Archaeology raised no objection but requested a condition to be included to address archaeological impacts. The Environment Agency raised no objection on flood risk grounds. However, they recommended that plant resilience measures are incorporated. Natural England did not wish to comment. The Canal and River Trust made no objections but requested a small contribution towards dockside enhancements. NATS Safeguarding and London City Airport made no objection, subject to conditions requiring a grey management plan to be approved, and details of scaffolding and radar mitigation to be approved. A crane management plan is also requested by DLR infrastructure protection. Thames Water raised no objection, subject to conditions. The local Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) group supports the scheme and is pleased to see the retention of the North Pole Public House.

In response to the initial consultation Tower Hamlets received three responses. Two of these were in objection, citing concerns about overdevelopment of the site, noise from construction works, impact on development potential of the adjoining site, and restriction of private public access to the adjacent site. The support comment welcomed the retention of the pub as part of the proposals.

Following the Mayor's decision to call in the application a further consultation was undertaken in receipt of additional environmental information. A further three responses were received, including an objection citing concerns about overcrowding, building height and DLR capacity. Two further support comments were received. Although one comment

felt the scheme was too tall and dense; the provision of the primary school, healthcare centre, retained pub, jobs, housing and improved public realm was welcomed.

We now move on to Tower Hamlets Council's reasons for refusal. On 18 February 2016 Tower Hamlets Planning Committee resolved to refuse planning permission in line with officer recommendation. This is a summary of the Council's reasons for refusal. The full reasons are set out in the hearing report. Firstly, the development would result in the overdevelopment of the site by reason of limited and compromised public realm; impact on the setting of the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site and the Grand Axis; insensitive relationship with surrounding properties on Byng Street and Bellamy Close; impact on the comprehensive redevelopment of the area; poor residential quality arising from insufficient amenity space, sense of ownership within the cores and daylight and sunlight failures; and inadequate provision for waste management. Accordingly the Council considered that the development would not be sensitive to its context or bridge the difference in scale between Canary Wharf and lower rise areas to the south, with all of these factors outweighing the benefits of establishing a new school. Secondly, the absence of a legal agreement to secure affordable housing and financial and non-financial contributions for a range of matters, including employment and skills, sustainable transport and highways. These matters are discussed in more detail in the mitigating the impact of development through the planning obligation section of the hearing report and later in this presentation. The final reason for refusal relates to the absence of an accumulative wind assessment incorporating the Cuba Street planning application. Following the Mayor's decision to call in the planning application this wind assessment was submitted and formally consulted upon. The outcome will be discussed later in this presentation.

In light of the consultation comments and Tower Hamlets Planning Committee's reasons for refusing the application the Deputy Mayor should now consider the following key issues. Having regard to the Council's reasons for refusal, the key issues for the Deputy Mayor to consider are whether the proposal provides an adequate quantum and quality of public realm; the impact on the setting of the world heritage site; the visual impact on the street scene locally; the regard had by the scheme to the comprehensive redevelopment of the area; the provision of private and communal amenity space within the development; sense of ownership within the cores; the daylight and sunlight levels within the new dwellings; the proposed waste management arrangements; and the wind impact of the proposals.

First considering whether the quantum of the public realm proposed is adequate, regard must be had to the loss of existing public open space which totals 271 square metres, although it is noted that the space is of poor quality and is of limited public benefit. The replacement provision in the form of the new public square would be of a similar quantum and of much higher quality and usability. Furthermore, the scheme would deliver new and improved areas of public open space around the buildings, providing widened footways along Marsh Wall, café spill-out space on Manilla Street, and widened Lenanton Steps contributing towards a new high-quality north-south route through the site. There would be 952 square metres of public realm in total.

As can be seen in this slide the quality and usability of the proposed public realm would be of the highest standards. The space would be flanked by high-quality buildings with active ground floor uses. Overall therefore officers consider that the proposed public realm would be adequate in terms of both quantum and quality, both to provide usable public space for future residents of South Quay and to provide a setting for the proposed buildings. The retention and refurbishment of the North Pole pub fronting onto this space is particularly welcomed.

Turning to consideration of the impact on the setting of the world heritage site, the bird's-eye view on this slide shows the tallest tower in the development above the left cupola of the Royal Naval College. The scheme would sit just outside of the Grand Axis and would not be detrimental to the appreciation of the axis view from the General Wolfe statue, being located 2.6 kilometres away. The proposal would, indeed, contribute positively in terms of its slender form, positioning and high-quality architecture. There would be no harm to the setting of the world heritage site or the LVMF view. This view, however, is not the cumulative view which we will cover on the next slide. We have shown the darker view for clarity because you can see the skyline slightly better than you can on the daylight view. As can be seen, the proposed cumulative skyline view is at the bottom. The proposal would lie within a cluster of similar sized towers, many of which are sited within the Grand Axis which has already been substantially altered. The scheme would provide visual layering and variations in the skyline as envisaged by the LVMF and the World Heritage Site Management Plan. The proposal would not result in a wall of development as there are already consents for buildings of a similar height in this part of the view, as the cumulative assessment shows. Overall, having regard to all the views set out in the applicant's environmental statement, the proposal was considered not to harm the setting of the World Heritage Site, the LVMF view from Greenwich Park or any other views identified.

I will now address the local visual impact of the proposals. As this view shows, the proposed primary school would be highly visible from Bellamy Close above the two-storey single-aspect properties backing onto the site. However, the full scale of the 34-storey tower would not be evident in this close-up view and the wider primary school element would act as a foil for the recessed residential floors above. In this view, from further along Byng Street to the east, both buildings would be visible and the scale would be more apparent. However, the primary school element of the western tower provides a clear visual break and relief to the taller residential element above, mitigating the visual impact on the low-rise surroundings. The buildings can be seen to step down towards the surrounding low-rise context. Overall officers therefore considered the scheme has been designed to respond sensitively to the surrounding context, and the scale of the development steps down away from Marsh Wall through the reduced height of the western tower and hotel wing on the eastern tower. The visual impact of the proposal on local views would therefore be acceptable.

Turning to the interface with surrounding sites. The scheme has been designed to ensure that the development potential of neighbouring sites is not compromised and that the objective of comprehensive development of the South Quay area can be achieved. GLA and Council officers continue to work with adjoining land owners to shape proposals whilst enabling individual applicants to bring forward development. In respect of the adjoining site to the

east, 54 Marsh Wall, a revised application is expected to be submitted shortly. As the diagram on the slide shows, and the model more clearly, the proposed buildings would be sited a similar distance from each other as the Novatel building is from Alpha Square. A separation distance of around ten metres is considered to be in keeping with the emerging context in this part of South Quay. The ground floor layout of the proposed building provides a plinth storey of commercial uses abutting the eastern boundary, as envisaged by the South Quay Master Plan SPD, which will enable the adjacent site to come forward in a similar or complimentary manner. The other adjacent site which is the subject of a development proposal is the small car park site at 72 Manilla Street, immediately to the west of the North Pole Public House and directly adjacent to the proposed school. There is a current outlined planning application for a 13-storey building on this site and two images are shown of the scheme, one in the context of the Alpha Square west tower and the other in the existing context. As set out in the Mayor's Stage 1 response to that application, the proposal for 72 Manilla Street would result in a prejudicial impact on Alpha Square as the upper floors of the building would enclose some of the residential units in the west tower. The scheme would also amount to overdevelopment of a tiny site and would have an inappropriate visual impact, both in the context of Alpha Square and in the existing context. A reduction in scale has been recommended to overcome these concerns. Accordingly it is considered that the Alpha Square proposal does not compromise the reasonable development potential of adjacent sites. A failure to include 72 Manilla Street within the application site would not jeopardise the wider objectives of comprehensive redevelopment.

Now I consider the residential quality matters. It is noted that many of the units in the east tower do not have private outdoor amenity space. However, the Mayor's Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) provides that in exceptional circumstances this may not be required. In this instance the wind conditions around the taller block make the provision of balconies undesirable. The majority of flats are instead proposed with additional indoor living space, equivalent to the area of the private open space requirement that the Housing SPG requires. Furthermore, the windows to some of the units are provided in the form of full-height sliding glazed panels with balustrades to enable the internal space to be fully opened. Overall it is considered that the scheme provides a high standard of accommodation with regard to private amenity space.

The scheme would provide a range of communal amenity spaces, including indoor and outdoor spaces. Many of these are located adjacent to rooftop play areas. The overall quantum of communal amenity space would exceed Council local plan standards and would provide a good mix of internal and external spaces. It is noted that the twenty-first floor amenity area on the east tower would be accessible through hotel use. However, the scheme layout shows that this would be fully accessible from the residential cores, located close to the residents' bar and gym, and would therefore be fully accessible and usable. Accordingly the proposed communal amenity space is considered to be acceptable.

Just under half the floors in the eastern building would have nine units per floor. The Mayor's Housing SPG generally seeks to limit the number of units on each floor to eight per floor in order to foster a sense of ownership. However, this minor exceedance of the general guidance set out in the SPG would not, in itself, be detrimental to the objective of providing a

sense of ownership over the communal areas. Furthermore, an access control system and 24-hour concierge would be provided and the core would be served by four lifts, thereby complying with the other detailed requirements of the SPG.

The applicant's daylight and sunlight report concludes that over 200 habitable rooms within the development would fail to meet the recommended Building Research Establishment (BRE) standards for daylight. This would amount to just 12% of the total habitable rooms within the development. The majority of rooms that fail would be located within flats with other rooms that pass, with only 33 of the units having all rooms fail the recommended average daylight factor levels. The majority of these units are located on the north elevation of the east tower. However, the proportion of average daylight factor failures is considered to be acceptable in this high-density urban environment. It should also be noted that the overall residential quality of the development would be high, with floor to ceiling heights of 2.6 metres and unit sizes generally exceeding London Plan standards with good outlook in most directions. Overall therefore the daylight and sunlight levels would be acceptable.

With regard to waste collection arrangements, the proposed vehicle lifts which would access the bin stores in the basement would not be large enough to accommodate the Council's current refuse collection vehicles. However, this could be resolved through a private arrangement, either for a management company to move bins to street level on collection days or for a private waste management company to serve the development. A condition is recommended requiring a waste collection management plan to be approved. Accordingly the proposal is considered to have been designed to accommodate the necessary waste management facilities.

Moving on to the wind impacts. The applicant has carried out wind testing, including cumulative assessment with nearby committed developments. The assessment concludes that the majority of outdoor spaces within and adjacent to the proposed development would be suitable for their intended uses having regard to the Lawson criteria, the established assessment criteria for wind comfort. The area around the ground floor public realm to the west of the eastern building would experience minor exceedance of comfort thresholds in the windiest season, but this could be overcome through the introduction of mitigation measures such as tree planting. A condition is recommended requiring these details to be approved. Private terraces on both blocks would also experience minor exceedances of the recommended thresholds during windy conditions, but on balance this is considered acceptable as it would generally be expected that these spaces would not be used during inclement weather. The applicant's assessment recommends mitigation in the form of porous structures affixed to lighting columns in Cuba Street, such as the one pictured, to slow wind speeds in the public realm. A section 106 obligation would be entered into, requiring the scheme to be approved prior to commencement and delivered during construction. Subject to this mitigation the proposals would be acceptable in terms of their wind impacts.

I will now take you briefly through some of the other matters relevant to the application. A full assessment of the relevant planning matters is contained in the representation hearing report. As mentioned, the scheme would deliver important social infrastructure to serve the South Quay area, including a new school, a health centre and a renovated public house. The

two form entry primary school would accommodate up to 420 pupils, provide outdoor play space and has been designed to allow for community use outside of school hours. The school layout has been designed in consultation with Council education officers who broadly support the proposed design approach. The proposed primary school would meet an identified need and would help to ensure that sufficient school places are available to meet the requirements of the existing and proposed community in South Quay. A section 106 obligation is recommended to secure delivery of the school and community access to the hall in perpetuity.

The scheme would deliver a 398 square metre health centre which has been designed for possible future use by a National Health Service (NHS) operator and a local practice has expressed an interest in using the space for a satellite facility. A section 106 obligation forms part of the agreed terms and would set out a mechanism for the transfer of this facility.

Finally, turning to the retention of the North Pole pub, the proposal to refurbish and bring back into use this important piece of social infrastructure for the benefit of existing and future residents is strongly supported and is the key change made since the earlier planning application submission. The pub's retention has attracted support from the local branch of CAMRA and local residents. Its position adjacent to the new public square would further enhance its prominence. Whilst it is not a designated heritage asset, its retention in its current use is also of significant heritage and community benefit. A section 106 obligation has been agreed to ensure the delivery of the pub, including its permanent retention and transfer to a pub provider for use as a drinking establishment.

The proposal therefore provides a significant contribution towards social infrastructure in the area as well as housing, including affordable housing, public open space and other appropriate uses including retail and a hotel.

Finally, to consider the density and quantum of development which has also been raised in the consultation responses. It is noted that the scheme, at 4,712 habitable rooms per hectare, exceeds the recommended density ranges in the London Plan. However, there is not an in principle objection to high-density development, particularly in Opportunity Areas. The Mayor's Housing SPG requires proposals that exceed the density ranges to be assessed in terms of their bearing on the capacity of local amenities, infrastructure and services. In this case the proposal provides a primary school, open space and other social infrastructure that more than meets its needs, as well as providing a contribution towards bus services. In addition, factors such as residential quality and housing mix are relevant. As concluded in the hearing report, the scheme would be in accordance with planning policy in both respects, with the residential quality proposals being particularly high. It should be noted that the majority of schemes approved in the South Quay area exceed the London Plan density ranges so the proposed density would not be inappropriate in this location. In this regard, and having regard to the above factors, the proposed density and quantum of development is acceptable.

Other planning issues relating to housing design, inclusive design, sustainable development, environmental issues and transport have all been addressed and are detailed at length in the relevant sections of the hearing report. All have been fully addressed.

In summary, and for the Deputy Mayor's reference, the agreed section 106 heads of terms, as detailed in the report, are as follows. Affordable housing is 25% of habitable rooms, including a review mechanism; the social infrastructure items mentioned to be delivered; offsite wind mitigation measures; construction training initiatives of just under £330,000; end user training initiatives of just over £31,000; local employment and training strategy; job brokerage; public realm and highway works; a bus contribution of £200,000; a Crossrail contribution of just over £837,000; commitment to submit and monitor a travel plan for all the various uses; connection to the Barkantine heat network and a satellite facility to provide for future connection for surrounding developments in South Quay; and a carbon dioxide offsetting contribution of just over £113,000.

Having now covered the key issues associated with the case, all that remains is for us to make our recommendation. That is that the Deputy Mayor agrees with the recommendation set out in the officers' representation hearing report and grant planning permission for the application at the Alpha Square site subject to the conditions and reasons set out within the report, and subject to the prior completion of a section 106 agreement. Thank you, Deputy Mayor. That concludes the presentation.

Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): Thank you, Nick. The first person who is going to speak to us this afternoon is going to be from Tower Hamlets, Paul Buckenham.

Paul Buckenham (Development Manager, Tower Hamlets Council): Thank you, Deputy Mayor. For the record my name is Paul Buckenham. I am the Development Manager at Tower Hamlets Council. Deputy Mayor, the Council supports the principle of redevelopment of this site and recognises the potential to deliver new homes, jobs and infrastructure. The Council has invested substantial resources, working with the applicant at the pre-application stage and the two applications that followed. It is therefore regrettable that as officers we have to object to the proposal for a second time, this time following a decision by the Council Strategic Development Committee on 18 February. Given the time available I will not go through all of the reasons for refusal. These can be condensed into three broad issues; the failure to respond to strategic planning objectives for height, scale and density; the failure to respond to local context; and the substantial overdevelopment of this site.

You will know from your site visit that the site is small, half the size of a football pitch, and lies south of Marsh Wall towards the edge of the South Quay Master Plan area. It sits within a network of tight streets close to lower rise residential properties. The density of the proposal is more than four times greater than advised by the London Plan density matrix. Whilst we do not object to high density, the London Plan and the Housing SPG do require exceptional circumstances to be demonstrated for such departures from policy.

This is an area of significant change. In recognition of this - and in advance of the OAPF being developed - the Council developed, in partnership with your officers, the South Quay Master Plan in conjunction with consultation with the development industry, the local community and other stakeholders. The South Quay Master Plan seeks to manage change in this area, manage development pressures and plan properly for taller buildings to deliver good

quality place making. The Master Plan has clear design principles that development should transition in scale between the taller buildings in the Canary Wharf cluster to the lower rise development of established residential areas to the south. This is consistent with established policy in the Council's local plan and, indeed, has been in various predecessors of that document over the years. The proposed 65-storey eastern tower would only be 19 metres shorter than One Canada Square and some 70% taller than the buildings permitted recently along Marsh Wall, of which you have heard within the officer's presentation. This is not a gentle undulation of building heights. It is a landmark statement building in its own right without any policy or urban design support and therefore would cause harm to the setting of the Greenwich World Heritage Site. The Council and your GLA officers have worked very hard to manage the transition in scale in other development proposals, even whilst the South Quay Master Plan was in draft form. I question why we would abandon that approach now that the Master Plan has been adopted. The justification for such height within the officers' report is, with respect, flawed. The report suggests such heights are acceptable because of the approval of South Quay Plaza and City Pride nearby. These were identified as locations for landmark buildings following detailed urban design studies and appraisals. There are no such justifications in this instance.

At a local level the development makes no allowance for any transition to the lower scale houses on Byng Street or Bellamy Close that directly adjoin the site boundary. Again, with respect, the statement in the officers' report that transition could be achieved by the lower 34-storey western tower and that the scale of the buildings would not be apparent within Bellamy Close does not make sense and is misleading. The development would in fact present a sheer cliff face of development when viewed against the two-storey terraces in these streets.

The proposal includes a new school, a health centre, community space and retention of the North Pole Public House. These are all welcome contributions to local infrastructure. However, the school has a compromised design, forcing children to learn and play in split-level accommodation right beneath residential balconies in a high-density development. Meanwhile the applicant is relying on play space managed by the school to justify their own densities.

Speaking myself as a CAMRA member, it is a sad state of affairs that the only way to bring a traditional public house back into use in London is to build a 65-storey tower and a scheme of hyper-density all around it.

The Stage 3 report makes much of the improved public realm within the site. This is only re-providing existing open space owned by Tower Hamlets Council, along with improvements to steps along Marsh Wall. There is no real substantial increase in new public realm that would genuinely support the density and scale of development that is being proposed.

Strategic planning should be about finding the best sites for schools, health centres and urban spaces. This is something the OAPF has been developed to bring forward. Relying on individual high-density developments to provide infrastructure that mitigates their own impacts to justify inappropriate height and density is not good town planning. There is simply too much being proposed on this site and there are too many compromises. In fact, it felt like

the officers' report was presenting a shopping list of compromises against adopted planning policy. The implications of granting permission have to be properly understood. If permission is granted for this development it will completely undermine the entire notion of proper, site specific consideration and master planning in an Opportunity Area. It would send a message that all developments in South Quay and the wider Opportunity Area could potentially be of a similar height and density irrespective of their context. The applicant has been quite open about their aspiration to deliver one of London's super tall statement buildings. This does not work with the local town planning framework. There are compelling reasons for refusal and I do urge you not to grant planning permission, and to ask the developer to continue to work with the Council and your officers to achieve a less dense balanced scheme that properly responds to its surroundings and the objectives of the South Quay Master Plan. Thank you very much, Deputy Mayor.

Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): Thank you. We now have Guy Bransby from JLL who is representing the developer.

Guy Bransby (Lead Director, Planning and Development, JLL Planning): My name is Guy Bransby. I lead the JLL planning team and have been planning consultant on this project since March 2014.

This scheme is in overall conformity with the development plan and constitutes sustainable development. We undertook 25 pre-application meetings with Tower Hamlets and the community over a period of two years. Therefore these proposals are informed by what local people want and deliver the social, environmental and economic infrastructure needed. This includes direct tangible contributions of approximately £70 million, the majority of which is Tower Hamlets strategic industrial location (SIL); and benefits in kind of approximately £60 million, a school, health centre, affordable housing and public realm. Therefore this presentation refutes the six reasons for refusal.

One, a limited and compromised realm. The proposal delivers both quantitative and qualitative public realm improvements. It meets the needs of the local community and accords with planning policy. The proposed public square, including the new shared surface level highway, is 1,642 square metres. Publicly accessible greenspace is provided to replace the overgrown and inaccessible Wayside Gardens. A significant generous connection is created between Marsh Wall and Byng Street which restores the historic north-south route. The North Pole pub has been bought and will be refurbished and reopened. New active uses at the ground floor of all buildings animate the space. Indeed, Tower Hamlets Parks Department state in their officers' report:

"The proposed replacement open space is acceptable as it is larger and more accessible in a reasonable location."

Second, impact on the setting of the heritage site. The two taller elements of the scheme sit outside the Grand Axis which is 2.6 kilometres away. In any event, the Grand Axis has been substantially altered by a number of schemes already approved in the background by Tower Hamlets. Further, the slender form of our buildings make a positive contribution. They

provide visual layering and variation to the skyline. Therefore the impact of the proposal is negligible. Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states:

“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm [as is the case here] this harm should be weighed against the public benefits [which I have set out].”

Third, an insensitive relationship to Byng Street and Bellamy Close. This site will be redeveloped. The scheme has been sensitively designed to respond to the relationship with the surrounding properties. Indeed, the west building was redesigned to set back the school and provide a stepped building form. The high density of the new neighbourhood plan for South Quay means its separation distances are acceptable. There will be no unacceptable overlooking, sense of enclosure or loss of outlook to neighbouring properties. The neighbouring properties on Byng Street and Bellamy Close are actually single-aspect and do not face the site. Other neighbouring properties are some 30 metres away and would not be adversely affected given the slender proportions of the towers. We note importantly there were no objections to the application from local residents, or from one housing group which owns and manage the estates adjacent. Finally, page 12 of the formal Planning Committee minutes state:

“Officers also answered questions about the impact on neighbouring amenity that, whilst not ideal, they did not believe were severe enough to form a reason for refusal.”

Fourth, a failure to interface with surrounding land uses. The site layout provides a significant contribution to permeability in the area and has an appropriate relationship with the layout of existing and proposed schemes adjacent. We have had extensive consultation with Freshwater, the developer of 54 Marsh Wall, and our schemes have been designed in conjunction. We have also made amendments to our scheme to facilitate the redevelopment of 72 Marsh Wall, the car park site.

Fifth, a failure to provide sufficient high quality residential accommodation which comes down to four points. First, private amenity space. The Committee minutes note that the levels of play space are in excess of standard. Secondly, sense of ownership within the cores. All units are designed in conformity with the Mayor’s Housing SPG. Third, the quantum of communal amenity space. The scheme has a mixture of residential amenity space, balconies, internal spaces and communal areas. In the west tower each unit has a private balcony which complies with standards. There is also a communal lounge, courtyard on the thirtieth floor and residents’ lounge on the fifth floor. In the east tower there is communal space on the twenty-first floor, and residents will have access to the sky bar and gym. Finally under this heading, sunlight and daylight failures. Internal layouts have been amended to limit the number of north facing units and studios. The vast majority of rooms meet or exceed BRE guidelines, with all north facing units compliant. The level of light to adjoining properties is also compliant. This addresses the points made by Councillor Chesterton at committee.

Finally, a failure to implement the waste management hierarchy. A delivery and servicing plan was submitted with the planning application and has been agreed by Tower Hamlets

Highways. The only outstanding point relates to the service lift contingency plan which can be dealt with via conditions. Thank you.

Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): Thank you very much. We have now got three more speakers. The first one is an objector, Councillor David Chesterton, and then there are two people who want to speak in favour of the development. Councillor Chesterton.

David Chesterton (Councillor, Tower Hamlets): Good afternoon. I am Councillor David Chesterton, a councillor on the Isle of Dogs. The biggest issue on the Isle of Dogs - on the doorstep when you speak to people - is that of overdevelopment on the island. People are very, very concerned about the scale and pace of development. They have no faith any longer in the planning process. They feel worn down as their objections and concerns have simply not been listened to. They are worried about infrastructure. I will give you two examples that affect this case. One of them is roads. There are only - and probably only ever will be - two roads on the Isle of Dogs, one on the east and one on the west. Mention was made earlier of DLR. You already cannot get onto the DLR in the mornings. It is already full by the time you get as far as South Quay.

I have lived locally for more than 40 years. I saw the London Docklands Development Corporation arrive and I watched it leave. It operated on a principle that there should be a scaling down of buildings from Canary Wharf as you go towards the existing residential community. It took a long time to get the South Quay Master Plan produced. It too embraced a similar principle, that there should be a scaling down. This scheme does not acknowledge that at all. In fact, this scheme puts even larger buildings right on the boundary with the existing residential community than there currently are. The ones that are around it on the south side of Marsh Wall are around 40 storeys, this one is 66. This is a significant increase in size. I do worry that, in fact, this high building may well be something to do with wanting to be at the top end of the tall buildings league table.

I also worry that the way this scheme appears to have been written in the report you are considering this afternoon is that because others have been approved to build these very tall buildings this one has to be supported as well. I am deeply concerned that we would end up with a licence to effectively not only disregard the idea of scaling down as we approach existing residential communities, but in fact that all of the rest of the sites available in the central part of the Isle of Dogs will come forward with these very large schemes. I do not accept what is said about those people who live in Bellamy Close. Yes, they are single-aspect. The people in the single-aspect buildings that are in the western end of Bellamy Close look straight across at the single-aspect properties that mirror theirs and this huge great building right next to it. People will not understand how on earth that was ever approved. This is an area that is already pretty densely developed. There are a lot of new communities moving in. However, the streets are the same size that they were if you go back to the beginning part of the 20th century. They are very, very narrow streets. To try to shoehorn a development of this scale and this size into those small streets is, frankly, bonkers.

I agree there are problems with school spaces. We definitely need more schools. The question I would ask about this scheme is whether this is the right place for school. Work on the OAPF has not yet been completed so we are not clear about that. I also worry about the safety of the school. The school playground is immediately below the residential tower. There is a scheme that is already in operation at Kings Cross which has a playground immediately below a large residential tower where they are already experiencing problems with things falling from the tower into the school playground. As far as I am concerned the play space figures are compromised. The play space for children is added up on the basis that the school playground and open space will be available for use by children outside of school hours. There is nothing in there to suggest how that is going to work. The reality of school playgrounds is they have to be safe. You have to be very careful you do not get broken glass, dog mess and so on in there. How on earth you manage that I do not know and there is no suggestion of how it is going to be. I am also concerned that, in fact, the play space for much of the time when the school is operational will not be available for anyone else to use other than the school children.

The surgery is welcome. I know that Barkantine are keen to establish a new surgery there. At the moment there is no clinical commissioning group (CCG) funding for this at all. As far as I can see all we would have actually done is create more class D1 space.

This is a massive development. It is too big. It is too dense. It is in the wrong location. It flies in the face of many years of the principle of stepping down towards existing residential communities. Thank you.

Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): Thank you very much, Councillor Chesterton. We now have two more speakers who are in favour of the development. Councillor Andrew Wood and Floyd Macdonald.

Floyd Macdonald (local resident): Good afternoon. My name is Floyd Macdonald. I live a few minutes' walk from the proposed scheme. I strongly support the school being included within this development and I urge you to support it. I am a parent who wants the provision of more outstanding education, for free, in an area with an acute shortage of pupil places. I settled in E14 more than 12 years ago. During that time, when we had children, we wanted the best education for them so they were initially educated some miles away. Since then Canary Wharf College was established as a new free school, open to all in this area. I have also become involved with the school in an administrative capacity. It has now successfully opened two primary schools on the Isle of Dogs. In both cases this was achieved in smaller spaces than the Alpha Square proposed scheme. With an outstanding rate from the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), Canary Wharf College schools are both more than five times over-subscribed. Consequently the Department for Education has granted permission for Canary Wharf College to open a further primary school on the Isle of Dogs. We need a site. There is already a chronic shortage of primary school places on the Isle of Dogs. The Alpha Square opportunity brings together the ideal solution of building both desperately needed homes and a school. The potential for Canary Wharf College to develop a new school on the site, in conjunction with Far East Consortium, is what

we are working towards. This would enable another outstanding primary school to be offered as a choice, for free, to local families on the Isle of Dogs.

The innovative plans show outdoor play spaces at each different classroom level, which is essential for meeting the demands of young children. However, the school would be for more than just the children. It would be a hub within this new community. As with existing Canary Wharf College facilities, regular community use is, and would be, encouraged. We have discussed a management plan which enables out of school hours use of facilities through using the proposed Far East Consortium estate management team to undertake that caretaker role. This would allow both the outdoor and indoor sports' facilities to be available to the wider community for a much longer period than perhaps a traditional school caretaker would care to hang around for.

Therefore, please, allow the Alpha Square development to proceed to enable a badly needed school to be developed. Allow local families this choice. Allow more great teachers to do a great job. Do not scare off a developer from building a great school into their great scheme. The initial Canary Wharf College is proud of its outstanding rating. This development is another outstanding opportunity. Please, make it happen. The as yet unborn who could enjoy this school would not thank you if you vote against it. Thank you.

Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): Thank you, Mr Macdonald. Councillor Wood.

Andrew Wood (Councillor, Tower Hamlets): Good afternoon. My name is Andrew Wood. I am the Councillor for Canary Wharf Ward in which this development is located. In theory I should be agreeing with my colleague, Councillor, David Chesterton. I agree with most of what he has said. This development is too tall. It is too dense. It will cause daylight and sunlight issues. My ward is already over-delivering on London's residential and office space requirements. I will therefore try to explain why I am supporting this scheme.

The fact is we will have the four tallest residential buildings in the European Union with planning permission within a few minutes' walk of this site; Hertsmere House, City Pride, South Quay Plaza and Newfoundland. You have already heard the list of nearby developments. The important point about all of those developments is that none of them are actually going to provide onsite any public infrastructure, except maybe some retail and one crèche. As a brownfield site, comprised mainly of old garages and also being very close to Canary Wharf, we know something will happen on this site. The question is what type of development should be allowed on this site.

The main issue that residents and I have is the failure so far to deliver the infrastructure required to support the 30,000 new apartments identified in the City and the East document which will be coming to the wider Isle of Dogs. Too many developments have been allowed to get away with delivering no public infrastructure on site. They provide cash but no place to spend that cash. This is one of a handful of developments that actually starts to redress

infrastructure deficits and where the developer has genuinely consulted the community on what they want.

Let me list what residents want and how this development could deliver them. We need approximately ten new primary schools on the Isle of Dogs based on known developments in the pipeline. We only have four in the pipeline, three approved and with this one as well, four in total so far. I have no clue where the other six are coming from. There are no more primary schools in the pipeline that I am aware of. There is almost no public land on the Isle of Dogs to build those new schools. The current Tower Hamlets Council budget has no capital expenditure set aside for new schools on the Isle of Dogs. There is, as yet, no master plan for the area. The South Quay Master Plan was largely silent on infrastructure issues. It did not identify any school sites. We know the current Tower Hamlets Local Plan is not fit for purpose and is currently being rewritten. There is a new OAPF also being written which will not be delivered until late next year. We do know that we have been waiting for at least 16 years now for a new bridge across South Quay which has not been delivered yet. We have to take what we are offered. This development offers a lot of things we like. The other risk is that of those four primary schools in the planning pipeline only one of them is state funded, the Canary Wharf College Glenworth site. The other three depend on developments going ahead and, as we all know, that is not guaranteed.

Of the other things we would really like one is the North Pole pub. I have very few buildings in my ward older than 1965. This is one of a tiny handful older than 100 years of age. For original islanders it is a, limited, link back to the past. We know that once all the other developments in the area are complete that this pub would have a very secure commercial future as a historic building in the area.

We also need at least 36 extra general practitioners (GPs) in the area given all the developments that we know are coming. The Barkantine Surgery - where I am a member of its patient panel - has 18,500 patients already on its register. They are currently converting five meeting rooms into additional GP surgery space. We have only got one additional surgery in the pipeline with nine GPs at Wood Wharf. Therefore these five GP spaces would be very welcome. I am sure the CCG would find some way of funding it. We do know that in the past 30 Marsh Wall was run by the Barkantine as a walk-in centre, a similar concept of a satellite GP surgery.

We would also like the pedestrian through access at the site office. The ability to walk from the Barkantine through to Marsh Wall up the steps would be very welcome, especially for people who are disabled. The current green space, Wayside Gardens, that we have got is, to put it bluntly, a toilet. It is where people go to the toilet because it is completely overgrown and not managed. This green space will be of much better quality. The community space would be welcome and I already know people who want to use it. We have two colleges nearby which train youngsters to work in the industry so this hotel, and the jobs in that hotel, would be very welcome as well.

My great fear is that if this development is rejected for trying to put too much into one small site then every other developer would do the same. They would present to us very simple

developments, with residential and maybe a little bit of public space similar to 54 Marsh Wall, with no supporting infrastructure on site. A warning example for me is 30 Marsh Wall. The initial public consultation for that site talked about a GP surgery in a 57-storey tower. What happened was it came back as a much shorter 43-storey tower with no GP surgery. My theory is that if this is rejected it will come back shorter. It would solve some of those issues of density but it would not provide supporting infrastructure. If there is a choice between a tall, dense 60-storey tower with a school, a GP surgery and the North Pole pub I would take it rather than a 40-storey tower without. While this development is not perfect it does help provide the infrastructure we need. By approving it we also send a message to developers that the GLA will support schemes with infrastructure attached, even if that makes the schemes more complicated and with compromises as a result of that. Therefore I urge you to approve this scheme. Thank you.

Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): Thank you, Councillor Wood. I have now got one or two questions I want to ask. Starting with the density of the scheme. This must be, at 5,000 rooms per hectare, pretty much the densest of all the schemes on South Quay or very close to it. Therefore there is an issue about the juxtaposition between all of the towers and each other, rights of light, sunlight and daylight, and all of those types of issues. Could somebody go back over that for me again about what are the issues with overlooking and with rights of light between those towers? Could somebody from the developer take me through that?

Guy Bransby (Lead Director, Planning and Development, JLL Planning): Deputy Mayor, I am Guy Bransby of JLL. I have my daylight, sunlight and rights of light consultant with him. Can I pass the microphone to him?

Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): Yes.

Anthony Harris (Partner, GIA): Deputy Mayor, I am Anthony Harris. I am a partner at GIA, the daylight and light consultants for the project. With regard to daylight, sunlight and the impact on amenities - my partner Alex Buckley [Partner, GIA] will briefly explain to you about the internal amenity of daylight and sunlight - and impact on existing neighbours in high-density environments such as this it is not so much the height of a development causing the problem. It is the close proximity of those surrounding properties. For example, we could put another 20 or 30 storeys on some of these blocks and it would not make any difference to the impact on surrounding neighbours, mainly because the impact is caused by the lower to middle part of the towers. If you imagine yourself sat in one of those properties looking out the window, because of the head of the window you would not see anything above 15 to 20 storeys depending on where you are and the proximity.

We have also got to understand the BRE guidance which is the methodology by which we assess the impact on the neighbours. The guidance primarily is written for low density development in out of town boroughs, for example at Milton Keynes. The guidance has suggested target values which should be adhered to in order to maintain adequate levels of daylight and sunlight and also on recommended reduction factors to the surrounding properties. It, indeed, suggests that a reduction of less than 20% would not be noticed. If I

can put that into context, if you have a traditional out of town street, 17 metres elevation to elevation, two storeys facing each other, that is a vertical sky component (VSC) value of 27% which the guidance suggests is an adequate level of daylight. To reduce that by 20% you only have to put one storey on the property on the other side of the road. That would reduce it by around 20%. The guidance acknowledges this. It does say that the target values have to be treated flexibly, especially where dealing with dense urban environments such as this. Indeed, this is where the BRE guidance does fall down somewhat because achieving the target 20% compliance in areas like this is very, very difficult. Therefore what we look at is not so much what has been taken away in percentage terms but what is the quality of daylight left to surrounding neighbours in respect to what is similar in that local borough. In essence that describes the impact on neighbours without going into specific details. It is too big a scheme for this room to go into the specifics. Do you want about the internals?

Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): That is fair enough. I do not know if Tower Hamlets want to comment on that at all?

Paul Buckenham (Development Manager, Tower Hamlets Council): Thank you, Deputy Mayor. I do not necessarily disagree with the last speaker's interpretation of how the BRE guidelines work. In planning terms it is always possible to justify matters numerically. You have also got to put on the other side of the balance the quality of the places that are being designed and made. What it will actually feel like to live in existing properties looking towards the development. How those who may be affected by the sense of enclosure and overbearing impact - while not being that adversely affected numerically - will feel because of the sheer scale of what is being proposed also has to be considered. That is how our local plan policies are written and that is how London Plan policies are written as well. You have got to look at both the quantitative and qualitative impact on the sense of enclosure and the overbearing impact that can occur with any development, as well as the technical losses of light and outlook. Thank you.

Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): Thank you. Can we talk for a minute about the school? One of the criticisms Councillor Chesterton made was the position of the playground underneath the tower block. Would somebody from the developer like to comment on that?

Fred Pilbrow (Partner, Pilbrow & Partners): Fred Pilbrow from the architects Pilbrow & Partners. The school itself, which is a two form entry primary school accommodating 420 pupils, was evolved with careful dialogue from the Education Department at Tower Hamlets. We looked at successful inner city schools, such as the award winning Hampden Gurney School off the Edgware Road which provides its play space on a number of different levels. For me the advantage of the arrangement is that as well as some very large secure play space provided at the first floor podium level where we have a **mooga(?)**, we also are available to provide landscaped play space outside every one of the teaching levels on the four upper levels of the school so the classrooms break out directly into landscaped space. The quantum of play space required is fully met by the first floor large play deck where we have the mooga and a second play deck at fifth floor level. The extra landscaped space adjacent to each of the classrooms was really providing an additional educational resource. Hampden Gurney has

been now operating for a number of years. It is very successful both academically and in terms of parent demand for places in the school. Therefore it provides a very secure and robust model for how Alpha Square primary would work.

Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): Thank you.

Floyd Macdonald (local resident): Deputy Mayor, if I could chip in, it is Floyd Macdonald again.

Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): Sorry, you were hidden by a tower block.

Floyd Macdonald (local resident): I am slightly. A very nice, small tower it is too. To echo again, as a user and provider of facilities for small school children the fact they can instantly be able to step out and play - or have those cool off moments, those calm down moments, those meltdown moments where children do not have to go down four flights of stairs - really is an innovation in schooling and not something to be afraid of. Thank you.

David Chesterton (Councillor, Tower Hamlets): I do not disagree at all with what has just been said. However, I am not sure it answered the point I raised which I thought you picked up. That is that immediately above those play spaces - as you can see on the model they are tiered - are residential units with access to the outside world. We heard about that. The issue is about things accidentally or otherwise ending up landing in children's play spaces. We have a number of problems with our tall buildings already in Tower Hamlets where some people, foolishly and clearly antisocially, throw their rubbish out the windows. That causes a real management problem and occasionally injury. I am concerned about safety on not just the first floor but each of those decks, wonderful though they are as a great piece of education and I love the idea.

Fred Pilbrow (Partner, Pilbrow & Partners): Shall I take that point? It was raised and I apologise I did not cover it. Fred Pilbrow again for the record. We show a canopy above the uppermost play deck, and then the play decks themselves are cantilevered one over and one below so there is an element of protection from above. The other point I raise is that the Far East Consortium has a long-term interest in the management and running of this estate. It will operate the hotel. It will have an onsite management team that was alluded when Floyd spoke. That is important because it suggests that will be ongoing care about the way that the estate is operated. It will be operated to a high standard. I would be surprised, for example, if rubbish being thrown out of windows would not be attended to as a management issue.

The short answer is that there is canopy protection over the uppermost play space and the lower decks are set below one another, as they are at the Hampden Gurney example I referred to earlier.

Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): Thank you. I do not have anything else I want to raise. I now want to adjourn the meeting for a few minutes and I will come back to you as soon as possible.

(Adjournment)

Sir Edward Lister (Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning): Thank you very much. I am sorry I have kept you all waiting. It is absolutely right that this must be one of the denser developments on the island. I do not think it is the densest, there is somewhere else which is even denser but it is certainly towards the top end. I believe this was put by a couple of people, it is all about the balance. What does this site give us? Does it give good public realm? Does it give a school? Does it give a doctors' surgery? It is providing 25% affordable housing onsite which is contrary to a number of schemes we have seen on the island in recent times. On balance the scheme is contributing a lot to the island. I would add that work is underway on an OAPF on the Isle of Dogs. That OAPF is looking at height and density, and is looking at how that is managed in the future so that work is ongoing. I have no reason to believe that that OAPF would come out with any different conclusion than we have today.

On that balance, and because of the benefits that are gained from this, I am going to give planning permission, subject to a section 106 being entered into and subject to the conditions which are set out in the report all being dealt with. Thank you very much. I would like to thank everybody who has come along to make presentations this afternoon. Thank you.