
Query 1: Planning Application

H O'Brien from Edward Road read out the following written question: "Although planning permission has not yet been applied for please state the maximum density of housing which would be considered in an application for site BHL2 (Industrial land south of Blackhorse Road Station owned by English Partnerships and Circle Anglia). Please state maximum height (in storeys) and maximum housing units i.e. 2 bed, 1 bed, 3 bed (please give analysis)".

Response: Ian Ansell Development Control Manager, Environmental Services

In considering any development of this site, the Council will have regard to a range of considerations set out in the relevant statutory policy documents (The London Plan and the Waltham Forest Unitary Development Plan) and other relevant guidance, including 'Blackhorse Lane: Fulfilling the potential', the Interim Planning Policy Framework produced in September 2006. The Council will seek to balance a range of often competing priorities in its negotiations with the developers in order to secure a development which makes a positive contribution to the Borough, the local environment and the regeneration of the local area in a way that limits the impact on the immediate surroundings while providing benefits for existing as well as new residents in the area.

In terms of scale, The Blackhorse Lane Interim Planning Policy Framework states 'while higher density development may include taller buildings (e.g. in the northern portion of site BHL2), new buildings close to existing two-storey terraced housing (e.g. on Blackhorse Lane and Hawarden Road) should be sensitive to the existing urban fabric'.

In terms of housing mix, the Council is seeking provision of a mix of unit types, tenures and size in accordance with the level of housing need for accommodation in this area and in the Borough in general. Details will be subject to further negotiation as part of the planning application process.

Query 2: Petitions

M Keegan from Pearl Road stated that last summer there was a brief consultation on introducing a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) between Forest Road and Hoe Street. However, local residents gathered around 120 signatures to stop the plan from going ahead. He asked for clarifications on how local petitions fit into the consultation process, including who precisely the petition should be sent to; who would deal with it; and if all the signatories would be contacted and informed of the outcome.

Response: Peter Bailey, Unit Head Corporate Governance

Petitioners can either:

(a) Exercise a right to present a petition to the council at a Full council meeting, in which they must give notice to the Mayor (in practice, contact Derek Hall, 8496 4328) before 12 noon on the day before the council meeting concerned, and can nominate someone to address the council when presenting the petition. The speaker will be permitted to speak

at the council meeting for up to 3 minutes. There will normally be no discussion or response to the petitioners at the meeting, but the petition would be forwarded to the relevant Chief Officer or Cabinet Member to respond. The next full Council meetings are on 11th October and 13th December.

(b) Ask a ward Councillor to present the petition at the council meeting, in which case again there would be no discussion of the petition at the meeting, and it would be referred to the relevant Chief Officer or Cabinet Member for response.

(c) Send the petition directly to the relevant Chief Officer or Cabinet Member. If the petition relates to a specific consultation, it should be sent to the officer named in the consultation documents for comments to be sent to, and should be submitted by the deadline for responses.

Response from Claire Witney, Head of Community Engagement (02.7.07)

Petitions are already an important part of the Community Engagement process as they effectively highlight issues of concern for local people. However they cannot be used in isolation as a reliable indicator of the views of local people. Whilst they highlight areas of concern, well planned and executed community engagement activity needs to be undertaken that considers the complexity of an issue and ensures that a broad range of views are gathered.

Query 3: Local Safety Schemes in Forest Road and Hoe Street

M Keegan asked why the one-way scheme still had not been implemented as it was funded from last years budget from Transport For London and at that time he was told that the scheme had to be completed before the end of the financial year.

Response: Jas Dhanjal Project Development, Environmental Services

The design of the Local Safety Schemes in Forest Road and Hoe Street has been agreed and construction is progressing according to this design. All funding for this scheme has been committed. The majority of the work in Forest Road is substantially complete. The Borough is waiting service connections by EDF Energy to the illuminated signs i.e. for the one-way roads.

We are anticipating all works to implement the one-way system will be completed by the end of August 2007. However, the entry treatments at side road junctions with Hoe Street will not be constructed until after the current gas main replacement works in Hoe Street have been completed. Programmed date for the completion of this gas main works is September 2007.

Query 4: No Entry signs Market / High Street

V Lowther asked why No Entry signs could not be erected on Market /High Street. Drivers from side roads were ignoring the one-way in High Street and proceeding in the wrong direction. He pointed out that even the Police were traveling in the wrong direction.

Response: Alan Campbell Project Development, Street Services

Regulation signs for the one-way system in the High Street E17 will need to be surveyed. A schedule will then be drawn-up with an estimation of the cost of all missing and additional signs. This is likely to be several thousand pounds. Funding will then need to be sought.

Query 5: St James Street Library

P Tan said, in a written question, that Cllr Reardon did not answer the question she posed, which were the following:

- a) The Council closed St James Street Library just to save £70,000 - what is the Council planning to do with the money saved?
- b) Had the Council consider the extensive benefits over the cost of St James Street Library?
- c) Was there an intentional under-investment on St James Street Library over the past two to four years?
- d) Had the Council considered the welfare of schools, children and local residents over this un-consulted closure?

Response: Clive Morton, Head of Cultural Services

- a) The money saved was part of the service contribution to the Council's overall budget reductions
- b) Previous responses to Mr Tan and to the recent Scrutiny Management Committee have clearly stated the reasons for the closure on value for money grounds - the Council considered the benefits of the decision to close St James St as part of its long-term investment strategy in libraries.
- c) No
- d) The welfare of children and residents is paramount in our commitment to deliver an effective and sustainable library service from buildings that are fit for purpose - we will be working very closely with schools in the St James St area to ensure that they receive excellent services from their nearest libraries.

Query 6: Walthamstow Central Library

D Martin remarked that after so much money, Walthamstow Central Library was not fit for purpose – it was not soundproofed and the laminated flooring screeched.

Response: Clive Morton, Head Of Cultural Services

Work has been done to try and improve soundproofing at Walthamstow central Library. The flooring of the reference library on the first floor used to be wooden; it was recognised that this resulted in excessive noise. Part of the refurbishment involved carpeting this area, which has reduced the noise considerably. Due to the acoustics of the room, sound can travel. With respect to the listed nature of the building it was not possible to resolve this as it was deemed inappropriate to install cladding or similar. Furthermore, the arrangement of the study desks has been improved; formerly these were interspersed between the shelves and readers were easily disturbed. The study tables have now been separated from the shelves. We are also working with our users to ensure this is recognised as a 'quiet study area' by installing notices and staff initiatives.

Query 7: Hall Farm Curve

J Harkin said that he was disappointed that the rail connection between the Chingford to Liverpool Street line and the Lea Valley line (the Hall Farm Curve) would not be implemented and wondered what would be the benefits the Borough would receive from the 2012 Olympics.

Response: Cllr Wheatley replied that he was a member of the transport liaison committee and he would be able to report back with an answer at the next meeting.

Query 8: Head of Museum Gallery and Libraries

P Spiro submitted the following written query regarding the appointment of Mrs L Lee as Head of Museum, Gallery and Libraries: “when and where was the post advertised?” “when and where was the formal interview for this post held, and were other candidates considered and interviewed?”; “what were Mrs Lee qualifications and experiences which enabled her to take on the additional responsibilities for the Libraries?”.

The response to this issue will be given at the meeting
