

ST/P7058
9 May 2018

London Borough of Hackney
Planning and Regulatory Services
2 Hillman Street
Hackney
E8 1FB

For the attention of Mr Steve Fraser-Lim

Dear Sirs

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017
Britannia Leisure Centre 40 Hyde Road, Hackney, N1 5JU
Application reference: 2018/0926

REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION UNDER REGULATION 25

On behalf of Anthology Hoxton Press Ltd, we submitted an objection to the Council on 17th April 2018 in respect of the above application scheme. In summary these objections related to:

- The amenity impacts of the application scheme on neighbouring properties and in particular the detrimental impact in terms of loss of daylight, sunlight and excessive overshadowing of later phases of the Colville Estate Regeneration. These impacts are particularly severe on the existing homes in Francis House and will prejudice the delivery of hundreds of new homes for the borough once blocks H and I which remain to be developed on the Colville Estate. The quality of daylight and sunlight received by the proposed secondary school will also be affected by the final phases of the development.
- The over-development of the western site comprising Blocks H1 and H2; namely through:
 - Excessive height and bulk,
 - Excessive density for the location,
 - Lack of amenity space and an inappropriate unit & tenure mix which has led to too much family accommodation being squeezed onto the wrong site
 - Ultimately an unviable scheme which does not maximise affordable housing.
- The failure to justify the below policy level percentage of affordable housing proposed in the application scheme allied with concerns related to the overall viability of the application scheme. In particular the viability of Blocks H1 and H2 and the negative impact this has on the overall viability of the application scheme should be critically and independently assessed.
- The failure to provide validation documentation with the application to allow third parties to fully assess the application, with particular reference to the lack of important appendices for the Viability Statement and drawings for Blocks H1 and H2.
- A request to the Council to seek (through Regulation 25 of the EIA Regulations 2017) further information on:

Architecture Planning Interiors

Old Church Court, Claylands Road, The Oval, London SW8 1NZ

T 020 7556 1500

www.rolfe-judd.co.uk

DD 020 7556 1526

E seant@rolfe-judd.co.uk

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- The detailed drawings for Blocks H1 and H2;
- Additional justification on the appraisal of alternative sites;
- The inclusion within the ES of assessments of the impact of the application scheme on the redeveloped Colville Estate.
- The failure to correctly scope the Environmental Statement.

Following the submission of the objection letter we met with Mr Fraser Lim on 30 April 2018 to discuss Anthology's serious concerns related to the scheme. Prior to the meeting on 24th April 2018 the Council made available on its website the drawings related to Blocks H1 and H2. These drawings were not previously available.

At the meeting we reiterated our significant concerns to Mr Fraser Lim over the impact of the application scheme on the wider environment and highlighted the failure to provide the relevant information.

Following this meeting we wish to submit a further response in relation to Blocks H1 and H2 having received the drawings. We also wish to highlight concerns over transparency of information relating to the viability of the whole scheme and the failure to fully assess alternative scenarios within the ES.

Blocks H1 and H2

The drawings demonstrate the development of the smaller western site would lead to a cramped and over dense development which is not in character with the area and will have impacts in relation to overlooking of the neighbouring Shoreditch Park Primary School playground.

The plans demonstrate that the footprint of the two buildings forms more than 90% of the site area with no useable external public realm or amenity space. The first floor of the proposed buildings oversail 100% of the site area. The Early Years Centre has access to the neighbouring Shoreditch Park Primary School playground but all residential units have no external amenity space other than balconies or terraces.

The upper floorplans demonstrate that within Blocks H1 and H2 there is direct overlooking of the playground on floors 1 to 4 from 5 windows per floor and 2 terraces per floor and on floors 5 to 15 there is direct overlooking from 2 windows per floor and 2 terraces per floor. This means 42 windows and 30 terraces directly overlook a Primary School playground the use of which will be accentuated by the incoming Early Years Centre. It should be noted there is further indirect overlooking from other terraces in Block H1. As these are primary windows to habitable accommodation, they cannot be obscured or obstructed as this would reduce the quality of the proposed accommodation, much of which is for social rent (Block H1).

These concerns reinforce our previously stated objections related to Block H1 and H2 which is that the development is too dense, too tall and the typology of units within these buildings is not appropriate.

Lack of Transparency related to Viability

As noted in our original objection letter, the Viability Statement has four appendices which are continually referred to in the Main report. As confirmed at the meeting the Council will not release these appendices to the public.

This failure to release important data strengthens our previous objection. The failure of the Council to provide these documents means there is a wholesale lack of transparency that is contrary to the

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Council's own local validation list, which requires a full un-redacted version unless there is sensitive commercial information. Given the appendices relate to build costs, the Argus Model and accommodation schedules; we cannot see any justification for the Council preventing the release of these documents.

Paragraph 1.21 of the Mayor's Affordable Housing and Viability SPG states that viability information should be available for public scrutiny and comment like all other elements of a planning application, as should any review or assessment of the appraisal carried out by or for the LPA. As such, boroughs should implement procedures which promote greater transparency where not already in place. Section 3 of the Mayor's Affordable Housing and Viability SPG identifies key appraisal data required to support a viability appraisal; including sales values affordable housing values, fees and build costs. The failure to make available the Argus Model and the Build Costs to the public means that it is impossible to fully analyse the viability case sufficiently.

We cannot see any reasons of public interest why the appendices have not been released and therefore request that the Council releases Appendices 1 to 4 of the Affordable Housing and Viability Statement to ensure proper transparency.

Failure to Assess Alternative Scenarios

At our recent meeting we highlighted that in Chapter 3 of the ES Alternatives and Design Evolution, no alternative options have been assessed which excluded the western site containing Block H1 and H2. We have not as yet received a satisfactory response as to why this site was included within the wider scheme.

As this site is not required for the redevelopment of the Leisure Centre and not required for the new Secondary School, we consider the options appraisal should have clearly identified why this site was included into the application scheme and what the impact would have been had the site not been included in the application scheme. The cost of building on this site, as highlighted in the Viability Statement is considerable given the proposed tunnel infrastructure below and the benefits of including the site and making it the location of the affordable housing as noted in the original objection are strongly questioned.

Actions

As stated at our recent meeting we would request the Council provide a formal response on the points raised within our letter dated 17th April 2018 and additional points raised within this letter.

Yours faithfully

Sean Tickle

For and on behalf of
Rolfe Judd Planning Limited

cc Anthology Hoxton Press Ltd