

**Notes from a presentation by Ballymore 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019 7.00 pm****Venue: Ballymore Showroom/Presentation Suite**

Ref NotJun019

**1. Introduction:** The presentation commenced at 7.12 pm. The presenters were Jennifer Ball (JB) (in-house PR) and Matt Stone (MS) Senior Development Manager of Ballymore and Lloyd Spencer (LS) of AHMM (masterplan architects)

2. LS began, saying that the masterplan for the sites had been prepared in 2011 and outline planning permission granted in 2015. MS will go through the programme for the scheme as part of his presentation. There had been a quiet period but now the scheme was ready to go. Ballymore are reviewing minor elements of the masterplan scheme, but it would be delivered much as was consented in 2015. LS went through the key elements of the scheme and will look at what has changed. He showed the masterplan areas. The first phase would be Blocks B, C and K as a residential-led with retail and a supermarket. There is some heritage retention. There are changes in Block C in that the car park has changed. There are also enhanced connections between the High Street and the River Brent. Other uses may also be brought in, such as a cinema in Phase 2. The aim was to make the environment more lively and enriching for locals. The retail elements had been revisited as the retail market has changed. There is no point in creating retail units that are empty for the long term. They need to be worked in with the supermarket.

3. There is now more detail in the current plans. In Phase 2 the car park is now under development. The connection between the High Street and the waterside is important. The aim with the division of the site into blocks is to bring back life to the 'yards' and to provide new materials that work with the old materials. The new must fit in with the old. They will ensure that the right details are used and that the quality of materials is good. The approach is to bring back vibrancy to in the public realm and in the ground floors of the blocks. The 'green' masterplan was not only at ground level but other areas will be 'greened' as much as possible. The public realm round the buildings will interact as much as possible with the waterways. Activities around the water will be enabled.

4. LS showed the massing images. He stated that these are consented buildings but there could be changes to the detailed design and minor changes to the brickwork. The aim would be to keep the ground floor lively.

5. Car park block: this contains leisure use to the back and residential use to one side. The car park was a planning requirement and is to be in use before any other part of the development is completed. The façade is not consented. The residential block faces Dock Road. There is a 'marker' tower on the High Street.

6. MS continued the presentation. He said that they had received numerous questions and would aim to deal with these in his presentation. The planning consent is for 876 homes, and about 50 retail and commercial units. The planning permission had been granted in 2015. Phase 1, Blocks B, C and K, would be delivered in accordance with that planning permission. Phase 2 had an outline consent and would be delivered in accordance with the parameter plans.

7. As to timing, the infrastructure and site enabling was commencing in June 2019. This included a sewer diversion and the provision of electrical power from a new external source. This will run to the start of Q4 2019. The necessary demolition would

commence at the start of Q4 2019. This would include asbestos removal from some buildings which would be part of a separate strip out and sent to licensed tips in accordance with legislation. The aim was to complete Phase 1 in 2022. This would enable Phase 2 to start in 2023 with completion of that in 2028. After completion, Ballymore would remain the asset manager of the site and their ownership will run into the future. They don't sell on their schemes as a matter of practice.

8. Car parking: 150 spaces are required by LBH and Ballymore have a formal Agreement with them. Ballymore are working in accordance with the parameter plans. There is a temporary planning application and a Reserved Matters application going through LBH at the moment. The work undertaken has been in consultation with LBH. The car park will provide 500 spaces. In the short term up to 2022, 150 spaces will be provided from the start of July this year. 350 will be ready from February/March 2020. In the medium term, from 2022-26, residential and commercial users will use the car parking spaces. In the long term, from 2026, the use of the spaces will be predominantly for the owners of residential units. In the short term, the spaces soon to be provided will be open to use by anyone and will be regulated and payment made through an ANPR system. Payment will be made upon leaving the car park. Electric chargers will be provided for 20% of spaces as required by regulation.

9. Thames path. It will be possible to walk through the whole site along the water's edge including through Plot G. The blocks will be ungated all the way between The Ham and St Lawrence's Church.

10. Archaeology. To date the first stage has been completed on the basis of a desk-top study completed by MOLA and in consultation with Historic England and LBH. The Plot G investigation was done including two trenches and two boreholes. The finds were very limited, and some Saxon pottery was removed by MOLA. Most material was destroyed in the Victorian and post-war developments. The work did confirm the extent of the old flood plain of the River Brent. The next steps are creating boreholes on the south part of Phase 1 which was the river flood plain. Trenches will be started in June 2019 and additional trenches will be formed after the demolition of County Parade. The church and the graveyard are of prime interest as they are unlikely to have been disturbed for centuries. Phase 2 will go through a similar process in 2023. The main interest is in the western end of the overall site and this diminishes going east.

11. Historic buildings: Listed Buildings are all being retained. The Wilson & Kyle gates have been retained and are being protected. The Barlow Rails are in storage and Ballymore will try to incorporate them in the scheme although it has been discovered that they are not uncommon. As to the Bradbury Warehouse plaque, the building is being retained. The St Lawrence fountain is to be repositioned if possible and the designers have been instructed to retain it in a suitable location, although this has not finally been decided yet. The Dock Road cobbles will be retained: if they have to be dug up they will be fully reinstated.

12. Cycleway. This is coming and will require bike stands and other street hardware. This is being allowed for. There may also be some access by water via Workhouse Dock which may also be used as a leisure area. al buses.

13. Retail: There will be 50 units from less than 500 sq. ft to larger units of 5-10,000 sq. ft. Brentford is well connected with bus routes etc. and the south side of the High

Street can be brought back to life. The units on the High Street are now slightly less deep. Deeper units are for fashion outlets but these will now be more orientated towards convenience retailers. There will be smaller units in the lanes aimed at more artisanal users. These need smaller units so entail lower rents. There will be some 'meantime' use such as Rye by the Water, the Duke of London and the Event Space. This will include a bakery and use by the community will be encouraged. As to wider 'meanwhile' use, Ballymore doesn't have a suitable area for temporary shops. The current buildings are unsafe and cannot be used. The retail strategy is still under development but there is confidence in general demand, so Ballymore are generally comfortable although cannot give any specific answers nor on the proposed supermarket although they are in discussions with operators about this. There is some interest but this is at an early stage. There will be an announcement when Ballymore are ready.

14. Post Office: Ballymore has worked with LBH to see if this can be taken over, but there was no interest. The economic incentives are too low. It could be on site. This use often goes with pharmacies as there are similar security issues.

15. Brewery Tap: Ballymore has worked with the owners Fullers and the landlord to improve its external appearance. It's in Fullers' ownership so is their responsibility.

16. Temporary shops: the High Street is being shut down with Morrisons potentially closing as well, but is there any way of providing interim retail on the site? MS said broadly no. Phase 1 occupies the whole of its site. Block D is in LBH's ownership. The remainder of the buildings are unsafe for use. Block A may be brought into Phase 1 as well. LBH don't want the other buildings demolished until Phase 2 is commenced. MS doesn't want to give any false hope about this.

17. Social Housing: This is being provided by LBH in Block D who have their own programme. The mix of Ballymore's housing will be of studios through to 3-bed apartments. Sales will be on the open market. Residents will have amenities in the form of a gym and other leisure facilities. The public space in the scheme will not be gated, so there will be access to all to the waterfront. The public realm will be open to all.

18. Environmental: The scheme will satisfy what is in the planning permission. In the development period, there will be some noise but there will be no impact piling and Ballymore will mitigate noise as best they can. As to dust and noise, all appropriate measures will be taken. The KFC demolition was well controlled. As to rodents this is not an issue. Ballymore has undertaken two demolitions already and this was not a problem.

19. Existing services: A new power supply will be introduced from outside the area. Other services will be able to address the additional demand. Energy centre: a new District Heating system will be provided. There was a question about planters on balconies, and these will be permitted.

20 Engagement with the community. JB said that 800 had attended the exhibition on 1<sup>st</sup> June. There would be events thorough the summer. The workshops in August has been sold out. MS will be around for Saturday drop-ins. This would be every other Saturday, not at a set time but MS would inform the staff on site when he would be present. The Centre will be opened and manned permanently. MS's

contact details and telephone number will be on the website. The website address is [www.thebrentfordproject.com](http://www.thebrentfordproject.com)

Question and Answer time.

21. Comment was made about the car park's appearance and the loss of the vista that has been enjoyed while the site was vacant showed the lost opportunity to open up views. The cladding needed to be made more appealing with the right texture and atmosphere. MS said that as far as the volume of the car park building was concerned, this had been driven by LBH. It is a community car park as well. When it is finished it will not look as hard as it does now. LS said that he wished to allay fears with regard to the design and architecture of the proposed scheme. AHMM had been appointed who were Stirling Prize winners in 2015 and who had won many RIBA and Civic Trust Awards. He had recently finished the refurbishment of the BBC Centre in White City which had been a 7-year project. That is a Grade II Listed building and he had a concern for historic buildings. The design of the car park still had a long way to go. On a temporary basis it is a large lump of concrete, but detail is going into the building and how to make it work correctly. The planning process will be tough on them. In the process details of the brickwork and the panels and their colour will be considered. The CGIs are illustrative only. In the work that they do as a practice they ensure buildings look as good as possible. A question was asked about whether green walls would be incorporated in the car park building. MS said that there wouldn't be a green wall in the car park building. Ballymore will adhere to the materials in the parameter plan. There are green spaces in the scheme and a pocket park at the top of Catherine Wheel Road. People should be assured that such matters will be taken into consideration.

22. Cycleway: MS commented that this was with LBH Highways Department. Cycleway 9 would run from Kew Bridge to the Heidelberg Building. Ballymore had been trying to get TfL into their timetable. CW9 will be built in 2021 but the remainder is still in design stage. Ballymore will go ahead with their scheme. They have pushed LBH to push TfL to progress with their scheme. Ballymore is making a £1.5m contribution to highways. Some of this will no doubt be for the cycleway.

23. There was a question about the height of the roof of the car park building. The height of the top deck was consented but the towers were now 10 ft higher and the screening was also 10 ft higher than the consented level, so that the tower on the north-east corner would have a considerable visual impact. LS said that he didn't want to get into the minutiae, but it is all within the parameter scheme. This gave an allowance for lift overruns etc. to provide for fire fighting access. The lifts at either end provide this access to the top deck. So all is within the parameter plan. If they can bring certain elements lower, they will but there are certain restrictions. They have done their best to make the building work. MS said that an application for detailed consent would go to the August planning committee. A green wall on the car park building won't work. LS said that there are fire risks associated with the building and 50% of the façade has to be free area. There would be measures to soften the lighting within the building to make it inviting but safe. The building would not be a torch keeping people awake at night.

24. Copies of the slide show were requested. MS said that they would consider this but these were not finished palettes as yet and he didn't want to issue incomplete

slides as he didn't want to mislead. He would put it on the website so that it could be changed as the design evolved.

25. There was a comment that trade on the north side of the High Street had suffered since Ballymore's hoardings had gone up. MS said that the hoardings would remain but they would not stay as black but will be dressed. If the traders on the north side of the High Street are concerned they should come and see Ballymore.

26. Concerns were also expressed about car parking and if LBH might change the ½ hour free car parking. MS said LBH should be approached on that subject. The Ballymore scheme should improve footfall when constructed. There would be 150 spaces for public use in July this year. The other car park had to close because of the land deal and it also is the entry into the site. These spaces will not be for the contractors but would be for all to use.

27. MS said that all buildings on the site were being removed. The NatWest façade was the concern of LBH, but he understood that all buildings in Block D were to be demolished and the slide showing those buildings being retained would be amended. The large overhanging warehouse would be demolished and the scheme delivered as in the parameter plan.

28. MS said that the possible cinema provision was separate from Watermans. Ballymore had spoken to them. Watermans are looking at a variety of relocation possibilities, such as the Police Station site or elsewhere. Ballymore are talking to cinema operators in respect of the Phase 2 leisure area.

29. MS said that Ballymore was aware of plans for the public realm beyond the site boundary line. LS said that Ballymore would be making a cost contribution to the public realm. How LBH spends this is their decision and Ballymore doesn't have a say on that. MS said that these are s106 payments made as obligations. These had to be spent within the general environment of Brentford but there were not highly prescriptive restrictions for how they were spent. The s106 Agreements are in the public domain and can be seen by anyone. To make this easier, Ballymore will put a link to the documents on their website.

30. A question was asked about recycling facilities for the new flats. MS said that they will ensure that there is a waste disposal regime that accords with LBH's requirements. They will be bound by regulations that LBH imposes. LS said that the scheme will use LBH's usual means to export waste. They always provide recycling facilities in their schemes but he will double-check in this case.

31. There was a question about the Post Office. MS said that most supermarkets do not take on a PO and Ballymore won't impose a condition requiring this on any operator, as this could risk not having a supermarket at all.

32. MS said that the changes to the depths of the retail units would be suitable for the retailers in Brentford and would not affect the creation of jobs. Ballymore is committed to the retail element of the scheme and this would be successfully achieved in the new evolution of the design. They had done their demographic work, which showed a diverse local population, which the retail proposed will support. There is no detail yet as to where specific retailers will go and that also will evolve over time, and the general retail market will change over time as well. The High Street, yards and waterside will provide a range of suitable units. They can still

bring retail to Brentford for the benefit of the scheme and the town. In MS's personal view, the High Street will be a service offer and needs something to raise its profile. The waterside environment will be for restaurant use, a zone to enjoy looking over the water. The lanes were hard to put a typology on, but would be smaller units led by the Brentford community, suitable for entrepreneurial use, or craft or experience users.

33. MS said that Ballymore does take a holistic view. They do not wish their scheme to be visually jarring. L&Q had only recently taken over the Morrisons site. Ballymore has not spoken to them as yet but they do know them. There will be a conversation with them at director level, although L&Q might not wish to talk. The onus is really on LBH to make sure that the schemes do not jar with each other.

34. MS said that with regard to the waterfronts, they had spoken to the Canal and Rivers Trust, PLA and Environment Agency. This was more really a technical conversation. The authorities are mainly concerned about the condition of the river walls and its life expectancy. If that is below a certain level, Ballymore will have to bring it up to standard and will have to ensure that it is satisfactory for the development. Beyond that, these authorities are not interested in what happens on the estate

35. LS said that, with regard to wildlife, this would be considered in the planning conditions and compliance with them. There are silt issues to do with the river walls. They want to bring the water back into the picture and to create links between the High Street and the water. Ballymore had looked at the historic plans of the yards and lanes and aimed to recreate these as far as possible. This would create avenues, views and vistas. The car park block may take away in some senses but also gives a lot back – it is more positive than negative. He cannot give any promises but the quality of finishes can be seen in the marketing suite. There will be a careful study of retail and there is an intention to bring back makers and crafts back into the retail realm. The 'lanes' will be a beautiful thing and will blend with the area.

36. MS said that the leisure facilities were for residents only and would not be public, but through the retail agents they were looking at a commercial gym which could be a public facility. There probably wouldn't be a public pool as it was doubtful that there would be sufficient demand.

37. JB said that Ballymore will look at re-presenting the hoardings to reflect the community. MS said that they would pick on dressing the hoardings. St Lawrence's Church was also becoming part of Phase 1. It was going to be a gym but that had been questioned and now Ballymore were considering some kind of marketing of food and beverage for community use. This would not be a community club. The idea was in its early stages and they would need to find an operator to undertake this. If so, then the people of Brentford would be able to use it. The church would not sit empty, insofar as far as Ballymore were able to find an appropriate user. The Church is part of the overall project.

38. As to the overall context, MS said that they would discuss with LBH the relation with the north side of the High Street and the wider area. Ballymore is happy to make a commitment to join up with other schemes and the remainder of Brentford as far as reasonably possible and within the context of executing the parameter scheme.

39. The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.