

Minutes: Meeting August 14 2017**DRAFT**

Ref MinAug017

1. Present: Denis Browne, Richard Linnell, David Farmery, Derek Collett, Kath Richardson, Chris Dakers, John Todd, Hugh Mortimer, Vitas Puig, Marie Robouhans, Myra Savin, Theo Dennison, Mel Collins, Guy Lambert, Mark Kehoe

2. Apologies: Stephen Browne, John Burges, Chris Richards, Martin Case

3. Minutes of Last Meeting: Approved as correct record (see MinJul017) save that Mel Collins should be added to the list of apologies.

4. Matters arising (numbering from July minutes):

Item 10 (The Green School for Boys planning application): BCC sent comments on this item which were echoed by the Isleworth Society. The proposal has now gone to pre-application.

5. Presentation from London & Quadrant (L&Q):

Ed Tibbetts and Emma Osborne attended from London & Quadrant to present initial ideas for the Citroen site, the presentation being tabled. ET said that they had conducted a first consultation in July. L&Q is a not-for-profit Housing Association that has been running for 50 years and already provides 500 homes in the LB Hounslow area. L&Q would remain involved in managing the scheme on a permanent basis. The L&Q Foundation also invests in projects in the local community where it develops. It has already acquired Wheatstone House (the former telephone exchange), which has now been demolished and is being redeveloped as a separate scheme. MR confirmed that the agreement was that the name Wheatstone House was to be retained to recall the predecessor building, and the foundation stone kept as a mark of the previous building. DF said that it was a pity that the previous building had been demolished as it was of high quality and could easily have been reused for the developer's purpose.

The petrol filling station has not been acquired as it remains an extremely profitable enterprise and would not be economic to redevelop.

L&Q did consider with LBH the redevelopment of the Fountains Leisure Centre in a combined scheme, but with increased costs this had not proved acceptable to L&Q, who had withdrawn from discussions with LBH and were developing the Citroen site in isolation. The proposal is for c. 430 homes, of which up to 40% would be Affordable. The main part of the scheme would be for sale, probably on 150-year leases. There would be 70 car parking spaces, so parking for approximately 16% of the units. Cycle storage would also be provided. The mix of apartments would be for 1, 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings, but the exact mix was not yet determined. There would be Public Open Space in accordance with the requirements of LBH, possibly with a temporary local market.

The Affordable element could include shared equity, which is very popular but the proportion of this was not decided yet.

L&Q are seeking responses and the presentation included contact information and the consultation website details. The 'family fun day' that comprised the initial consultation was attended by 77 people only with a small number from Chiswick owing to a conflict with another event. KR suggested that L&Q need to consider the venue carefully for the September meeting to avoid a similar occurrence.

L&Q said that they were not able to comment on the form of the scheme, but expected this to be consistent with the Capital Interchange scheme and the height could be up to 20 storeys in some blocks with a variety of heights over the scheme. DB commented that the opportunity to achieve a masterplan for the immediate area seems to have been lost. L&Q said that they had been willing to participate in this but were now going ahead independently of any wider plan or consultation. DB asked if consideration had been given to air quality and L&Q are looking at this, and mechanical ventilation was being considered. DB also commented that there are also now wider issues such as air quality and traffic that are relevant to the site, particularly if the Mayor of London increases the 'Toxic Charge' area out to the North and South Circulars as this would exacerbate congestion and pollution on those roads.

There had been an indication that part of the site might provide a location for a temporary leisure centre to allow the Fountains Centre to be redeveloped, but L&Q said that this would not now be possible.

JT questioned the shortfall in car parking provision but this was stated to be dealt with in the marketing of the units and the management of expectations through that. He also questioned the likely level of ground rents and escalation of them over time, but L&Q said this was not yet known. As to the Affordable units, L&Q stated that they would be within the guidelines of LBH at 80% of market rent for the postcode, and shared equity would be in accordance with the GLA standard with a salary cap at £90,000 pa.

MS asked how the BCC could comment on the scheme with no indication of the size of blocks and layout? L&Q stated that this was an initial exercise only and that there would be a plan by September.

MR expressed concerns at the concentration of high rise blocks (over 10 storeys) in this area in a Borough that was described as a low-rise area.

MC said that with these proposed taller buildings, full account needed to be taken of the visual impact from the M4 with its long sweep into the area. There were also the problems of tall blocks in this location creating wind tunnels and of shadowing between the towers affecting amenity for occupiers and the public. The density of the developed area was likely to lead to architecture of little merit and limited or no landscaping around the blocks.

KR asked why the idea of a public square had been put forward if this led to an increase in height of the towers to achieve the number of units L&Q wished to achieve, rather than lower buildings without the square? L&Q said that the proposal for a public square had been led by LBH's requirement for PoS.

MK asked if the Affordable Housing might become non-viable in view of the surplus of 1- and 2-bed flats in the area, particularly from the new schemes? L&Q said that this would be considered. DB said that the need was for family housing of which there is not a surplus.

RL asked again about provision to assist in the redevelopment of the Fountains Centre. TD confirmed that any idea of a joint scheme was now off and the Fountains would have to be redeveloped in isolation or not at all. GL said that he had thought that assistance would be given but TD confirmed that there was no such understanding now with L&Q.

L&Q said that they had wished to make the presentation to establish contact with BCC and to obtain initial responses. They said that the meeting had been helpful to

them in understanding local concerns. They said that responses would be taken into account in preparing the scheme.

6. Correspondence with Cllr Curran:

DB on behalf of BCC, West Chiswick and Gunnersbury Society and Air Quality Brentford had sent a letter on behalf of BCC to the Leader of LBH and the reply from him had been circulated. MS raised the question of consultation about air quality. TD said that this had been due to start today, but had been brought to the Consultation Advisory Panel at LBH. A number of points had been put to the Consultation Manager who is considering these with a view to the consultation now beginning on 29th August. An Air Quality Action Plan will then be issued and consultees will be invited to comment on proposed measures.

DB mentioned the Highways England team at the Department of Transport who were considering 'poly tunnels' over roads, in which the lining of the tunnel can 'digest' the pollution and the tunnel prevents pollution affecting the wider area. There have been experiments with this in Holland. This is not part of the Action Plan. It was agreed to defer any further discussion of this until the next meeting. The Action Plan would be referred to Martin Case, Secretary of Air Quality Brentford, and an initial response would be made by e-mail.

7. Waterman's site:

The scheme for the current Waterman's site has now been designed so that the height line from Goat Wharf and Albany House is extended across the scheme at the same height of approximately nine storeys. This is unacceptable. It is also unacceptable to Kew Gardens, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, with regard to Kew Palace, a Grade I Listed Building, within the Gardens. For this reason, Heritage England may request a call-in by the Secretary of State. Also, the scale and density of the proposed blocks is not acceptable in respect of Brentford High Street. The blocks are arranged in pairs so that there are only two gaps along the whole of the High Street frontage, substantially reducing any view of the river from the High Street in this section.

BCC has stated that the arts centre should remain in this location. It was noted that the Arts Centre proposed at Half Acre would be little bigger than the present Waterman's and that no details of its design are included in this application. GL stated that his personal view was that the arts centre should be located in the town centre to benefit from local shops and other activity and this was noted, but BCC's agreed view remains.

There are serious reservations about the scheme now proposed. The developer had said that it would revisit the proposal in the light of previous comments from BCC but the revised proposal has made the problems worse. DB stated that the application had now been lodged and there are three weeks to respond. MK said that he was concerned that the scheme was in effect 'walling off' Brentford from the river and Kew Gardens which was an important source of fresh and clean air for the whole area, which suffered significantly from pollution from the main roads crossing it. It was agreed that the previous comments that were made about the draft scheme should be restated with any additional new points or nuances added from the discussion at the meeting.

8. St Paul's Rec. Conservation Area:

Martin Case had sent a letter requesting the consideration of the extension of the Conservation Area to include the Albany Road and Braemar Road areas up to Ealing Road, to Sophia Laird, the Assistant Conservation Officer at LBH. She said that the extension was not a good idea, but had given no reasons for her comment. The matter might go out to consultation in October. The previous Officer had been supportive. GL asked that the proposals and background correspondence be sent to him for his review.

9. The Butts:

Resurfacing has now commenced. It was proposed that a letter of thanks be sent to Cllr Curran and the Ward Members, but also to request their action on the Goddards site. Although this was now fenced there was more to do to make this visually acceptable.

10. AoB:

a. Brentford Stadium scheme. The Lionel Road Liaison Group had convened a meeting at short notice on 23rd August at the Steam Museum, with a Pre-App meeting of the Planning Committee on 24th August to ratify some changes. The main change was to reduce the new stadium capacity from 20,000 to 17,500 seats. This was stated to be for economic reasons but it may be to provide flexibility for an increase in capacity in future. The existing stadium seats 12,000 people and it would seem uneconomic for the new development and all its related enabling works to provide so small an increase in capacity. KR said that she would attend the Liaison Group meeting and would seek to discover the rationale behind the changes. MC confirmed that the Pre-App meeting on 24th August would not make any decisions but responses to questions would be important.

b. Chiswick Curve. MR said that the applicant had formally appealed on 8th August. BCC has until 19th September to make any observations. There will be a Public Inquiry from 17th October. LBH and Historic England will be represented at it by Counsel. It was decided that BCC would not appear under Rule 6 owing to the possible risk of suit for costs by the appellant in the event that the appeal succeeds, although it seemed unlikely that an Amenity Society would be pursued for costs. MC said that he would appear as a witness, but not under Rule 6, and DB encouraged members of the Planning Committee to appear also as this gives weight to the refusal decision.

c. Subscriptions. DC asked that all members who had not paid their subscriptions should do so as soon as possible.

d. Ballymore CPO. There was a discussion about whether or not BCC should seek to influence the CPO or appear at the Public Inquiry commencing on 3rd October. RL commented that those who would be heard formally would be landowners subject to the CPO. As to timing of implementation, if the Inquiry decision was made within, say, six months, at the latest, then a Vesting Order conveying the land to LBH as Local Authority and proponent of the CPO could be made within a few months of the decision, so a scheme could probably proceed within about a year. After the Vesting Order confirmation, LBH would then convey the land to the developer. Compensation would be paid to the landowners and this would be assessed by the Valuation Office. This compensation process can take a long time, but takes place

as a separate exercise and does not delay the Vesting Order and the conveyance of the land to the developer. What is unusual in this case is that Block D does not have planning permission, as a decision on the application is unlikely until early December, and the attitude of the Inquiry to being presented with a CPO for an unconsented scheme is more uncertain. BCC previously offered support for the Block D scheme provided that the blocks in it are scaled down by a storey, and with other changes (see July meeting minutes) and we will know soon if these changes have been made in the application. If they have, the scheme will have BCC's support and there will be no need to participate in the CPO hearing other than to observe. If the changes have not been made, there may be a case for BCC to seek to appear at the CPO Inquiry, and this could be discussed at the next meeting if the form of the scheme put forward in the planning application for Block D is known by then.

e. Take Your Pick. MS commented that Take Your Pick's licence is not being renewed, and it is being replaced by a betting shop. The owners do not want to continue anyway and there is no action for BCC to take.

f. Sarah Trimmer House. GL said that steel structures have been erected at the property. Kit Law of LBH is looking into the situation with a view to enforcement action to ensure the removal of the structures.

g. Mobile masts at Royal Horseguards PH. RL asked is there was an update on this from June meeting. GL said that there had been some discussion as to whether or not this was Permitted Development. LBH had determined that it was not but that there is a grey area with regard to these masts. A compromise solution was being negotiated with the owner.

10. The meeting closed at 9.16 pm

11. Dates of Next Meetings: September 11 and October 9.