

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING PANEL  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 10 JUNE 2015**

**COUNCILLORS**

**PRESENT**

Toby Simon, Dogan Delman, Jansev Jemal and George Savva MBE

**OFFICERS:**

Andy Higham (Head of Development Management), Sharon Davidson (Planning Decisions Manager), Andrew Ryley (Senior Planning Officer), Ned Johnson (Environment and Street Scene), David B Taylor (Head of Traffic and Transportation), Denny Adam (Interim Project Manager) and Andrew Wilson (Development & Estate Renewal) Jane Creer (Secretary) and Metin Halil (Secretary)

**Also Attending:**

Applicant / Agent representatives:  
Leigh Bullimore – Pollard Thomas Edwards (Architects)  
Robert Wilkinson – Countryside Properties  
Rosie Baker – Terence O'Rourke (Planning)  
Robert Parker – Peter Brett Associates (Highways)

Ponders End Ward Councillors: Cllr Doug Taylor, Cllr Ayfer Orhan, Cllr Donald McGowan

Approximately 30 members of the public / interested parties

**1**

**OPENING**

1. Councillor Simon as Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Panel Members, the Council officers and the applicant's representatives introduced themselves.
2. A mix-up had led to Councillor Chamberlain's name being included on the panel, but he had never been able to attend this meeting.
3. The purpose of the meeting was an opportunity for councillors to listen and understand issues about the application and to enable members of the public to contribute to the planning process.

**2**

**OFFICERS' SUMMARY OF THE PLANNING ISSUES**

1. Sharon Davidson, Planning Decisions Manager, confirmed that the purpose of this meeting was not to make a decision on the applications, but for interested parties to ask questions and give their opinions on the proposals.

## PLANNING PANEL - 10.6.2015

2. There were two applications for consideration. One was an outline application for the totality of the estate and the additional sites. This sought permission for the principle of the development, the demolition of existing buildings, and the erection of the residential-led scheme including shops, café, gym, outside spaces and community facilities. The second was a detailed application for Phase 1A of the scheme which provided for the demolition of Kestrel House and the construction of the first 228 residential units, restaurant/café, gym, and open space and play facilities, and parking, highway and ancillary works. The application included the construction of a 16-storey building adjacent to Ponders End station and the erection of buildings ranging from 5 to 7 storeys fronting Alma Road.
3. The key planning issues were likely to be:
  - The quantity, design, scale and height of the proposed development.
  - The mix of residential accommodation proposed and the level of affordable housing.
  - The level of parking proposed.
  - The level of retail and community facilities proposed.
  - The proposed phasing of the development and the timescales for the provision of the retail, open space and community facilities.
  - The impact of demolition and construction works on existing and adjoining residents, and on existing parking and access arrangements.

### 3

#### **PRESENTATION BY THE APPLICANT/AGENT**

1. Leigh Bullimore (Pollard Thomas Edwards, Architects) led the presentation of the proposals, illustrated with slides.
2. The applicant was Countryside Properties. Their core business was urban renewal and developing large quantities of housing. They had been working in partnership with Enfield Council and with Newlon Housing who would be the shared provider of social housing.
3. Alma Estate was a typical estate of its era with problems including housing in poor condition, crime and anti-social behaviour, and poor quality public space at ground floor level.
4. The Council had made the decision to regenerate the estate, following consultation, in 2012. The regeneration vision was to totally transform the estate by providing streets and open spaces that connected together and an area that people would enjoy, with mixed homes and community and complementary facilities.
5. This regeneration was part of a wider regeneration of Ponders End. Other schemes in the area included the Electric Quarter, Oasis Academy, improvements to the High Street, and Cycle Enfield.
6. Planning application 15/02039/OUT was the outline for the entire estate, covering the layout, the quantum of development and the height.

## PLANNING PANEL - 10.6.2015

Application 15/02040/FUL was the detailed application for Phase 1A. If successful, further applications would come forward. Presenting these two applications at the same time would speed up the regeneration process.

7. Phase 1A should be completed in Winter 2017, with the entire regeneration completed by 2026. The timescale was partly to do with the regeneration occurring while people were also living there.
8. The masterplan design had evolved via an extensive programme of engagement with residents which included workshop evenings, coach trips and estate walks. This had been considered a successful and enjoyable process and had impacted greatly on the design.
9. There had also been extensive consultations with Enfield Council Planners and other departments including Transport. There had been consultation with the Greater London Authority, with positive feedback, and there had been a series of 'Secure by Design' meetings with the Police, and consultation with Ponders End Youth Centre, Welcome Point Centre and the Ponders End Partnership.
10. At the bid stage, the satellite sites had been incorporated into the plan, including provision of new buildings for Ponders End Youth Centre and Welcome Point Centre.
11. The key principles of the masterplan were:
  - a) Total transformation of the estate.
  - b) Redistribution of the density of the population and a more efficient street network.
  - c) Better distribution of open space, to give everyone access to green space.
  - d) Connection of the streets back together in a more conventional way.
  - e) Reinvention of South Street as a hub for the local neighbourhood, as a main road, with maximum frontage.
  - f) New arrival at Ponders End and new Station Square.
  - g) A range of different types of buildings in different tenures, leading to more sustainable communities.
  - h) Strengthening of connections in the wider area.
12. The mix of residential accommodation would balance regeneration objectives and planning policies. Of the 993 homes, 200 would be Council homes, 199 intermediate and 594 market sale homes. This would lead to a more mixed community as well as paying for the regeneration. There would be a distribution of tenures throughout the scheme and the aim was to make it impossible to tell the difference.
13. Other schemes in the area, including Dujardin Mews, would also be used to help with decanting of residents of Alma Estate.
14. There would be reprovision of the existing shopping parade, and new medical centre, restaurant/café and youth and community centre.

## PLANNING PANEL - 10.6.2015

15. The development would be completed in phases and sub-phases. As each new phase was built that would enable people to be decanted.
16. The development would offer high sustainability and energy efficiency. An assessment accompanied the planning application. A district heating system was proposed and in the future that would connect with the Lea Valley Heat Network.
17. There would be landscape design and a comprehensive strategy with different open spaces and play spaces and new public space.
18. Work with Peter Brett Associates consultants had developed the transport strategy. A 0.6 parking ratio was proposed: this was similar to the existing situation. All parking would be at surface level. Vehicle movements would connect in traditional streets. There was a strategy for traffic calming and one-way streets, and prevention of use of roads as rat runs.
19. Computer-generated images were shown of the proposals. The area would read as one neighbourhood, but the parts would have their own character and context. South Street would be the major route, there would be a new arrival at Station Square, and Alma Road would change quite radically with new buildings facing the road. Napier Road could connect back to Scotland Green Road. There would be a new community hub. The idea of communal gardens had been liked by residents.
20. The Phase 1 application covered the area where Kestrel House and two maisonette blocks now stood. This was the most dense part of the scheme. By building more homes in the first phase, this would help with moving people out more quickly. 228 housing units were proposed: 97 social rent, 35 shared ownership, and 96 private sale. There was more information on the appearance in the planning application documents, but Alma Road would have contemporary mansion blocks while the landmark building would be sculptural and designed to be viewed from different angles and to give a feeling of safety particularly at night. The gym was also in that location and would attract users in the early morning and in the evening and would be overlooked by the surrounding residences.
21. Supporting planning documents identified social, economic and environmental benefits of the scheme.

## 4

### QUESTIONS BY PANEL MEMBERS

NOTED the following questions and observations from Members of the Panel:

1. Councillor Simon asked whether there would be children's play space and equipment within the communal garden areas. It was advised that the proposal was for informal play in the communal gardens close to people's

## PLANNING PANEL - 10.6.2015

homes eg. boulders. The wider play strategy included play spaces for different age groups open to the whole community.

2. Councillor Delman noted that the current number of units on the estate was 746 and asked how many were social housing. It was advised that there were currently 556 social rented houses on the estate.
3. In response to Councillor Simon's further query it was confirmed that everybody currently housed in a social rent property would be offered similar accommodation here or off site.
4. In response to Councillor Delman's queries about involvement of stakeholders and residents, the consultation work was highlighted and that the detailed design layouts of apartments had been developed in consultation with the residents and influenced by feedback received. Each individual application would go through a similar process.
5. Councillor Savva wished to record credit to the applicants and tenants for working well together and creation of a good partnership with the community, and he was pleased to see the tenants' support for the proposals. He also congratulated officers, and ward councillors, and Councillor Ahmet Oykenar (Cabinet Member for Housing and Housing Regeneration) for their involvement and hard work. He also supported S106 provision for healthy living facilities and a clinic.
6. Councillor Simon asked whether the application sought anything which deviated from agreed planning policies. Sharon Davidson, Planning Decisions Manager, highlighted that a key aspect was the overall mix of accommodation. The number of two-bedroom units proposed would be assessed. The distancing between blocks was slightly less than DMD standards, but window displacement was being looked at in mitigation. The applicants confirmed that the Council homes mix was driven by the Council's surveys. In respect of intermediate and private homes, Countryside Properties had significant experience selling flats and houses in Enfield, and strong market research showed demand for one and two bedroom apartments compared to three beds.
7. Councillor Simon asked what the Section 106 contributions were likely to cover, including non financial elements. It was advised that the benefits from a scheme of this scale would be significant, including affordable housing, traffic and highway improvements on and off site, contributions to education, open space and the public realm, securing the management company and securing the energy centre. Countryside Properties also wanted to introduce an employment and skills programme.

## **5 QUESTIONS BY WARD COUNCILLORS**

NOTED the following questions and observations from Ward Councillors:

## PLANNING PANEL - 10.6.2015

1. Councillor Orhan stressed the importance of outdoor play space for young children for healthy living, and recommended that private space could easily lend itself for this. Parks and green gyms were also important and could be a stepping stone to local residents wanting to use the proposed gym as well. She emphasised local provision for local people.
2. Councillor Orhan asked about provision of disabled parking bays. It was confirmed there would be 60 disabled parking bays, which was around 10% of the total. There would also be five allocated car club spaces. Exact detail of the provision had not yet been worked out, but there would be some lifetime homes and there would be disabled parking related to those uses, and there would be disabled parking for visitors to the site as well as residents.

## 6

### OPEN SESSION - QUESTIONS AND VIEWS FROM THE FLOOR

NOTED the following questions and observations from attendees:

1. A resident and Alma Residents' Association member expressed that there had been very good consultation by Countryside Properties. There had been ten workshops and residents had influenced the proposed buildings and styles. Some accommodation would be open plan, some with an open kitchen, etc. Everyone wanted an award-winning, well-built scheme. If the second stage progressed as the first had done it would be fantastic.

In response to his queries regarding number of Council tenants, it was confirmed that there were currently 200 and that there was an agreement in place with the Council that could allow the number of Council homes to go up if required, but the number was based on the assessed need based on two detailed surveys of residents.

2. Residents were pleased and wanted the scheme to be progressed now.
3. With regard to height of developments, residents expressed they would like to see greater height down Alma Road and asked for consideration of extra storeys and more social housing. Planning officers confirmed that the scheme was of a different density at the moment and the highest density was proposed close to the station – this was a good approach in terms of policy, including the London Plan. There was also the need to consider the impact on existing dwellings in Alma Road. Councillor Simon suggested that it may be possible to give further consideration in phases 2 and 3 or at reserved matters stage. He also raised that density standards may be affected if there were four rather than two trains per hour serving the station. The applicants advised that the density of 388 habitable rooms per hectare was within the appropriate range.
4. In response to a further query, it was confirmed that at its highest point, the development near the station would be 16 storeys, stepping down to 13 storeys. In contrast, the existing tower blocks were 23 storeys. It was

## PLANNING PANEL - 10.6.2015

also confirmed that the block would have two lifts, and that all flats would have a private amenity space with every home having a balcony, terrace or front garden.

5. An attendee welcomed the green spaces proposed, but asked whether the Council would undertake responsibility for their maintenance. It was advised that there would be a management company responsible for the management of the estate. (Residents would be responsible for private garden areas.) Alma Residents' Association was currently looking at putting together a resident-led management association. The funding would come from service charges.
6. Concerns were raised that most parking here was from outsiders using the station and asked if there were plans to deal with commuters parking. Robert Parker, transport consultant, advised that surveys had been carried out throughout the day and it had been found there tended to be a reduction in demand for parking on the estate in the day time. Quite a few people used cars to drop off children and use the station, but during the working day many people left the site. The peak demand for parking was overnight. Parking surveys had been done at 1:30am when the highest amount of parking was found, and that was what the 0.6 parking ratio was based on. It was confirmed that surveys took dispersal and the number of occupied units into account. Parking issues may need to be further considered if capacity improvements were made to the rail line. Council officers confirmed that the only way of getting a higher frequency train service would be by providing additional track. Delivery was some way off. Further in the future, Cross Rail may also have an effect.
7. An attendee asked what would happen to residents when buildings came down. It was confirmed that the phasing was designed to cope with this. Current residents had left Kestrel House and moved largely off the estate or to empty homes, and once the block was fully emptied, work would be allowed to start on Phase 1, which would in turn provide homes for those affected by Phase 2 and the development would move through the estate in that way.

## 7

### **CLOSE OF MEETING**

1. The Chair thanked everyone for attending and contributing to the meeting.
2. The public consultation period was due to expire on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June, and any additional comments should please be submitted to Development Control by that date.
3. Notes taken at this meeting would be appended to the Planning Officers' reports to be considered by the Planning Committee when the applications were presented for decision at a future meeting. The likely date when the applications would be considered by the Planning Committee was Tuesday 1 September 2015.

## PLANNING PANEL - 10.6.2015

4. A full report for each application would be prepared by Planning Officers for Planning Committee. This would form part of the agenda for the meeting and would be published on the Council's website at least a week before the meeting.
5. There was a deputation procedure whereby people could request to speak at the Planning Committee meeting: details were available on the Council website [www.enfield.gov.uk](http://www.enfield.gov.uk) or via the Planning Committee Secretary 020 8379 4093 / 4091 [jane.creer@enfield.gov.uk](mailto:jane.creer@enfield.gov.uk) or [metin.halil@enfield.gov.uk](mailto:metin.halil@enfield.gov.uk) and residents could also ask ward councillors to speak on their behalf.