



Haverling

LONDON BOROUGH

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE AGENDA

7.00 pm	Thursday 23 January 2025	Council Chamber, Town Hall, Main Road, Romford RM1 3BD
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Members 6 Quorum 3

COUNCILLORS:

**Conservative Group
(2)**

Ray Best
Timothy Ryan

**Haverling Residents' Group
(3)**

Reg Whitney (Chairman)
Bryan Vincent (Vice-Chair)
John Crowder

**Labour Group
(1)**

Jane Keane

For information about the meeting please contact:

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**To register to speak at the meeting please call 01708 433100
Before Tuesday 21 January 2025.**

Please would all Members and officers attending ensure they sit in their allocated seats as this will enable correct identification of participants on the meeting webcast.

Under the Committee Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution the Chairman of the meeting may exercise the powers conferred upon the Mayor in relation to the conduct of full Council meetings. As such, should any member of the public interrupt proceedings, the Chairman will warn the person concerned. If they continue to interrupt, the Chairman will order their removal from the meeting room and may adjourn the meeting while this takes place.

Excessive noise and talking should also be kept to a minimum whilst the meeting is in progress in order that the scheduled business may proceed as planned.

Protocol for members of the public wishing to report on meetings of the London Borough of Havering

Members of the public are entitled to report on meetings of Council, Committees and Cabinet, except in circumstances where the public have been excluded as permitted by law.

Reporting means:-

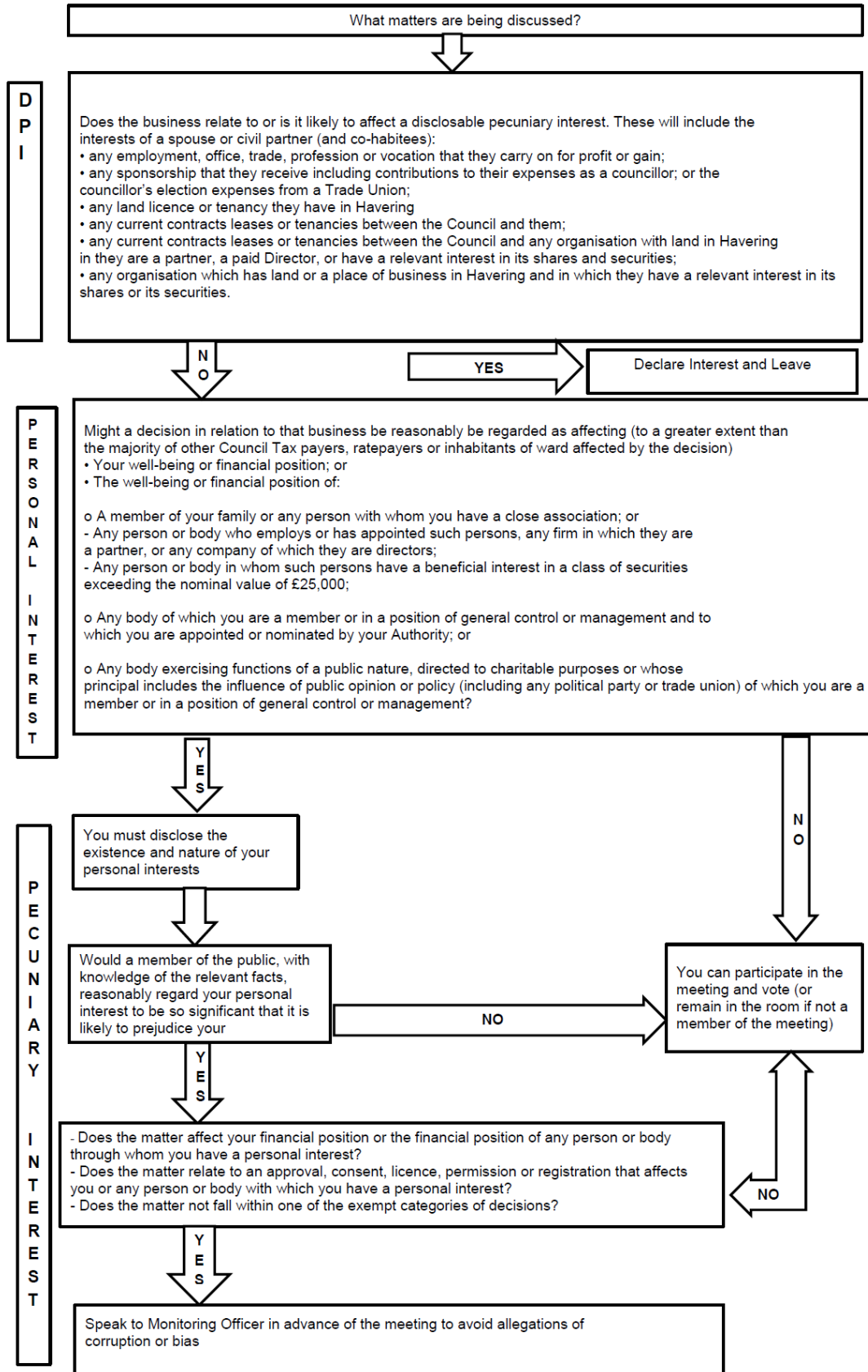
- filming, photographing or making an audio recording of the proceedings of the meeting;
- using any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later; or
- reporting or providing commentary on proceedings at a meeting, orally or in writing, so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later if the person is not present.

Anyone present at a meeting as it takes place is not permitted to carry out an oral commentary or report. This is to prevent the business of the meeting being disrupted.

Anyone attending a meeting is asked to advise Democratic Services staff on 01708 433076 that they wish to report on the meeting and how they wish to do so. This is to enable employees to guide anyone choosing to report on proceedings to an appropriate place from which to be able to report effectively.

Members of the public are asked to remain seated throughout the meeting as standing up and walking around could distract from the business in hand.

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



AGENDA ITEMS

1 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman will make his announcements.

Applications for Decision

I would like to remind members of the public that Councillors have to make decisions on planning applications strictly in accordance with planning principles.

I would also like to remind members of the public that decisions may not always be popular, but they should respect the need for Councillors to take decisions that will stand up to external scrutiny or accountability.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

(if any) - receive.

3 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members are invited to disclose any interest in any of the items on the agenda at this point in the meeting.

Members may still disclose any interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

4 MINUTES (Pages 7 - 8)

To approve as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5 December 2024 and to authorise the Chair to sign them.

5 DEVELOPMENT PRESENTATIONS (Pages 9 - 10)

Report attached.

6 W0198.23 - ANGEL WAY CAR PARK, ANGEL WAY, ROMFORD (Pages 11 - 20)

Report attached.

7 W0221.22 - COMO STREET CAR PARK, COMO STREET, ROMFORD (Pages 21 - 30)

Report attached.

**Zena Smith
Head of Committee and Election
Services**

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 4

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Main Road, Romford RM1 3BD
5 December 2024 (7.00 - 7.40 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS **6**

Conservative Group Ray Best

**Havering Residents’
Group** Reg Whitney (Chairman), John Crowder and
+Robby Misir

Apologies were received for the absence of Councillors Jane Keane, Timothy Ryan and Bryan Vincent. + Councillor Robby Misir substituted for Councillor Vincent.

The Chairman reminded Members of the action to be taken in an emergency.

4 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

5 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6 DEVELOPER PRESENTATION - VEOLIA LANDFILL, COLDHARBOUR LANE, RAINHAM.

The Committee received a presentation for an extension to the operational life of the landfill and composting facilities, retention of all landfill buildings and infrastructure required for these operations before completion of the restoration of the site.

The development was presented to enable Members of the Committee view the proposal before a planning application is submitted and to comment upon it.

As set out in the committee rules, the Developer was given 20 minutes to speak. Members received the presentation from Belinder Gill, Planning Agent and Veolia Representative Alistair Hoyle.

The Committee was not required to make any decisions with respect to the developer briefing.

The Committee noted the presentation and the following considerations were summarised as the points raised by Members at the meeting by the Director of Planning & Public Protection:

- To have confidence in any submission that Veolia is able to complete the landfill development in the timeframe.
- Question around public consultation. That this is part of the planning application.
- It was noted that it was very likely that the application will be submitted shortly, because of the time frame until the expiry of the current consent. The engaging with residents is going to be engagement post submission.
- Question around negative effects of not completing landfill development. It was expected that the application would detail out such information.
- Reassurance about calculation, Members sought reassurance that this period of five years would be sufficient to complete landfill development.

Members were informed that any further comments and questions be sent to planning officers within the next week.

Chairman

Development Presentations

Introduction

1. This part of the agenda is for the committee to receive presentations on proposed developments, particularly when they are at the pre-application stage.
2. Although the reports are set out in order on the agenda, the Chair may reorder the agenda on the night. Therefore, if you wish to be present for a specific application, you need to be at the meeting from the beginning.
3. The following information and advice only applies to reports in this part of the agenda.

Advice to Members

4. These proposed developments are being reported to committee to enable Members of the committee to view them at an early stage and to comment upon them. They do not constitute applications for planning permission at this stage (unless otherwise stated in the individual report) and any comments made are provisional and subject to full consideration of any subsequent application and the comments received following consultation, publicity and notification.
5. Members of the committee will need to pay careful attention to the probity rules around predisposition, predetermination and bias (set out in the Council's Constitution). Failure to do so may mean that the Member will not be able to participate in the meeting when any subsequent application is considered.

Public speaking and running order

6. The Council's Constitution only provides for public speaking rights for those applications being reported to Committee in the "Applications for Decision" parts of the agenda. Therefore, reports on this part of the agenda do not attract public speaking rights, save for Ward Members.
7. The items on this part of the agenda will run as follows:
 - a. Officer introduction of the main issues
 - b. Developer presentation (20 minutes)
 - c. Ward Councillor speaking slot (5 minutes)
 - d. Committee questions
 - e. Officer roundup

Late information

8. Any relevant material received since the publication of this part of the agenda, concerning items on it, will be reported to the Committee in the Update Report.

Recommendation

9. The Committee is not required to make any decisions with respect to the reports on this part of the agenda. The reports are presented as background information.

 Havering LONDON BOROUGH	Strategic Planning Committee Developer Presentation 23 January 2025
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Pre-Application Reference: W0198.23

Location: Angel Way car park, Angel Way, Romford

Ward: St Edwards

Description: Redevelopment of existing car park to provide circa 105 residential units and ancillary commercial, and community uses, landscaping and parking.

Case Officer: Malachy McGovern

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This proposed development is being presented to enable Members of the committee to view it before a planning application is submitted and to comment upon it. The development does not constitute an application for planning permission and any comments made upon it are without prejudice and along with the comments received as a result of consultation, publicity and notification subject to full consideration of any subsequent application.
- 1.2 The proposal has been the subject to a series of pre-application meetings with officers since July 2023. There has been a QRP meeting undertaken on 3rd September 2024. The proposal is not GLA referable.
- 1.3 Informed by the feedback gained from the initial QRP meeting and following discussions with officers, the scheme has gradually developed.
- 1.4 The scheme is not finalised and it is anticipated that the proposals will further evolve over the coming months before submission of a planning application. At this stage however, Member feedback concerning broad principles for the development will be constructive in taking the scheme forward.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The pre-application site is irregularly shaped and bound by Angel Way to the west, east and south, located just southeast of St Edwards Way (A118 ring road). The site is approximately 5,200 sq. metres (0.52 hectares) in area and is currently comprises a multi storey car park and associated garage structures as a LB Havering car park.
- 2.2 The site is not within a Conservation Area and does not comprise any Listed Buildings however, Trinity Methodist Church is located immediately North West. The site is accessed via Angel Way with additional pedestrian routes to the east and is located on the edge of Romford town centre with a mixture of retail, commercial and residential uses.

- 2.3 Immediately southwest is a 3 – 8 storey apartment block and a new 16 storey development under construction (Previously known as the ‘Zog’ development) to the north and northeast. The River Rom is exposed to the north of the site before submerging in a culvert beneath the site and is both one of the main assets and constraints of the site. The site contains some trees but no TPOs and falls within Flood Zone 2 and partially Zone 3 and has a high PTAL of 6a.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

The proposal involves demolition of existing structures and redevelopment to provide a residential-led, mixed-use scheme.

3.1 Scale & Height:

- Two mid-rise residential blocks ranging from six to eight storeys.

3.2 Residential Provision:

- Approximately 105 residential units.
- Mix includes 38 no. (36%) 1-bedroom, 56 no. (53%) 2-bedroom, and 11 no. (11%) 3-bedroom homes, including duplexes.
- 86% dual-aspect units, with south-facing single-aspect homes where applicable.

3.3 Affordable Housing:

- Commitment to affordable housing provision, with details on proportion and tenure split under discussion.

3.4 Community and Commercial Uses:

- Ground-floor commercial and community spaces integrated into the development to activate key frontages.

3.5 Landscaping and Public Realm:

- Central landscaped garden featuring a naturalistic rain garden along the alignment of the culverted River Rom.
- Informal play elements, private terraces, and communal patios enhance resident and public amenity.

3.6 Energy and Sustainability:

- Air source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels for energy efficiency.
- Targeting a 50% reduction in regulated carbon emissions and compliance with net-zero goals.

3.7 Access and Parking:

- Car-free scheme with limited Blue Badge parking spaces.
- Secure cycle parking provided for all units.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 None relevant within the site.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Members should note that the proposal being presented to them now may have changed in order to address officers and QRP’s comments.

QRP Comments – 3 rd September 2024	Design Team Comments / Responses
<p>1. Site Context and Integration</p> <p>The QRP appreciates the potential of the Angel Way Car Park site for redevelopment into a sustainable, mixed-use scheme but highlights challenges related to integration with its surroundings. The panel suggests reorienting the blocks to align with existing street patterns, thereby enhancing the public realm, ensuring pedestrian-friendly streets, and improving safety through passive surveillance. Key recommendations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Defining clear fronts and backs for buildings to reduce ambiguous, underused spaces. · Addressing the relationship between Angel Way and adjacent residential and commercial areas, including engagement with urban design and highways teams to future-proof the streetscape. · Exploring collaboration with Trinity Methodist Church to optimize the site's potential and enhance integration. 	<p>1. Since the QRP, further work has been undertaken to define and refine the block forms and orientation to better relate to the surrounding context. There is now a much clearer definition to building lines along Angel Way south with Block A & B frontages aligned to the street frontages to the south and the south-eastern end of Block B reconfigured to create a stronger and more defined corner within the streetscape. This has permitted boundaries between public and more private areas to also be better defined with further development of the landscape strategy further reinforcing a clearer definition of open spaces within the scheme.</p> <p>Engagement has taken place with LBH Highways with particular regard to Angel Way West and potential highways changes to facilitate re-introduction of two-way traffic on this section of Angel Way.</p> <p>Further dialogue has taken place with Trinity Methodist Church and the proposals are being developed to create an enhancement to the setting of the Church and to integrate it with the site. This includes the creating of a new landscape space to the east of the Church and creation of a new area incorporating relocated parking for the Church along the western edge of the site. A new pedestrian route along the south side of the Church will link the Church to the eastern open space.</p>
<p>2. Sustainability and Biodiversity</p> <p>The QRP encourages embedding sustainability into the design from the outset to meet local and national climate targets. Recommendations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Comprehensive exploration of deculverting and naturalizing the River Rom, which could yield significant environmental and public benefits. · Prioritizing passive measures such as optimal building orientation, shading, and natural ventilation. · Clarifying strategies for biodiversity net gain, green roofs, and urban greening. 	<p>2. Comprehensive exploration of the potential to deculvert the River Rom is currently being undertaken. This includes complex technical analysis and an alternative landscape scheme for the centre of the site, that allows for stepped terracing down to the river's edge. The technical and financial feasibility analysis of opening up the river, and any impacts of doing so, is yet to be concluded.</p> <p>The scheme design has been developed will utilise sustainable energy with a combination of air-source heat pumps and photo-voltaic panels along with highly insulated</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporating features like bird and bat boxes and spaces for urban agriculture to foster ecological richness. 	<p>building envelopes to optimise energy performance and limit carbon emissions in line with LBH and GLA policy. Due to the urban location and noise environment of the site, MVHR (mechanical ventilation heat recovery) with enhanced vent rates and cooling coil will be utilised to mitigate local air quality, noise and overheating conditions.</p> <p>The building forms are designed to be efficient with fenestrations sizes carefully controlled to permit sufficient daylight levels whilst minimising overheating.</p> <p>The landscape scheme aims to maximise urban greening through a softening of the site and introduction of planting throughout the ground floor spaces. Planting is selected to respond to biodiversity net gain principles, including the use of native planting where appropriate and wildlife friendly species to attract pollinators and other desirable fauna. The option of deculverting allowed for a greater diversity of habitats, with the introduction of water. The applicant design team is confident proposals will achieve 10% BNG and UGF of 0.4 or more. Biodiverse roofs will be included.</p> <p>Enhancements can be made including invertebrate nesting boxes, bird boxes and fencing to be sympathetic to commuting mammals, as well as planting of native species and wildflowers. It is noted that currently the site has very little vegetation and so this scheme will be a vast improvement.</p>
<p>3. Site Layout and Public Realm The panel advocates for a more efficient site layout that better balances housing, public open space, and streetscape quality. Suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revising block placement to maximize housing yield while maintaining quality. Enhancing the central garden's accessibility as a public or semi-public space, recognizing its potential as a much-needed green asset for Romford town centre. Refining the hierarchy and function of streets, minimizing vehicular 	<p>3. See response to Point 1. In addition, the applicant has sought to optimise the footprint of Block A to include an additional apartment per floor and included one more GF apartment in Block B which will increase the overall no. of apartments to 106.</p> <p>The landscape strategy for the central garden has been developed to include a potential N-S route through the site if the River Rom is opened up. This allows for views over the river and associated planting and also provides a green link within the urban centre,</p>

<p>dominance while ensuring effective servicing and parking solutions.</p>	<p>which offers relief from the surrounding busy streets.</p> <p>The landscape scheme also faces towards Angel Way and provides a green backdrop to the road and footway, with a generous belt of planting along the perimeter and views into the open space creating a spacious feel. Planting along the perimeter has been maximised to soften the street and parking and creating a more welcoming and attractive environment.</p>
<p>4. Architectural Quality and Design The panel encourages a cohesive architectural approach, with Block A's vertical articulation setting a positive precedent for Block B. Key design considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Simplifying material choices and detailing for durability and visual quality. · Differentiating ground floors to create a strong urban presence and ensure appropriate interfaces between public and private spaces. · Preserving the high proportion of dual-aspect homes while balancing this with potential site constraints 	<p>4. In line with the panel's comments, the materials palette has been further refined and a common architectural language has now been applied to Blocks A and B.</p> <p>Distinctive ground floors incorporate feature pre-cast cladding and more generous openings to create a strong urban presence at street level.</p> <p>Whilst block forms have evolved as noted above, we have continued to optimise provision of dual aspect homes where possible with a high overall provision.</p>
<p>5. River Rom and Flood Risk The QRP underscores the strategic importance of opening and naturalizing the River Rom. While acknowledging engineering and cost constraints, the panel challenges the design team to creatively explore options that would unlock the river's potential as a public asset. Suggested actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Investigating stepped or terraced riverbanks as alternatives to traditional deculverting approaches. · Collaborating with the Environment Agency to balance housing yield with public realm improvements. · Ensuring that flood risk mitigation strategies are seamlessly integrated with landscaping and urban design. 	<p>5. Please see response to point. 2 – comprehensive studies and analysis are currently being progressed to investigate the feasibility of opening up the River Rom. This includes analysis of potential increase in flood risk, both on and off-site and any mitigation options This work is still being progressed..</p>
<p>6. Landscape and Play Strategy The panel values the emerging landscape proposals but emphasizes the need for more detailed and integrated strategies. Key points include:</p>	<p>6. Scheme development has focused on better defining the spaces and the nature of routes through. The opening up of the river allows for a north-south route to run alongside, which affords views over the river and landscaping beyond. The river forms the edge of</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing the landscape's usability by defining circulation routes and activity zones. • Ensuring the play strategy delivers meaningful spaces for children of all ages, avoiding reliance on small or fragmented areas. • Prioritizing planting over hard landscaping to soften the urban context and provide microclimatic benefits 	<p>the route along the western side and the building and associated terraces and landscaping forms the other side. A public space with play facilities is also created at the back of the Methodist church and hall, along with a pedestrian link to the front of the church.</p> <p>There is an overall play strategy for both options. The retained culverted option has informal play running north-south along the 'rain garden'. This formal play space moves to the northwest of the site for the de-culverted option. The latter option has less play space as the river takes up more space on site, but it has other benefits.</p> <p>A majority of the site is now planted, which is a big change from the existing situation, where vegetation is very sparse (one single tree). Hard landscaping has been used sparingly for paths and seating areas only.</p>
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5.3 It is intended that the following will be consulted regarding any subsequent planning application:

- London Fire Brigade
- Thames Water
- Essex and Suffolk Water
- EDF Energy
- National Grid
- Transport for London
- NHS Trust
- Department for Education
- Place Services (Ecology)
- Place Services (Landscape)

6.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

6.1 The applicant has undertaken community consultation - 2,644 residential and business properties notified on 27.11.2024 (12 days in advance of events), plus Ward Councillors

6.2 Development consultation website live - prior to events

6.3 A total of 12 responses were received to the survey / events.

Are you a local resident?

Yes 11

No 1

Are you a local councillor?

Yes 0
No 12

Tell us how you feel about our emerging proposals

Positive 3
Negative 9
Neutral 0

6.4 The key issues were parking; public infrastructure; the need for more flats; and community cohesion as a result of significant development in the area.

6.5 The feedback from residents and stakeholders will form part of the Statement of Community Involvement submitted by the Applicant at submission.

7.0 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The main planning issues raised by the proposal relate to:

- Principle of Development
- Proposed site layout and function
- Design Quality and Scale
- Affordable housing
- Commercial and community uses
- Energy and Sustainability
- Open spaces

7.2 Principle of Development

The Angel Way Car Park site is a 0.51-hectare area currently occupied by a five-storey multi-storey car park and ancillary structures. It sits at the north western edge of Romford town centre, with a PTAL of 6a (excellent) public transport connectivity. The site forms part of an emerging cluster of higher-density development and is identified for regeneration under the Romford Town Centre Masterplan.

The redevelopment of the site aligns with the Borough's strategic objectives to provide new homes, improve public realm, and create mixed-use spaces in central Romford. While there would be a loss of car parking provision, the proposed scheme includes a mix of residential and ground floor community/commercial uses which is considered a more sustainable use of the site.

The potential for the scheme to contribute to sustainability objectives through measures such as deculverting the River Rom and integrating sustainable urban drainage systems is acknowledged, although further exploration is needed to demonstrate feasibility.

7.3 Proposed Site Layout and Function

The layout prioritizes a central landscaped garden aligned with the culverted River Rom, creating a naturalistic rain garden feature that serves as a focal point for the development. The two residential blocks are positioned to maximize dual aspect homes while maintaining active ground-floor uses and ensuring a clear relationship between public and private spaces.

The scheme introduces improved pedestrian permeability, including an east-west connection through the site and opportunities for potential future links to surrounding developments. However, concerns remain about the dominance of surface parking on

the western edge and the treatment of servicing areas, which require further refinement to ensure a high-quality public realm.

The QRP has suggested reconfiguring the site to better address Angel Way and integrate with surrounding streets, ensuring a stronger sense of urban continuity and minimizing the visual and functional impact of service areas. Officers have reiterated these concerns and the applicant is working to improve alignment with the surrounding development pattern.

7.4 Design, Quality, and Scale

The proposed six- to eight-storey blocks are designed to respond to the site's mixed urban context, providing a transition between the taller developments to the north and lower-rise residential areas to the west. The architectural language incorporates vertical articulation and recessed balconies to create a human scale, particularly at street level.

The scheme achieves 89% dual aspect units, with all single-aspect units oriented southward to ensure adequate natural light. Ground-floor residential units are set back with defensible planting to provide privacy while maintaining visual interaction with the public realm.

Further consideration is recommended regarding the height and massing of Block B, particularly its relationship with the Trinity Methodist Church and adjacent developments. A unified architectural approach between the blocks, informed by Block A's resolved vertical articulation, is encouraged.

The development proposes approximately 93 residential units across two blocks, with a mix designed to respond to the town centre context and housing needs. The current unit mix comprises:

- 1-bedroom flats: 38 units (36%)
- 2-bedroom flats: 56 units (53%)
- 3-bedroom flats and duplexes: 11 units (11%)

The balance favours smaller units, reflecting the site's urban location and the demand for housing suited to single occupants and smaller households. However, this approach limits the provision of family-sized homes, which is clearly identified as a policy priority in the borough.

7.5 Affordable Housing

The applicant has committed to delivering affordable housing, although the exact tenure split and proportion remain subject to viability discussions. The proposal must demonstrate compliance with local policies, which require a 70:30 tenure split between social rent/London Affordable Rent and intermediate housing. The site being Council land would mean that the provision of affordable housing would need to make up 50% of the housing proposed by the development.

Given the high PTAL rating and town centre location, the inclusion of affordable housing is critical to achieving mixed and balanced communities. The applicant has been encouraged to provide more family-sized units within the affordable housing provision to address the identified borough-wide housing needs

7.6 Commercial and Community Uses

The ground-floor commercial and community spaces are located at key corners to maximize visibility and accessibility. A proposed community hub at the southern edge of Block A creates opportunities for active use and engagement with the wider community.

The Council's Design Officers and the QRP have recommended enhancing the definition of entrances and public/private thresholds for these uses, particularly in relation to adjacent streets and the central garden. Opportunities to strengthen connections between the community spaces and nearby public facilities, such as the Trinity Methodist Church, should also be explored.

7.7 Energy and Sustainability

The energy strategy aligns with London Plan policies, incorporating air source heat pumps and a fabric-first approach to achieve a 10% reduction in regulated CO₂ emissions through energy efficiency alone. Roof space will prioritize photovoltaic panels alongside green roofs where feasible.

The rain garden represents a sustainable urban drainage approach, managing surface water runoff while providing amenity and ecological benefits. Biodiversity net gain is targeted through new tree planting, wildlife habitats, and soft landscaping, though detailed proposals for implementation remain outstanding.

Further justification is needed regarding the decision not to deculvert the River Rom, with the QRP emphasizing the importance of fully exploring this option as a key public benefit.

7.8 Open Spaces and Play Provision

The central landscaped garden is a key feature, designed to provide communal amenity space and a naturalistic setting that references the culverted River Rom. Informal play opportunities are integrated through features such as stepping stones and climbing logs, contributing to a child-friendly environment.

Private terraces for ground-floor apartments are set back with planting to provide privacy and green outlooks. The overall landscape strategy seeks to create a welcoming, pedestrian-friendly environment, though the distinction between public and private spaces could benefit from further clarification to address concerns about management and security

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The proposed development remains in the pre-application stage and additional work remains to be carried out. The scheme will be progressed through a design led approach over the coming months. At this stage, Members' guidance will be most helpful to incorporate as the various elements are brought together.

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	Strategic Planning Committee – Developer Presentation 23 January 2025
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Pre-Application Reference: W0221.22

Location: Como Street Car Park Como Street

Ward: ST. EDWARDS

Description: REDEVELOPMENT OF CAR PARK FOR RESIDENTIAL LED DEVELOPMENT WITH SOME COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Case Officer: Raphael Adenegan

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This proposed development is being presented to enable Members of the committee to view it before a planning application is submitted and to comment upon it. The development does not constitute an application for planning permission and any comments made upon it are provisional and subject to full consideration of any subsequent application and the comments received as a result of consultation, publicity and notification.
- 1.2 The proposed planning application has been the subject of pre-application meetings with Officers. There have been five pre-application meetings including one workshop with officers and the scheme has evolved over the months. The proposal was presented to the Council's Quality Review Panel on 5th February 2024 and a Chair Review on 3rd September 2024. Pre-application discussions with the applicants have included the principle of the development proposed including quantum of development, massing, height layout, access and landscaping planning that have been undertaken by the applicants subject to a masterplan being developed for the site. The proposal is being brought to Committee at this stage.

2 PROPOSAL AND LOCATION DETAILS

2.1 Proposal

Full planning application for missed-use development of the site comprising:

- 137 new residential dwellings (number of affordable units yet to be decided);
- Low – medium high-density development, with building heights between 3 to 9 storeys;

- 540sq.m of flexible commercial / community space across 7 open plan units, all at GF level;
 - Environmental improvements to River Rom;
 - A new public green space adjacent to the to the River Rom including public play space for children;
 - A new pedestrian link to the town centre through the site;
 - Waste and recycling strategy utilising and underground refuse system;
 - Associated landscaping, parking spaces and cycle stores;
 - Vehicular access is from Como Street as existing.
- 2.2 The proposed pre-application enquiry subject to review is a detailed application. The information provided as part of this enquiry includes proposed quantum, layout and public opens space areas.
- 2.3 The key objective will be to create high quality buildings and places, which helps boost the supply of homes, including affordable homes, within the London Borough of Havering.

Site and Surroundings

- 2.4 The site measures approximately 0.9 hectares in area. The development would be on brownfield land which is already occupied by an existing surface level car park with 141 spaces. The site is located within London Plan Opportunity Area, Local Plan Strategic Development Area, and an Archaeological Priority Area. The site is positioned at a key node immediately adjoining Romford's Ring Road. Como Street is mainly a residential street.

In terms of its local context, the application site lies east of River Rom and west of North street which forms part of the Strategic Road Network ("SRN"). The application site is bound to the north by a Como Street, which is the main vehicular access point and to its south by St. Edwards Way. To the west on the opposite side of the river rom lie the rear gardens of the residential properties on Linden Street.

Planning History

- 2.7 None

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 At this stage, it is intended that the following will be consulted regarding any subsequent planning application:
- Transport for London (Statutory Consultee)
 - Environment Agency
 - Historic England -Archaeology
 - Thames Water
 - Essex and Suffolk Water
 - EDF Energy
 - LFEPA – Water
 - Fire Brigade
 - Natural England
 - CCG/NHS
 - Metropolitan Police – Design Out Crime
 - National Air Traffic Services (NATS)

3.2 Quality Review Panel (QRP) Comments

- The proposal has been presented to the Havering Quality Review Panel twice (5th February and 3rd September 2024). Members should note that the proposal as presented to them may have changed to reflect the QRP. The Table below sets out how the scheme has evolved in response to QRP comments.

	Chairs Review Comment	Design Team Response
01.0	Summary	
01.1	<i>The Havering Quality Review Panel acknowledges the difficulties involved in developing a site with multiple constraints and welcomes the testing of alternative layouts. However, the preferred option is not significantly different to the site layout seen at the previous design review meeting. The panel asks that its previous comments are reconsidered and suggests some efficiencies to help to create the best possible scheme.</i>	The scheme has been developed to consider all the key points raised in the Chairs Review. The main changes are described below in relation to each point in this response table.
01.2	<i>The panel recognises the changes made to improve the scheme, including the reduction in the height of Block D from twelve storeys to nine; more generous and rational terraced houses in Block A; relocation of four-bed family homes from the roundabout to the riverside frontage; increased play provision; removal of parking from the centre of the site; a clearer split between public and private landscaped space; and improvements in the quality of the architecture, including the proposed materials and detailing.</i>	The design team have worked to retain all the improvements noted by the panel while making updates to the scheme to reflect the main points raised in the Chairs Review comments.
01.3	<i>The scheme should demonstrate that a future pedestrian connection to the south of the site is possible, allowing integration with the council's upcoming Liveable Neighbourhoods scheme. The project team should avoid bringing vehicles into the public realm.</i>	The revised scheme retains a new public pedestrian link through the site which works with both the current situation and if the 'Liveable Neighbourhoods Scheme' comes forward. The new link is located centrally, with the option to either go north or south using the current underpass.
01.4	<i>The panel recommends testing whether moving the parking to the overshadowed parts of the courtyard to the north would allow greater enjoyment of the riverside. The riverside play space is a positive feature, and the panel suggests focusing efforts on making it as successful as possible.</i>	The parking has been relocated along the northern boundary and away from the new public realm open space.
02.0	Architecture	

02.1	<i>The Panel commends the revised architecture. Materials and detailing approach promise high quality development in keeping with its context that could raise the bar in Romford.</i>	Noted, the architectural materials and detailing proposed are mindful of avoiding expensive detailing and utilise simple brick detailing and good quality red brick which has been retained in the updates to the scheme.
02.2	<i>The panel are concerned that the site layout creates complex forms and internal arrangements that could impact quality of materials.</i>	The updated design has removed a building, 'Block B' and consolidated the scheme into 3 block cores instead of 4, reducing complexity and minimising quantum of materials required without reducing number of homes.
03.0	Site Layout	
03.1	<p><i>The panel thinks that Test B leads to several positive outcomes. It makes efficient use of the wider northern end of the site, reduces the number of cores required, uses simple building forms. It also creates a clearer division between public and private landscaped spaces and allows a direct visual connection to the River Rom from the public realm space for members of the public to enjoy.</i></p> <p><i>However, Test B has issues with single aspect units fronting the roundabout, and an overshadowed courtyard to the north. The panel recommends exploring how the massing could be redistributed to achieve better light into the courtyard, especially in the evenings when it is more likely to be used.</i></p>	<p>Test B is more efficient in terms of reducing cores and making more use of the wider part of the site, however reducing the number of cores / buildings will reduce overall dual aspect and still has a significant issue with the shading to the northern courtyard as noted by the panel.</p> <p>The design team have explored and developed a hybrid solution between the test options as suggested by the panel, see more detail in response 03.3 below.</p>
03.2	<i>Test C is successful in terms of more dual aspect homes with good access to natural daylight. However, it results in a highly complex built form. The panel is concerned that, if it is too expensive to build, it may be subject to value engineering exercises post-planning stage, and therefore may not be delivered as it is currently drawn.</i>	The design team agree that test C is more successful in terms of housing quality and dual aspect. The design team have responded to comments on complexity of built form and removed a building, consolidating the built form into two buildings with 3 cores. Removing a core from the scheme while maintaining the number of homes being delivered overall.
03.3	<i>The panel suggests finding a hybrid solution, bringing together the best aspects of each test. The panel's views on this will need to be weighed up with the views of all stakeholders, including the council and housing operators, to find the appropriate balance.</i>	<p>The design team have focussed on developing a hybrid approach to the options shown at the last Chairs Review. The new proposal has minimised complexity of build by reducing number of cores and simplifying the block layouts, but carefully managing the aspect of homes to avoid single aspect facing the roundabout and no single aspect homes facing north.</p> <p>The revised scheme has also significantly improved the sunlight and daylight into the northern courtyard, now exceeding the minimum BRE guidance.</p>

04.0	Landscape	
04.1	<i>The panel asks that the scheme does not preclude a future pedestrian connection to the south where there is a level change to St Edwards Way. This will futureproof the development for future integration with the council's upcoming Liveable Neighbourhoods scheme.</i>	The revised design incorporates a set of steps to access St Edwards Way from the southern end of the site. This will be a secure and managed access for residents, but it does not preclude a future public connection if desired.
04.2	<i>In the panel's view, communal outdoor space will not function well as amenity space if it is dominated by servicing. It asks for all opportunities to be taken to avoid bringing vehicles into the public realm: for example, locating the underground refuse storage collection area at the edge of the site.</i>	We have explored all possible options for the URS bin provision and balancing residents' proximity to use the bins safely and easily. The URS vehicle needs a significant amount of space to empty the bins as well as turn around. We are unable to service the URS from St Edwards Way, the roundabout or the end of North Street so we have no choice but to service from within the site.
04.3	<i>The panel supports the removal of the parking spaces from the centre of the site, but the new location along the riverside is too visible and disrupts enjoyment of the River Rom. The panel recommends testing whether the parking could be relocated to the courtyard of Block B. This would be a good use for areas that will be more overshadowed.</i>	The parking has been relocated along the northern boundary and away from the new areas of public realm and away from the River Rom.
04.4	<i>It is positive that play provision for the development has been significantly increased by making the landscaping alongside the river private to residents. The panel is comfortable with this solution because it is more likely to be well maintained, and controlled access will increase safety.</i>	Agreed, the design has evolved but retains the play and landscaping along the edge of the River Rom boundary within a secure residential communal amenity area.
04.5	<i>The panel is not convinced that play space will be well-used in the courtyard of Block B to the north as it will be largely overshadowed. Efforts should instead be concentrated on making the riverside play space as successful as possible.</i>	The courtyard to block B has been redesigned so that it is now a very well-lit space and comfortably passes the BRE guidance for sunlight and daylight on the 21 st of March and is very well lit during all the summer months.
04.6	<i>The panel recommends naturalising more of the river to maximise its visual amenity and taking advantage of the linear form to create 'play-on-the-way' landscaping. These play structures should not all be under the shade of trees, so that they can be enjoyed throughout the seasons.</i>	The updated proposals increase the amount of naturalisation to the River Rom while balancing the need to create usable public realm space and play areas. Play is in several different locations to ensure that it is not all shaded by trees.
04.7	<i>The quality of the communal amenity and play spaces will depend on the surface materials and finishes, and further detail is needed on these. The</i>	All hard and soft landscaping are being developed in detail for the planning submission and the amount of hard landscaping has been reduced to the minimum needed to service the site and provide a new public link.

	<i>panel advises reducing the amount of hard surfacing in the playable areas.</i>	
04.8	<i>The panel supports the strategy of interplanting the existing retained trees with more appropriate native species. This will be positive for biodiversity and will help to protect the privacy of the properties along Linden Street.</i>	Agreed, a detailed tree removal and replacement strategy has been developed for the site and will be submitted as part of the planning application.
07.0	Next Steps	
	<i>The Havering Quality Review Panel is confident that the applicants can address the remaining comments in discussion with Havering officers. Como Street Car Park does not need to return for another design review.</i>	Noted and agreed. Following a further pre app workshop after the Chairs Review panel, we discussed the priorities of the site and developed the new proposal addressing all the main concerns by the QRP and LBH Planning Team.

4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1 In accordance with planning legislation, the developer will consult the local community on these proposals as part of the pre-application process.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024
London Plan 2021
London Borough of Havering Local Plan 2016 – 2031
Draft Romford Master Plan 2024

5 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The main planning issues raised by the application that the Committee must consider are:

- Principle of development
- Density, scale and site layout
- Quality of Design/Living Conditions for Future Occupiers
- Housing mix/affordable housing
- Parking/Traffic
- Other issues

5.2 Principal of Development

- This is a brownfield site which abuts the Romford Town Centre and is Council owned land. The principle of residential led redevelopment of this site is accepted. The site is covered by Site Specific Allocation ROMSSA3 which allocates the site for residential development with ancillary fringe retail uses along North Street.
- The Site is also identified in the Council's Housing Trajectory 2019, which formed part of the evidence base for the Local Plan. The site is identified as being able to provide 150 units. The development of the site for residential development will make an important contribution to meeting the boroughs housing targets.

- The site is part of a development brief identified in the emerging Romford Masterplan – expected to be adopted in 2025.
- LBH supports the principle of residential led mixed use development on this site as it is providing additional homes in a well-established residential neighbourhood and shopping area, five to ten minutes' walk from Romford station subject to all other material planning considerations.
- At all levels of planning policy there is strong encouragement to maximise the use of such sites when they become available. Bringing forward this type of site that could be delivered in the short and long term will support the Council in meeting its housing requirement.
- The Council's Local Plan states that Romford has potential for significant regeneration and intensification, and national, London Plan and local policies seek to optimise the use of brownfield land for meeting the demand for new homes, and other growth.

5.3 **Density, scale and site layout**

- The proposed density would be within the ranges identified in the current London Plan and the adopted Local Plan. The London Plan has moved away from the density matrix approach and also density is only one indication of the appropriateness of proposed development. What is most important here is ensuring that the proposals deliver a high quality of design and living environment for future occupiers.
- At 3-9 storeys, the buildings will be taller than its direct neighbours but comparable to the ongoing development on Angel Way south of the site and elsewhere close to the ring road. Buildings of the height proposed, could be considered appropriate in this context subject to the quality and liveability of accommodation, proximity of the buildings to the boundaries of adjacent sites in terms of amenity impact and/or prejudicing development of surrounding land. Any height and bulk should be justified through a thorough townscape and contextual approach including identifying important viewpoints, in accordance policies 7 and 10 of the Local Plan. Members may wish to comment on this part of the proposal.

5.4 **Quality of Design/Living Conditions for Future Occupiers**

- There is merit in an approach as demonstrated which gives high priority to the quality of materials and which can demonstrate a coherent design led approach to the redevelopment of the site.
- It is important that any proposal provides high quality accommodation for future residents including provision of outdoor amenity space, avoiding single aspect dwellings and satisfactory outlook from habitable rooms.
- Consideration is required as to the quality of pedestrian environment, particularly from along Como Street and North Street, the amenity area of the site and river frontage, as well as links to Romford Town Centre and proposed liveable neighbourhood scheme.

5.5 Housing mix/affordable housing

- Council Policy 5 states that all housing schemes should include a proportion of family-sized homes and seek to reflect the recommended housing mix as set out in the table below. The policy does allow for variations to the recommended mix, but states that these must be robustly justified, having regard to individual site circumstances including location, site constraints, viability and the achievement of mixed and balanced communities.

- The Borough's housing mix as set out in the Local Plan Policy 5.

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+bed
Market Housing	5%	15%	64%	16%
Affordable Housing	10%	40%	40%	10%

- The scheme proposes 137 new homes with the following mix:

30% 1 bedroom flats (42 no) (split of 35 x 1 b2p, 7 x 1B2p M4(3) wheelchair)

47% 2 bedroom flats (64 no) (split of 23 x 2b3p, 34 x 2b4p and 7 x 2b3p M4(3) wheelchair)

23% 3 bedroom homes (31 no) (3 x 3 bed, 6p houses / the balance 3bed, 5p flats).

- Current planning policy would require that a minimum of 35% affordable housing in all new developments and 50% on public sector land (of which 70% should be social rented and 30% intermediate/shared ownership by habitable room, which is subject to tenure mix) is proposed or it should be comprehensively demonstrated that the maximum viable quantum is being provided. As the site is Council owned land, the policy requirement for 50% affordable housing is applicable.
- The applicant has stated that the level of affordable housing on site is to be determined following a full understanding of the costs of the River Rom works and aspirations for naturalisation of the river within the site. Officers question what has informed the proposed housing mix in terms of policy requirement if the viability of the proposal is still in question? Members may wish to comment on this.

5.6 Parking/Traffic

- It is not anticipated that the proposals will generate significant levels of traffic. There would likely be a requirement to provide disabled and service area parking, but given the town centre location, providing additional residential parking spaces would not be required.
- Number of parking proposed:
 - 4 x accessible residential parking spaces, (3% dedicated on site)
 - 1 x commercial parking space,
 - 2 x dedicated large bays for servicing and deliveries (One within the site and one at the end of North Street)
 - 3 x dedicated scooter delivery bays (for small food deliveries).

- Given the quantum and the uses proposed and the nature of the site, providing a satisfactory servicing may be a challenge and Members may wish to comment on this.

Financial and Other Mitigation

5.7 Any subsequent planning application will be supported by a package of measures secured under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or the Community Infrastructure Levy (as appropriate), to mitigate impacts of the proposed development.

5.8 The proposal would attract the following Community Infrastructure Levy contributions to mitigate the impact of the development:

- £25 per square metre Mayoral CIL towards Crossrail
- £125 per square metre Havering CIL

5.9 **Other Planning Issues:**

- Archaeology
- Biodiversity
- Sustainable Design and Construction
- Impact on local Education provision
- Infrastructure and Utilities
- Healthcare
- Open Space and Recreation
- Flooding and Sustainable Drainage System
- Secured by Design Sustainable Design and Construction
- Secured by Design
- Servicing Management

Summary of Issues

5.10 In order to assist members, officers have raised similar concerns/issues expressed by the Quality Review Panel with the developer team as outlined in the table of responses to QRP comments in Paragraph 3.2 and members may wish to comment in relation to these points in addition to any other comments/questions that they may wish to raise.

Conclusion

5.11 The proposed development has been considered at five pre-application meetings and a design workshop with officers, and the scheme has been developed as a result. There are some aspects that require further work as identified in this report and Members' guidance will be most helpful to incorporate as the various elements are brought together.

5.12 Further, it is likely that this scheme may come back to this Committee for final review as part of the continuing Pre-Application engagement but only if members seek further clarification.

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