



Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

**Strategic Planning
Committee – Developer
Presentation
28 January 2021**

Pre-Application Reference:	PE/01081/19
Location:	FORMER ICE RINK SITE, ROM VALLEY WAY, ROMFORD.
Ward:	ROMFORD TOWN
Description:	HYBRID PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING 7 BLOCKS OF 1 TO 12 STOREYS OF UPTO 1,041 UNITS (USE CLASS C3); 1,131SQ.M RETAIL AND CAFÉ (USE CLASS E (A & B)); 760SQ.M GYMNASIUM (USE CLASS E (d)); 3,000SQ.M HEALTH CENTRE (USE CLASS E (e & I)); 170SQ.M NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE FOR COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND 170SQ.M ENERGY CENTRE (SUI-GENERIS) WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING, PARKING, BINS AND CYCLE STORE
Case Officer:	Raphael Adenegan

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This proposed development is being presented to enable Members of the committee to view the proposals for a second time (first presented on 9 December March 2019) 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 There have been six pre-application meetings including three workshops with officers and the scheme has evolved over this time since the initial SPC presentation. The last, pre-application meeting with Officers took place on the 13th January 2021, with further meeting(s) to be arranged as part of a Planning Performance Agreement. The proposals were presented to the Councils' Quality Review Panel on the 15th April 2020 and 18th November 2020. Pre-application meetings also took place with the Greater London Authority (GLA) on the 18th June 2020 and 14th December 2020, and with Transport for London (TfL) on 14th January 2021.
- 1.3 Members may recall discussing these preliminary proposals at their Strategic Planning Committee meeting of the 9 December 2020. Summary of Members' feedback to the broad principles for the development are as follows:
- i. A wish to understand more about the tenure type and split in relation to key workers and the Build to Rent product
 - ii. The importance of affordable housing nomination rights for borough residents
 - iii. Details of unit mix were sought and a concern expressed about the low level of 3 bed units
 - iv. Details of child yield were sought
 - v. A keenness to ensure the safe movement of pedestrians across Rom Valley Way, especially as future social infrastructure will be on the opposite side of Rom Valley Way
 - vi. Is there adequate space between the blocks to provide quality children's play space?
 - vii. The proposed integration with Queens (in terms of floorspace and key worker homes) was welcomed
 - viii. The current shortage of sufficient parking spaces for people visiting and working at Queens and how traffic access to the site during and post construction will be managed
 - ix. Further details were sought on the timing of the phasing and the practicalities of construction given the proximity to the hospital
 - x. Further details of the refuse storage arrangements were sought
 - xi. A wish to understand how the estate would be managed following completion
 - xii. The 'necklace' approach to Oldchurch Park access was welcomed. The developer was encouraged to ensure access to it is promoted
 - xiii. The need for the Oldchurch Park footpath to be lit after dusk
 - xiv. A wish to see a visual comparison between the approved scheme and the proposed scheme
 - xv. A wish to see visuals from the opposite side of Rom Valley Way
 - xvi. A keenness to understand the impact upon neighbouring occupiers in more detail
 - xvii. Whether a daylight and sunlight analysis had been undertaken for the public realm and a reassurance that these spaces will have good light levels

- xviii. What is the justification for the proximity of the blocks to the site boundaries?
- xix. What is the justification for the tallest blocks?
- xx. Whether there are sufficient dual aspect units?
- xxi. The applicant must ensure that the Air Ambulance flight path is not impeded
- xxii. Is there a need for a warning beacon on top of the tallest buildings given the Air Ambulance flightpath?

FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS POST SPC PRESENTATION

- xxiii. The robustness of the explanation that viability was the reason the original scheme was not built out
- xxiv. The logic behind the hybrid nature of the application
- xxv. The proximity of the blocks to the site boundaries
- xxvi. What is the justification for the tallest blocks?
- xxvii. The number of family units are significantly short when compared to policy
- xxviii. The robustness of the explanation that dual aspects concerns have been addressed
- xxix. Further evidence is needed to reassure that pedestrians, especially school aged children, can move across Rom Valley Way safely

2 PROPOSAL AND LOCATION DETAILS

2.1 Initial Proposal

- The proposal is continuing to evolve. The initial proposal is for the redevelopment of the site for mixed-use development comprising 1051 residential units.
- Provision of employment floorspace and retail floorspace.
- Residential development would be the predominant use of the site.
- The quantum, layout and density of the development is at an advanced stage and subject to a masterplan being developed for the site.
- Vehicle access would be as existing from Rom Valley Way and the public car park serving Queen's Hospital.

2.2 The proposed pre-application enquiry subject to review will be a hybrid application for the erection of up to 1,041 dwellings comprising the following:

- **Full detailed application:** for a total 146 apartments (previously 154 units);
- 481sq.m retail space;
- 299sq.m restaurant/café space;
- 156sqm, neighbourhood centre space;
- 158sq.m energy centre space and;
- 504sq.m car park space (Block A).

- **Outline Application** (with only access for detailed consideration all other issues to be dealt with as reserved matters) application for 6 apartment blocks of up to 873 residential units (breakdown per block shows a total of 1,019 units) including key worker accommodation reserved by request for the NHS. 248 units are expected to be later living, with care, extra care, communal facilities, including dining room, library, pool, hydrotherapy pool and physiotherapy and a meeting or 'village hall' for social and craft activities, dance and yoga.
- 3,000sq.m medical facilities comprising clinician and outpatient;
- 421sq.m of flexible retail and café space;
- 760sq.m of Gym for residents and NHS staff only
- 14sq.m Neighbourhood Centre for community activities, with residents and NHS co-working space;
- 12sq.m Energy Centre;
- 9,826sq.m publicly accessible linear central park and activity area, central main avenue, a plaza landscaped frontage onto Rom Valley Way that allow for future cycle paths;
- 5,230 m2 private ground floor and podia gardens;
- Associated landscaping, parking spaces (up to 215 space including car cub) refuse and cycle stores with only access for consideration.

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. The scheme should also provide community facility and infrastructure.

Latest Proposal

2.4 Following the submission of this proposal to the Strategic Planning Committee on the 9th December 2020, the scheme has further evolved. The applicant / developer have responded to the feedback of members of this committee thus:

SPC Comment	Response
A wish to understand more about the tenure type and split in relation to key workers and the Build to Rent product	There is no BTR. The NHS trust have indicated a wish to participate in the affordable by way of a nomination agreement (but with no financial underwrite) and that has been communicated to the Director of Housing. He has to make a decision. In the same way, that Barking Havering Redbridge University Trust (BHRUT) has provided a letter of support for the NHS unit and retail and commented on the preference that the GP services be offsite, Impact can secure that letter, but the DoH needs to make a decision.

<p>The importance of affordable housing nomination rights for borough residents</p>	<p>This has been discussed with the DoH, Impact is supportive. The DoH has emailed to confirm that he has control of nominations. Havering RP is an interested bidder, but has requested last look, rather than competing and Impact is fine with that.</p>
<p>Details of unit mix were sought and a concern expressed about the low level of 3 bed units</p>	<p>The development is targeting 15% 3 bedroom dwellings, which is considered to be appropriate given the site's highly accessible urban location. 50% of the units will have 2 bedrooms.</p>
<p>Details of child yield were sought</p>	<p>The child yield has been estimated to be 270. The development's provision of play space exceeds that sought by policy standards.</p>
<p>A keenness to ensure the safe movement of pedestrians across Rom Valley Way, especially as future social infrastructure will be on the opposite side of Rom Valley Way</p>	<p>New green pedestrian links will be provided across the site that could be used as safe school routes to the River Rom and as the main corridor to the future Bridge Close school and central Romford. Consultation with Secure by Design has been positive and the recommendations incorporated into the detailed design.</p>
<p>Is there adequate space between the blocks to provide quality children's play space?</p>	<p>Extensive child play facilities are provided across the development. Daylight/sunlight studies confirm that the public realm will be a high quality environment.</p>
<p>The proposed integration with Queens (in terms of floorspace and key worker homes) was welcomed</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>The current shortage of sufficient parking spaces for people visiting and working at Queens and how traffic access to the site during and post construction will be managed</p>	<p>The NHS Trust are working hard to reduce the reliance on the private motor car and seek to encourage patients and visitors to consider sustainable and active modes of travel via their various travel planning initiatives which include provision of comprehensive travel information via various forms of media. As part of the development proposals, a comprehensive Travel Plan will be developed and it would seek to identify where collaborative working with the NHS may result in more effective travel planning measures to assist in reducing vehicle trips further.</p> <p>The operational phase of the development has been the subject of a detailed Transport Assessment which relies on modelling of the local highway network that secured the previous two</p>

	<p>consents. This modelling identifies that the proposals are unlikely to give rise to any significant harm (in terms of congestion or delay) on the local junctions. This is, perhaps, not surprising given the proposed development includes fewer car parking spaces than that previously consented scheme, and in real terms, will attract less than one vehicle per minute to the site in the busiest peak periods.</p>
<p>Further details were sought on the timing of the phasing and the practicalities of construction given the proximity to the hospital</p>	<p>As far as practicable, we will seek to minimise the interaction of construction traffic and hospital visitors. As part of our early engagement LBH Highway Officer (John Deasy) agreed in principle to a temporary construction access from Rom Valley Way to assist in limiting such interactions. Naturally, should consent be granted, we would expect there to be a suitably worded condition requiring a Construction Management Plan to resolve the details for the entire construction programme.</p>
<p>A wish to understand how the estate would be managed following completion</p>	<p>Each building will have a 24 hour concierge and there will be a permanent on-site management office. The Neighbourhood centre will hold regular residents' association meetings. Impact will be managing the estate in the long term and has the relevant experience and track record from Wembley and Greenwich Peninsula.</p>
<p>The 'necklace' approach to Oldchurch Park access was welcomed. The developer was encouraged to ensure access to it is promoted</p>	<p>The public realm strategy establishes clear desire lines and fitness trails encouraging access to Oldchurch Park.</p>
<p>The need for the Oldchurch Park footpath to be lit after dusk</p>	<p>The areas of public realm within the site will be illuminated at night.</p>

A wish to see a visual comparison between the approved scheme and the proposed scheme	A visual comparison of the two schemes will be provided.
A keenness to understand the impact upon neighbouring occupiers in more detail	Aside from residential properties to the north, the development is effectively an island site. It will not impinge on neighbouring privacy or outlook, and has been robustly tested in terms of daylight/sunlight.
Whether a daylight and sunlight analysis had been undertaken for the public realm and a reassurance that these spaces will have good light levels	Daylight/sunlight studies have confirmed that excellent levels of light will be received at ground level, including residential amenity areas.
What is the justification for the proximity of the blocks to the site boundaries?	The buildings have been set back from the site boundaries to provide new pedestrian and cycle ways, and landscaping. In particular, along the eastern boundary extra space has been provided to allow for future upgrades to Rom Valley Way.
What is the justification for the tallest blocks?	Building heights respond to both the sun path and emerging Romford townscape. The tallest gateway buildings mark the key entrances to the site.
Whether there are sufficient dual aspect units?	Overall 71% of the units will be dual aspect. This is considered to be appropriate given the site's highly accessible urban location.
The applicant must ensure that the Air Ambulance flight path is not impeded	The buildings have been set back from the Air Ambulance no-build zone.
Is there a need for a warning beacon on top of the tallest buildings given the Air Ambulance flight path	This will be discussed with the Air Ambulance as part of the detailed design; however, the buildings are set back from the no-build zone.

SPC Comment	Response
<p>The robustness of the explanation that viability was the reason the original scheme was not built out</p>	<p>The previous planning permission was not financially feasible to deliver. After the density was reduced to 620 and the storey heights to 4-8 and an average of 6 from 8, there was insufficient revenue to support the 40% car parking in large podia. This was recognised by LBH in the agreed 16% affordable and 10% Profit on cost. When the GLA raised the affordable % to 20%, that 10% profit vanished. 17% cost inflation subsequently and only 5.85 sales values rise has rendered it loss making, not just unviable. The current proposal optimises the use of the site, in-line with London Plan requirements, provides 91% increase in amenity space 62% more landscaping and public realm, as well as far more affordable units</p>
<p>The logic behind the hybrid nature of the application</p>	<p>The outline component of the application will establish maximum development parameters. The subsequent Reserved Matters submissions will ensure that the detailed design is appropriate. This approach provides flexibility within the scheme to allow for an alternative northern access and the inclusion of extra care accommodation in Block G. These respective options have been rigorously tested.</p>
<p>The number of family units are significantly short when compared to policy</p>	<p>The site is in a highly accessible location, adjoining Romford town centre and the hospital. Policy requires the provision of high density housing in such locations, which are better suited to smaller units. Nevertheless, the scheme is targeting 15% 3 bed units.</p>
<p>The robustness of the explanation that dual aspects concerns have been addressed</p>	<p>Overall 71% of the units will be dual aspect. This is considered to be appropriate given the site's highly accessible urban location.</p>
<p>Further evidence is needed to reassure that pedestrians, especially school aged children, can move across Rom Valley Way safely</p>	<p>New green pedestrian links will be provided across the site that could be used as safe school routes to the River Rom and as the main corridor to the future Bridge Close school and central Romford. Consultation with Secure by Design has been positive and the recommendations incorporated into the detailed design.</p>

Site and Surroundings

- 2.5 The application site is rectangular in shape with a site area of approximately 2.9ha (29,000m²). The site has been vacant since the former Ice Rink on the northern half of the site (single storey building at 3300m²) was demolished. The site is now largely hard-surfaced with some grassland and some trees/shrubs around its perimeter, and is relatively level (slight gradient from north-west to south-east).
- 2.6 In terms of its local context, the application site lies southeast of Rom Valley Way (A125) dual carriageway which forms part of the Strategic Road Network ("SRN"). The application site is bound to the north by a public car park and to its west by Oldchurch Rise and Queen's Hospital. The southern boundary of the site lies adjacent to the hospital site access, also the main vehicular access point. The site has good access to public transport and other services; it is approximately 700 metre walk from Romford station. The PTAL of the site ranges from 6a to 2.

Planning History

- 2.7 P1389.17 for 'Comprehensive redevelopment of the site to deliver a residential-led mixed use scheme. The proposal seeks to erect nine apartment blocks that range between four to eight storeys in height to contain a total of 620 residential apartments and two residents' gyms with ground floor commercial units, together with associated landscaping, car and cycle parking'. Application approved on 22.08.2018 with s106 agreement.

Planning Policy

- 2.8 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018
London Plan 2016
Intend to Publish London Plan 2019
London Borough of Havering Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD 2008
Romford Area Action Plan DPD 2008
London Borough of Havering Proposed Submission Local Plan 2016 – 2031
Emerging Romford Master Plan

3 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

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

- Principle of development
- Density and Site Layout including connectivity
- High Quality Design including height of buildings relative to the context of the site
- Housing provision, including affordable housing
- Regeneration
- Permeability and highways matters including link and connectivity with adjoining Council carpark, Oldchurch Road, Queen's Hospital and beyond to town centre.
- Retention/Relocation of existing uses
- Provision of infrastructure e.g. health centre or school
- Mitigating flood risk
- Archaeology
- Microclimate/ Daylight - Sunlight
- Sustainable Design and Construction
- Secured by Design
- Servicing Management
- Other issues

Financial and Other Mitigation

- 3.2 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 .

Conclusions

- 3.3 Whilst the scheme has evolved, officers are not yet in a position to fully support the current proposal. The proposed development continues to be considered at meetings with officers at London Borough of Havering (LBH), and with the Greater London Authority (GLA). Further discussions will take place with the GLA and Officers of London Borough of Havering, in accordance with the agreed Planning Performance Agreement.

3.4 Further, depending on the outcome of this presentation, it is likely that this scheme will come back to this Committee for final review as part of the continuing Pre-Application engagement by 31st March 2021.

