



Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

Strategic Planning Committee Developer Presentation 23 January 2025

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>
---	--

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.