



City of Westminster Cabinet Member Report

Decision Maker:	Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration
Date:	9 January 2020
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Response to petition: “Westbourne Terrace Road Residents Association call on the Housing Projects team at Westminster Council to prepare revised designs for the Blomfield Mews development before proceeding with plans that went through in September 2019 to which we strongly object.”
Wards Affected:	Westbourne
Key Decision:	No
Financial Summary:	Financial implications of any future use of the site will be assessed as options are brought forward.
Report of:	Executive Director Growth Planning and Housing

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This report considers a petition, that requested the following:

“Specifically we ask the Housing Projects Team to reconsider the scale of the development to address the following:

- The 3-storey flats and 6-storey townhouse so close to the rear boundary of the existing terrace would cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupants of Nos 14-26 in respect of outlook, privacy, enclosure, daylight and sunlight*
- The methodology of daylight and sunlight assessment was flawed and materially misrepresented the true impact of the proposal*
- The proposal with this number of flats creates an unsafe local environment in terms of highways and pedestrian movements*

- *The design of this development is not sympathetic to the heritage buildings that surround it nor consistent with previous planning objections ”*

1.2 The petition has 166 signatures and was submitted at Full Council in November 2019 by Councillor David Boothroyd.

2. **Recommendations**

2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration;

- Notes the submitted petition from the local community and acknowledges the concerns of those who have signed it regarding the Blomfield Mews proposal.
- Acknowledges the need to develop on the currently under-utilised site in order to deliver 14 much needed affordable homes in the area, contributing to the Council’s City For All priorities to deliver an increase in levels of affordable housing for the residents of Westminster.
- Commits to engaging with the local community and ward members on the proposed development and the next steps.

3. **Reasons for Decision**

3.1 The proposal at Blomfield Mews delivers new affordable homes for local people on what is currently a poor-quality brownfield garage site, meeting the key objectives of the adopted City Plan.

3.2 The Planning Applications (Major) Sub-Committee on 24 September 2019, after considering all the material planning considerations, which included all the concerns raised in the subsequent petition to which this report relates, resolved to grant conditional permission subject to the completion of a legal agreement. The basis on which the Sub-Committee found the proposed development to be acceptable is set out in detail in the officers report to the Planning Applications (Major) Sub-Committee on 24 September 2019 (hereafter ‘the Committee report’). The Committee report and minutes, are at Appendix B.

4. **Background, including Policy Context**

4.1 Blomfield Mews is a site owned by Westminster City Council, located in the Westbourne ward. The site currently comprises 26 underutilised garages of which a number of these are currently let on weekly licences. The site is often subject to antisocial behaviour and as a result of this, the north of the site has previously been hoarded off.

4.2 Redevelopment of the Blomfield Mews site forms part of the Council’s Infill Development Programme which focuses on making the best use of

Westminster's existing land to provide new affordable homes for people living and working locally.

- 4.3 In early 2018, a planning application for 18 new homes, including 14 affordable homes was submitted to the local planning authority and subsequently withdrawn following a number of resident and ward councillor concerns.
- 4.4 Following the withdrawal of the scheme, a number of design amendments were made to the proposal, taking on feedback from both local residents and ward councillors.
- 4.5 Prior to the re-submission of the second planning application, pre-application consultation was undertaken with Westminster Council planning and design officers, ward councillors and local residents.
- 4.6 A planning application for the site was re-submitted in January 2019 and was the subject of public consultation. The application was presented at the Planning (Major) Applications Sub-Committee on 24 September 2019. After considering all the material planning considerations, the Sub-Committee resolved to grant conditional permission subject to the completion of a unilateral undertaking, to secure a number of planning obligations.
- 4.7 The Committee report concluded that in terms of height and massing, the proposal is considered to integrate acceptably with the surrounding townscape. With regards to the townhouse, the Committee report concludes that the proposed height, position and massing of the building complements the adjacent townscape and is therefore considered acceptable.
- 4.8 As part of the application, a Daylight and Sunlight report, which assessed the impact of the development in accordance with the Building Research Establishment (BRE) Guidelines – Site Planning for Daylight and Sunlight (2011) was submitted with the proposal. This report included cumulative assessment of the impact on light of the development in combination with the approved scheme for redevelopment of the nearby site at 5 Kingdom Street. The impact of the proposal on the amenities of neighbouring residents was fully addressed in the Committee report.
- 4.9 The planning application was accompanied by a transport statement, which assesses the impacts of the development on traffic in the surrounding road network. The Committee report set out that the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the operation of the surrounding highways network.
- 4.10 A heritage statement was submitted as part of the planning application. In dealing with this application, the Committee report went into great detail in respect of the proposed impact on the designated heritage assets; namely the setting of the neighbouring Grade II listed buildings and the appearance and character of this

part of the Maida Vale Conservation Area. The Committee report concluded that the development would not harm the setting of the neighbouring listed buildings, nor would it harm the setting of the Maida Vale Conservation Area.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The scheme will incur a cost to bring forward which will be budgeted for accordingly.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 Legal implications will be investigated as the project progresses.

7. Outstanding issues

- 7.1 Not applicable.
- 7.2 If you have any further questions regarding this project, please do not hesitate to contact Henrietta Atkinson – hatkinson@westminster.gov.uk

For completion by the **Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration**

Declaration of Interest

I have <no interest to declare / to declare an interest> in respect of this report

Signed: _____ Date: _____

NAME: **Councillor Rachael Robathan, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration**

State nature of interest if any

.....
(N.B: If you have an interest you should seek advice as to whether it is appropriate to make a decision in relation to this matter)

For the reasons set out above, I agree the recommendations in the report entitled **Response to petition: “Westbourne Terrace Road Residents Association call on the Housing Projects team at Westminster Council to prepare revised designs for the Blomfield Mews development before proceeding with plans that went through in September 2019 to which we strongly object”** and reject any alternative options which are referred to but not recommended.

Signed

Councillor Rachael Robathan, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration

Date

If you have any additional comment which you would want actioned in connection with your decision you should discuss this with the report author and then set out your comment below before the report and this pro-forma is returned to the Secretariat for processing.

Additional comment:
.....
.....
.....
.....

If you do not wish to approve the recommendations, or wish to make an alternative decision, it is important that you consult the report author, the Director of Law, the Executive Director for Finance and Resources, and, if there are human resources implications, the Director of People Services (or their representatives) so that (1) you can be made aware of any further relevant considerations that you should take into account before making the decision and (2) your reasons for the decision can be properly identified and recorded, as required by law.

Note to Cabinet Member: Your decision will now be published and copied to the Members of the relevant Policy and Scrutiny Committee. If the decision falls within the criteria for call-in, it will not be implemented until five working days have elapsed from publication to allow the Policy and Scrutiny Committee to decide whether it wishes to call the matter in.

Appendix A

Other Implications

1. **Resources Implications** – no implication
2. **Business Plan Implications** – no implication
3. **Risk Management Implications** – no implication
4. **Health and Wellbeing Impact Assessment including Health and Safety Implications** – no implication
5. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – no implication
6. **Impact on the Environment** – no implication
7. **Equalities Implications** – no implication
8. **Staffing Implications** – no implication
9. **Human Rights Implications** – no implication
10. **Energy Measure Implications** – no implication
11. **Communications Implications** – no implication