

# Former Hounslow House – London Road

## Neighbour workshop note – 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016

On 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016 the project team, working on behalf of Meyer Homes, hosted a second informal workshop with members of the immediate community to discuss issues relating to the Former Hounslow House site, London Road, Hounslow. Neighbours of the site were sent an invitation letter and asked to register for a place at the session in order to manage numbers. In total 6 individuals attended the event.

### 1. Workshop structure

Consistent with the approach taken during the first workshop, the event was informal in nature, where attendees were encouraged to sit on two tables with members of the project team allocated to each table to help guide discussion. The workshop had a running time of approximately one hour between 7.00pm - 8.00pm. A brief summary of the points discussed at the first workshop was sent with the invitation to this event as well as a link to the project website where copies of the minutes of the first workshop were hosted. Full copies of the minutes were also circulated to the 13 individuals who attended the first workshop alongside the invitation to the second session. The proposed agenda for the second workshop was as follows:

- **7.00pm – 7.05pm: (1) Introduction**
  - Overview of previous discussions and purpose of the second workshop
  
- **7.05pm – 7.20pm: (2) Presentation on work to date**
  - Run through of site history (demolished buildings; approved Tesco superstore and refused residential development)
  - Overview of feedback on initial ideas
  - Outline the changes to the scheme following first neighbour workshop
  - Details on the distances between the proposed new homes and existing North Drive properties
  - Images to be used and discussed:
    - Aerial image of the site today; aerial image of site before clearance; approved plans for Tesco superstore; plan of refused residential scheme
    - Plan containing feedback on initial ideas; Plan showing design changes
    - Sketch view of initial ideas; basic visual of current scheme
    - Visual comparison of Tesco superstore scheme and current scheme
    - Images showing cross sections through the current scheme
    - Images showing the distances between the proposed new homes and existing North Drive properties
    - Indicative sketch views from within the site

*7.20 – 7.30pm: Concluding remarks for this discussion*

- **7.30pm – 7.55pm: (3) Discussion on the updated plans for the site**
  - A general discussion was encouraged on the two tables on the updated plans and any other issues attendees wanted to cover
  
- **7.55pm – 8.00pm: General Q & A and concluding remarks**
  - A general Q & A session was included at the end of the meeting and a brief discussion on the next steps for the project

**Venue:** The same venue as the first neighbour workshop was used to ensure a consistent approach was taken to the neighbour workshop. The session was hosted at The Hounslow Arts Centre, Paul Robeson Theatre, the Treaty Shopping Centre, High St., Hounslow, TW3 1ES. Full details of the venue as well as directions were provided in the invitation sent to neighbours.

## 1. Introduction

The project team briefly introduced themselves for the benefit of those who had not attended the first neighbour workshop. The purpose of the workshop and how it fitted into the planning process was explained and an overview of the agenda was provided. As with the first workshop, it was explained that the format would remain fluid, to allow the opportunity for attendees to guide discussion should they wish to concentrate on a particular area or topic.

## 2. Presentation on work to date

Following a brief presentation provided by PTEa giving an overview of the site history, a breakdown of the feedback received from the first neighbour workshop and a run through of the design changes to date there was an opportunity for attendees to ask questions. The discussion broadly covered the following topics:

- **Parking on site** – Questions were asked regarding what level of parking would be provided on site. The response was given that limited disabled car parking will be provided associated with the residential block in the southern section of the site (immediately adjacent to London Road). Private parallel car parking bays will also be provided for the mews houses adjacent to the existing North Drive properties. A limited number of visitor car parking/drop-off zones will be accommodated within an area of open space next to the main entrance into the site.
- **Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) extension** – Concerns were raised over how the developer would be able to prevent new residents parking cars elsewhere within the local area. The response was given that we are aware that the Council is reviewing the CPZ schemes across the Borough and that whilst there may have been failures in appropriately enforcing the CPZ on North Drive and the surrounding roads, this is likely to be looked at over the coming months. In addition to the CPZ there will be a clause written into the ownership of the new properties which prevents access to a car parking permit.
- **Site entrance** – One attendee asked whether the entrance to the site would be gated. The response was that as a general rule, gating new communities is an approach which should be avoided with developments such as this one and the Local Planning Authority would likely object to that type of plan. Instead considerable work is being undertaken to focus on the type of landscaping and form of the open spaces around the site, including the area next to the main entrance to the site. This space in particular needs to provide the new community an enjoyable open space whilst providing an appropriate level of distance, noise mitigation and security for the existing residents of Aces Court.

## 3. General discussion

Following a number of questions raised at the end of the presentation discussions took place on the two separate tables in order to focus the conversation. The discussion broadly covered the following topics:

- **Gardens for the mews homes** – A question was asked whether there were gardens proposed for the mews houses adjacent to North Drive. It is proposed that these new homes will not have private garden space but will be provided access to the public spaces included within the courtyard of the northern or southern residential building.
- **Security of footpath** – Some discussion was had over the security of the footpath connecting with Hounslow East underground station. It was mentioned that type of landscaping for this location is being carefully considered with no seating being proposed and softer planting to discourage any loitering in the area and limit littering.
- **London Road pedestrian island** – It was asked whether this is likely to change as a result of our plans. The team clarified that we are seeking an answer from TfL and the Council as to what is likely to happen with the pedestrian island. As the space is outside of our red line boundary it is not proposed that the

development will directly result in any changes to this road layout. That being said, it is understood that as part of an upgrading of London Road, being proposed by TfL, there are some plans which show the removal of the island in favour of widening of the cycle lanes. The team will continue to seek clarification from TfL and the Council and provide more information at the public exhibition.

- **Number of retail units and proposed delivery access** – It was asked how many retail units are proposed on London Road and how this would be accessed by delivery vehicles etc. The team clarified that it is likely to be one retail unit for the whole space and servicing will be provided by an access off London Road, adjacent to the bus station (furthest away from existing residents) and into an undercroft service space. This undercroft service space will be a dedicated area on the ground floor of the southern building which is covered by the proposed new open space for the new homes in this location. Vehicles will then exit the site via the main access point on London Road adjacent to Aces Court.
- **Height of mews houses** – One resident living on North Drive reiterated points raised at the previous meeting that he was unaware of any plans to build adjacent to his property and wanted more information on the height of the mews houses. Broadly residents felt the approach to maintain the height of the existing wall for the first three houses seemed acceptable. The break in the roof line of the proposed 2½ storey mews houses was also welcomed as they ensure the most amount of sunlight could penetrate into the existing properties of North Drive.
- **Removal of the building along Aces Court boundary** – The removal of a building in this location in favour of a secure walled boundary was welcomed. The detail of the landscaping in this location was discussed and more information on the type of planting to be proposed will be made available later in the consultation process.
- **Height of Block C (the southern block of proposed new homes)** – The reduction of this building by one storey was welcomed by an existing resident of Aces Court. The gaps between the buildings were also welcomed as this will both allow sunlight through but also provide shade at certain times of the day.

#### 4. Conclusions

Consistent with the first neighbour workshop the discussion was constructive. The changes to the massing of the buildings following the first neighbour workshop and the stepping back of the height, towards the bus station, was broadly welcomed by attendees.

Parking continued to be the most important issue for existing residents and assurances are needed that appropriate measures are put in place to prevent new residents parking on the wider road network. Careful consideration should be given to the parking strategy and residents are keen to work with the Council to implement potential changes to the CPZ arrangements, which better manage the local parking pressures.

The removal of a building adjacent to Aces Court and creating a landscaped open space in this location is supported. The measures being put in place to discourage loitering in the open spaces are also welcomed. Details of the secure boundary for the existing Aces Court residents should be provided at the next meeting along with a planting strategy for the open space.

Residents again welcomed the opportunity to discuss the plans as they have evolved and were informed that a wider, public consultation exercise will be undertaken in the coming weeks, where more details will be provided and another opportunity to feedback on the plans will be available.