

Panda House, 628-634 Commercial Road

Response to LBTH's Comments of 16th November 2020

Introduction

1. The note seeks to address the transport and waste related issues before the inquiry in January 2021 (case ref APP/E5900/W/20/3250665) so that both parties and the Inspector can just focus on the main areas of dispute. The outstanding transport and waste issues are taken from the email sent on behalf of the London Borough of Tower Hamlet (LBTH) email on 16th November 2020 to Rapleys LLP.
2. An extract of the issues raised in the email of 16th November 2020 is provided in blue italic text in the sections below, followed by the response addressing the issue.

Issue related to access to the lower ground floor cycle store

Firstly, Cycle access remains a concern. The proposed platform access on Island Row is not considered to be safe, and it leaves the cycle access point exposed to elements and is also a safety concern as it allows for tailgating onto the platform. An alternative access arrangement should be considered in order to provide a fully enclosed and secure entrance for cyclists. You might want to explore the option of providing the access directly into the building on Island Row where the current access lift is proposed which is likely to require some internal layout changes, or potentially reuse the main entrance on Commercial Road and rearrange the lobby space to ensure there is sufficient space for cycle access.

3. To take into account concerns raised by LBTH it is now proposed that the access strategy to the cycle store will involve cyclists accessing via the main Commercial Road entrance. Cyclists would walk through the reception lobby area to Lift 1 which has internal dimensions which exceeds 1.2m x 2.3m, with a door width of 1.0m. Therefore, the lift would meet the minimum requirements for the use of cyclists. The route through the reception lobby to the lifts is sufficiently wide to accommodate the movement of guests go to and from the lifts with a very small proportion of those guests wheeling a bicycle.
4. In the event that the lift is not operational due to maintenance or repair works, cyclists will be able to access the lower ground floor cycle storage by making use of the cycle wheeling track along the side of the staircase.
5. There is a platform lift between the Commercial Road footway level and the threshold level of the building to facilitate access for cyclists via Commercial Road, in addition to meeting step free disabled access requirements. Again the min. size of the lift will be 1.2m x 2.3m.

Issue related to the number of cycle parking spaces

In addition, the Council's fundamental disagreement regarding the number of cycle spaces remains. It is considered that the number of long-term cycle spaces should be provided in accordance with the draft London Plan policy which requires one space per each HMO room. Whilst we appreciate the efforts for a potential provision of up to 80 cycle spaces in two tier racks as indicated in the appellant's response to the Council's Statement of Case, we would like to explore the option of an internal layout reconfiguration to ensure the provision of cycle spaces which meets the minimum requirements. In addition, 5% of the cycle spaces will be required as Sheffield stands to accommodate larger/adapted cycles.

6. The cycle parking provision has been reviewed to achieve the requested provision in the space available. Drawing no. 189-CDA-A2-B1-DR-A-05-0099-REV 12 showing the layout of the lower ground floor indicates that 82 cycles can be provided in the form of 42 spaces within a two-tier rack system in the cycle store, and 40 semi-vertical bicycle racks with 6 in the cycle store and 34 in the courtyard.
7. In addition to the 82 spaces in the lower ground floor, 4 spaces in the form of Sheffield stands are proposed in an external cycle store to the rear of the disabled parking bay, thereby increasing the overall provision of long stay spaces to 86. The external cycle store shown in drawing no. 189-CDA-A2-00-DR-A-05-0100-REV 08 provides space for non-standard bicycles, and represents 5% of the overall provisions of cycle parking.
8. The total long-stay cycle parking provision can be assigned as follows:

Hostel	2 spaces for 25 hostel rooms which meets the standard 1 per 20 rooms.
HMO	84 spaces for 84 HMO rooms which equate to 1 space per room. (This provision is more than the 0.75 space per room requirement for student accommodation in the Intend to Publish London Plan, which could be considered as a comparable use.)

Issue related to waste collection arrangements

In terms of deliveries and servicing, whilst the Council appreciates that a similar arrangement is taking place at present, we would like to secure an arrangement which would seek to minimise any adverse impact. The provided tracking shows that the vehicles are encroaching onto the public footway, which is a safety issue. This is of particular concern in relation to the waste collection as the Council's waste collection vehicles are 11.15m in length, and the provided tracking shows an even smaller vehicle. The Council has an obligation to collect waste classified as household. We would need to understand the waste management that would occur in the building and an arrangement to bring the bins up for collection and to ensure the Council's waste vehicle and crew are not waiting for bins given that any waiting could obstruct the public highway. Details and plan of bringing the bins to the street level are required to understand these issues, as well as ensuring that the vehicles are able to stop at the designated servicing bay. A suitable drop kerb should be provided given that access is required across a public highway. The collection point should be entirely within the appeal proposal's red line boundary to ensure that there is no obstruction to the public footway.

9. For the short stay HMO and hostel uses, the council doesn't have an obligation to collect the waste which is generated. The waste is proposed to be collected by a private waste contractor who would collect waste from both the hostel and the HMO elements of the development, arranged under one contract thereby minimising the number of refuse vehicle collections. The terms of the contract would involve the contractor using a small waste collection vehicle, which is smaller than the Council's collection vehicles and that which is shown in the vehicle tracking drawing.
10. In terms of the waste collection arrangements, the collection days and times will be agreed with the waste collection contractor. On the waste collection days it will be the responsibility of the site management team to transfer the bins from the store to ground level using the refuse lift, where they will be held within the site boundary so as not to block the public footway, until they are emptied by the waste contractor. The eurobin holding area at ground floor level are shown in drawing no. 189-CDA-A2-00-DR-A-05-0100-REV 08. The site management team will then use the refuse lift to transfer the waste bins back to the lower ground floor stores. Two waste collection trips per week are envisaged, one for landfill waste (7 bins) and the other for recyclable waste (4 bins).
11. To facilitate the movement of the bins from footway level to carriageway level, either a 1.2m length of dropped kerb would be installed in the kerblines immediately north of the disabled bays on Island Row or further consideration will be made to create a level surface along Island Row whereby the carriageway level is raised to the footway level thereby avoiding the need for a dropped kerb. It is envisaged that details of either arrangement would be agreed with LBTH through a Section 278 agreement.

Issue related to waste storage capacity

In terms of waste capacity, the appeal proposal needs to demonstrate that there would be sufficient space to cater for the future occupiers of the building. In order to overcome the lack of waste capacity guidelines, the Council's waste team has suggested to use a guideline of at least 100l per room for the HMO rooms (60 rubbish, 40 recycling) given that a one bedroom flat is 130l (70 rubbish, 60 recycling). For the hostel element of the scheme, given that this would be temporary accommodation; this is likely to be less.

12. The waste storage provisions have been reviewed in light of the Council's waste team's latest comments which suggest the assumption of 100 litres of waste per room for the HMO rooms (60 litres rubbish, 40 litres recycling). For the hostel element of the scheme, they have suggested that the provision could be less but they haven't specified a rate. Hence, for ease we have again assumed 100 litres per room. The waste storage calculation is therefore as follows:

Hostel

General waste	60 x 25 = 1500 litres	2 no. 1100 litre eurobins
Recyclable waste	40 x 25 = 1000 litres	1 no. 1280 litre eurobins

HMO

General waste	60 x 84 = 5040 litres	5 no. 1100 litre eurobins
Recyclable waste	40 x 84 = 3360 litres	3 no. 1280 litre eurobins

13. The above eurobin waste storage provisions are shown in two separate stores in the lower ground floor on drawing no. 189-CDA-A2-B1-DR-A-05-0099-REV 12. The lift for transferring the bins to ground level is also accessible from both stores. In practice if the waste collection arrangements for the Hostel and the HMO are dealt with under one contract as is envisaged, then there would be no need for separate stores and the space available could be set out more efficiently. It should also be noted that the storage provisions assume weekly collections i.e. one for general waste and one for recyclable waste. This is an improvement on the existing situation where there are more frequent weekly collections i.e. three for general waste and three for recyclable waste.

Issue related to trip generation assessment of the existing and proposed developments

With regards to trip generation numbers, we would need to ensure that the most up-to-date has been provided. The methodology used should be consistent across different documents to ensure that more up-to-date and relevant surveys are provided. These should be revisited in order to provide the relevant information to understand if any additional mitigation measures would be required.

14. There are only two sites on the TRICS database under the category of hostel sites, both of which are YMCA hostels with one being the Liverpool site used in the trip generation assessment of the appeal scheme which was surveyed in 2010, and the other being in Merton which was surveyed in 2003.
15. Only the Liverpool site was used in the assessment given that it was the most recent survey. The year of the survey is not considered to be a significant issue in this case which would invalidate the use of the TRICS survey site, since travel patterns in respect of the total movements in and out of hostel during the peak periods in 2010 are not expected to have significantly changed.
16. The trip generation rates derived from the TRICS data of a YMCA hostel is expected to provide a robust assessment of the likely trips generated. This is because the institutional nature of the YMCA hostel is likely to result in higher occupancy levels, unlike the existing and proposed hostels which are more likely to be affected by seasonal demand trends.
17. A trip generation survey of the existing hostel was not undertaken as the site's occupancy can vary significantly month to month and so a survey of the existing hostel at the time of completing the Transport Assessment would not have been representative of the potential trips generated by the proposed development particularly at times of the year when the occupancy levels are high.
18. The existing hostel development has capacity to accommodate 263 occupants while the proposed development (hostel and HMO) would have capacity to accommodate 185 occupants. Although the capacity of the existing site is higher the typical occupancy levels are likely to mean that the trips generated by the proposed development may not be significantly different to that of the existing hostel and the impact of either a small reduction or increase in trips will not have a significant impact on the surrounding transport network.

Issue related to the road safety implications of the disabled parking bay

The safe use of the proposed accessible car parking space is required and be demonstrated. A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit should be provided to demonstrate that suitable visibility is available and that there are no inherent safety issues with the proposal. Should this find the proposed space to be appropriate for use, the Council would be satisfied. However, should this show that the provided space is not suitable for use and that the designers cannot find a way of addressing any concerns, we are willing to explore and agree on alternative options with yourselves as we would have sufficient information to acknowledge the site's constraints when it comes to this element of the proposal.

19. An independent road safety auditor was contacted to provide comments on the proposed disabled parking bay, and based on their recommendation a Road Safety Assessment was undertaken by them in line with the relevant sections of GG-119, part of the Design Manual for Roads & Bridges (DMRB).
20. The Road Safety Assessment dated 24th November 2020 (ref: L1-DR-VRP1237-01) didn't identify any road safety concerns with the proposals. However, road safety auditor did suggested that users of the disabled car parking bay be advised to reverse into the parking space in line with advice in the Highway Code, since this is safer then reversing from the bay into the highway.
21. To take on board the recommendation with the Road Safety Assessment it is proposed that appropriate signage be provided alongside the bay to inform users, and in addition to this the site management team will notify in advance the pre-arranged users of the bay that they should whenever possible reverse into the disabled bay.
22. It is envisaged that details of the signage can be agreed with LBTH by condition.