

PEABODY AND BERKELEY: PLUMSTEAD WEST THAMESMEAD

POSITIVE PLUMSTEAD QUESTION AND ANSWER

INTRODUCTION:

Peabody and Berkeley were pleased to be invited to attend Positive Plumstead's meeting on 6th September, at which a presentation was given to provide an overview of the work undertaken to date and forward steps. This was followed by a question and answer session which was chaired by Positive Plumstead.

The purpose of the following note is to reflect the questions which were raised and provide an overview of the answers given.

The project team continues to welcome feedback regarding the proposals and is committed to maintaining a constructive dialogue with local residents and businesses.

Further information can be found via www.plumsteadproposals.co.uk and any further comments or questions can be sent to info@plumsteadproposals.co.uk

Please look out for out consultation dates in October and we look forward to seeing you there!

QUESTIONS BY THEME:

COMMUNITY SPACES:

Question: Where is the community space currently located and could it be towards the south of the site so that it benefits existing local residents? If the main community centre could not be located to the south, could one of the blocks have a provision of space which could be hired by local groups?

Answer: Our current thoughts are that the community space could be located towards the centre of the masterplan to ensure that it is accessible to as many residents and businesses as possible across Plumstead, Broadwater Green and Thamesmead. It also provides a focal point to the development and a social hub where local people can meet.

There is, however, the possibility of having a series of flexible spaces at the ground floor level which could provide community uses and this is being considered as part of the masterplanning process. Peabody and Berkeley have also committed to undertake studies which will identify uses that compliment existing organisations and spaces and ensure that the new provision does not compete with them.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

Question: Regarding the affordable housing, will they be tenure blind, i.e. no different to look at than the private housing?

Answer: Yes, all homes will be designed to the same high-quality specification and outward appearance.

Question: What does “affordable” mean?

In this instance, Peabody and Berkeley have committed to meeting the Council’s policy of 35% affordable housing being provided on site (approximately 550 homes). Of this number, 70% of the homes will be provided at the Mayor’s London Living Rent which, at present, equates to around 60% of local rental values.

The remaining 30% will be provided on an intermediate basis such as shared ownership basis, i.e. residents will be able to buy a portion of their home and rent the remaining portion.

Question: What size will the affordable homes be?

Answer: A mixture of one, two and three-bedroom homes, the detail of which will be agreed through further discussions with the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

Question: What size will the units be? Will the affordable homes be smaller than the privately sold homes?

Answer: There will be a range of sizes of homes available across both the affordable and privately sold apartments. All of the homes will follow the national guidelines on space standard sizes. As an indication, national guidelines dictate that a one-bedroom apartment for two people to occupy should be at least 50 sqm in size.

Question: Will the affordable housing be offered to Greenwich residents first?

Answer: The London Living Rent homes will be allocated by the Royal Borough of Greenwich. The shared ownership properties will be marketed through Peabody’s own process but a marketing strategy and further detail will be agreed as and when planning consent is granted; usually through the planning conditions.

HOUSING TYPES AND OWNERSHIP:

Question: Who will own the homes? Will they all be sold abroad?

Answer: For the private homes, Berkeley has a policy of marketing all of its developments to UK buyers first. Whilst some may be bought by investors, data gathered from other Berkeley schemes in Greenwich demonstrates a 95%+ occupancy rate. Therefore, even if some are privately rented, there are people living in them who are providing an active contribution to the local community and economy.

DESIGN:

Question: What will the height of the buildings be?

Answer: It is proposed that the buildings will range between eight and ten storeys, with one landmark building of 21 storeys. The rationale behind including the taller building is to create an identity and sense of arrival towards Thamesmead.

Question: Will the development be inward-looking or will it be integrated into the wider Plumstead community?

Answer: The aim is to make the new development part of the wider communities of Plumstead, Thamesmead and Broadwater Green. Peabody and Berkeley's proposals seek to encourage existing and new residents to connect into one another in the context of the Ridgeway and Western Way.

Question: Will brick facades be used?

Answer: The current concept proposals of the masterplan show predominantly brick facades being used, along with other high-quality materials in some areas to accent key features.

Question: Can historic references be included in the planning and design process, EG: the fact that it was the original site of Arsenal Football Club and its history of providing jobs to local people?

Answer: All ideas which link the site to its former-history are very much worth pursuing and have been passed to the team to consider in more detail.

TRANSPORT AND ACCESS:

Question: What will happen to vehicles on site? Will there be parking and visitor parking provision?

Answer: Car parking spaces are provided at a ratio of 0.25 per home being built, i.e. one space for every four homes. One of the key qualities of the site is its excellent location in relation to public transport. As such, it is not anticipated that all homes will require a car parking spaces. Those spaces which are provided will be screened by green landscaped podium gardens.

Visitor parking spaces and spaces to access the businesses on site will be provided and there is precedent for successful permit schemes across the Borough which the project team is considering.

Peabody and Berkeley are aware of the issues which local residents have raised in terms of overspill parking on streets around Plumstead High Street and will work to ensure that the new residents and businesses on the site do not exacerbate this problem. The limited spaces which are being provided on site are intended to avoid people driving to the site if they can use local transport routes.

Question: Will there be other through routes, for example for pedestrians and cyclists?

Answer: The proposals onsite will seek to connect to existing sustainable transport links. The scheme will seek to link to this part of the Ridgeway encouraging safe, accessible and attractive links to the Ridgeway and across to Plumstead Station, Plumstead High Street and Broadwater Green to the North.

Question: Will safety around the Station and Ridgeway be enhanced as part of the development proposals?

During the meeting, a significant discussion ensued surrounding the Ridgeway with differing opinions as to how suitable it is as an area to walk and spend leisure time. Suggestions included the need for development close to the Ridgeway to create a more active space. It was also felt that this would improve safety as there would be more over-looking and natural surveillance.

Ridgeway Users stated a clear vision for the Ridgeway to link to the Thames Path and to be “clean, safe and accessible”. Representatives asked Peabody and Berkeley to consider the pedestrian routes through the site to ensure the maximum benefit is provided to all.

Answer: Peabody and Berkeley see this part of the Ridgeway as a key to connecting the existing communities with new residents. Peabody and Berkeley’s proposals will aim to encourage use and maximise activation of the ridgeway whilst improving natural surveillance and accessibility where possible. The ideas put forward at Positive Plumstead were clearly based on significant experience and will be taken in account during the development of the masterplan.

SUSTAINABILITY:

Question: Are you working towards reducing the carbon footprint of the development, for example by utilising solar panels?

Answer: Yes, Peabody and Berkeley are committed to working towards reducing the carbon footprint of the development. It is proposed that the site will be designed to reduce demand for energy in the first instance, by progressing with a ‘fabric first’ approach, i.e. by providing high levels of insulation to promote thermal efficiency. In addition, the team will be considering the use of solar panels and energy-efficient heating systems. The scheme also aims to deliver a significant amount of green space and open landscaping throughout the site as a means of promoting healthy environments.

Question: What will the development look like from the surrounding areas?

Answer: The initial masterplan demonstrates the layout, but more detailed context will be provided at the formal consultation events in October, including images of the views in 3D.

Question: Has the ground been decontaminated and has mitigation against potential building cracking and unfavourable soil conditions been factored in?

Answer: Extensive ground investigations have been undertaken to date to ensure that the project building team has a thorough understanding of what it needs to achieve. Decontamination works will be undertaken when a planning consent is granted and the necessary preparations and studies have been undertaken.

Initial results suggest the soil at Plumstead West Thamesmead is very similar to that at Royal Arsenal Riverside and, as such, the team is confident that they have the ability and experience to build an exemplary and robust scheme.

WORKSPACE AND JOB PROVISION:

Question: What proportion of the site will be used for work spaces?

Answer: 200,000 sq ft has been allocated as Light Industrial and employment spaces. The previous consultation events identified a local need for:

- Make spaces – small studios and workshops for independent businesses to operate from
- Small manufacturing units
- Offices
- Storage facilities for small businesses
- Sociable working spaces which will enable small companies to be part of a wider building/campus

Peabody and Berkeley support this vision. They will also be responsible for marketing, managing and maintaining the work spaces so it is imperative that they meet local requirements and add to the vibrancy of the community throughout the day. It is intended that the businesses which are brought to the site will compliment those on Pettman Crescent, Nathan Way and Plumstead High Street and not detract from the surrounding business community.

SECURITY:

Question: Have Peabody and Berkeley been in touch with the prison?

Answer: Yes. Discussions with the prison are ongoing to ensure that the development will not impact upon its operation and they are being fully appraised of masterplanning developments.