

Appendix 4 - Scheme Option Appraisal

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document has been prepared by Poplar HARCA and CSDL as supporting material to the Statement of Reasons. The document outlines the rationale for the Scheme, which is the regeneration of an existing District Centre.
- 1.2 Poplar HARCA has been working on proposals to regenerate the Chrisp Street District Centre since 2009.
- 1.3 The Scheme has been developed with the regeneration of the District Centre as its central focus, in order to facilitate local economic improvements.
- 1.4 The approach taken has been to develop proposals that enhance the retail offer to improve the trading performance of the retail providers and market stallholders, while also addressing issues with poor accessibility and streetscape that the area currently suffers from, improving the retail offer and increasing the number and tenure mix of homes on the site both to improve quantitative and qualitative housing supply in order to fund the delivery of the overall scheme.
- 1.5 This document summarises the physical, socio-economic and planning policy drivers for the Scheme, and explains how it came to be developed.

2 Socio-economic context for the Scheme

- 2.1 The residents of Lansbury Ward suffer significant social and economic disadvantage even in comparison to other wards within Tower Hamlets.
- 2.2 The Lansbury Ward profile (2014)¹ identified the following key matters in respect of social and economic conditions within the ward:
 - a. Lansbury Ward had the highest proportion of residents aged 0-15 years old in the borough at almost 28 per cent and also the lowest proportion of working aged residents (16-64 years).

¹ https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Borough_statistics/Ward_profiles/Lansbury-FINAL-10062014.pdf

- b. At the time of the 2011 Census, 9,458 residents in the ward were BAME (64 per cent). This proportion was ten percentage points higher than the borough average of 54 per cent.
- c. Residents of Bangladeshi origin accounted for 39 per cent of the population (5,823 residents), a higher proportion than the borough average of 32 per cent.
- d. There were 5,259 households in the Lansbury Ward. Compared to the other wards, Lansbury has a higher than average proportion of households – accounting for almost 5.1 per cent of all households in the borough.
- e. 21.4 per cent of households in the wards were owner-occupied, lower than the borough average of 26.6 per cent.
- f. There were a higher than average proportion of socially rented properties in this ward and a lower than average proportion of private rented properties. Together the proportion of renters (80.6 per cent) was higher than the borough average (72.2 per cent).
- g. The proportion of households in the Lansbury Ward with three or more people accounted for almost 45 per cent of the total households in the ward. This proportion was higher than the borough average of 35 per cent.
- h. On Census day, 985 households were recorded as having five or more people living in them. This equated to 18.7 per cent of the households in the ward and was higher than the average for Tower Hamlets (12.3 per cent).
- i. The average household size was 2.83 persons compared to the borough average 2.51.
- j. Families with dependent children occupied 39.5 percent of the households in the ward, higher than the borough average of 26.6 per cent.
- k. Older people living alone (65+) accounted for 7.9 per cent of households which was higher than the borough average of 6 per cent.
- l. Table 3 of the Ward Profile shows the proportion of households that were overcrowded, had the required number of bedrooms, or were under-occupied at the time of the Census. 19 per cent of households (1,029

households) in the ward were overcrowded – higher than the average for the borough.

- m. 1,278 residents (8.6 per cent) in Lansbury had a long term health problem or disability limiting the person's day to day activities a lot, while around 8.3 per cent (1,234 residents) had a long term health problem or disability limiting the person's day to day activities a little.
- n. In Lansbury, the rate of people with a long term health problem or disability limiting day to day activities a lot and the rate of people with a long term health problem or disability limiting day to day activities a little were both in the Top 3 in Tower Hamlets. Notably, both rates were above the England, London and Tower Hamlets averages.
- o. The Lansbury Ward had a low rate of people in employment (47.3 per cent) compared to Tower Hamlets (57.6 per cent) and London (62.4 percent).
- p. The proportion of economically inactive residents, including those looking after home & family (10.4 per cent) and the long term sick (7 per cent) was very high, above the Tower Hamlets, London and England averages.
- q. A total of 986 residents were unemployed in Lansbury. This rate of 9.7 per cent was the highest in Tower Hamlets (average 6.7 per cent), and above the London (5.2 per cent) and England (4.4 per cent) rates.
- r. Lansbury had the highest unemployment rate in the borough with 18.8 per cent, which was significantly above the Tower Hamlets average of 12 per cent.
- s. The unemployment rate in Lansbury (18.8 per cent) was more than three times higher compared to the rate in St Katharine's and Wapping (4.9 per cent).
- t. The population aged 16 to 64 in Lansbury showed a different qualification structure to Tower Hamlets as a whole with the highest proportion of residents with no formal qualification and the lowest proportion of residents with level 4 plus qualification e.g. NVQs, BTEC Professional diplomas, certificates and awards, HNCs, Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE) and Higher apprenticeship

- u. The proportion of those with a level 4 qualification was substantially lower in Lansbury (25.1 per cent) compared to Tower Hamlets (43.6 per cent) and London (40.5 per cent).
- v. However, around 2,482 residents or 25.6 per cent aged 16 to 64 did not hold a formal qualification. This rate was substantially above the Tower Hamlets average of 15.6 per cent and the London (12.4 per cent) and England rates (14.8 per cent).

2.3 This situation continues to the present day. The 2019 Borough Profile² makes the following statements on poverty within Tower Hamlets:

- a) Tower Hamlets became significantly less deprived between the 2015 and the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, moving from 10th to 50th on the rank nationally but 60% of the borough still within the 30% most deprived parts of England.
- b) 44% of all residents aged 60 and over are living in income deprived households, more than double the average nationally (44 per cent vs. 17 per cent).
- c) 27.3% of children in Tower Hamlets were in relative low income families in 2018/19 which was the highest rate in London and well above the average for Great Britain. 21.4% of children were in absolute low income families – also the highest rate in London.
- d) 72% of all children are in a family that receives either child tax credit or working tax credit.
- e) As with other parts of the country, in-work poverty appears to be an increasing issue with a high proportion of means tested financial support now going to people in work. 29,000 employees earn less than the London Living Wage.
- f) Over three quarters of adults aged 25-49 are in work. Employment is generally low for the 16-24 age group.
- g) The number of Claimant count (out of work benefits) is higher in Tower Hamlets than London or Great Britain

² https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/borough_statistics/Borough_profile.aspx

3 Site constraints and condition

- 3.1 The site is located in East London within the area of Poplar. The site covers an area of approximately 3.7 hectares (ha) and is broadly rectangular in shape and includes the existing Co-op Car Park on the eastern side of Chrisp Street. The site is bound by Cordelia Street to the north, Chrisp Street to the east, East India Dock Road to the south and Kerbey Street to the west.
- 3.2 The site is within the Chrisp Street District Centre and comprises a mixed use area including approximately 18,000 sqm retail and commercial floorspace and 212 residential properties, centred around the Chrisp Street Market which is located in the middle of the site. The retention and enhancement of the Street Market and services to support this, increasing the retail floor space to provide an improved retail offer and evening economy in order to increase footfall into the District Centre, were key considerations informing the development of the Scheme.
- 3.3 In respect of environmental conditions, the area is largely hard surfaced, grey infrastructure. A limited amount of children's play provision has been made adjacent to the market square.
- 3.4 While Poplar HARCA has made some investment in internal refurbishment to the majority of the properties, decisions on external refurbishment were deferred pending consideration of regeneration proposals.
- 3.5 Of the existing residential accommodation only the properties in the Festival of Britain properties have been renovated to Decent Homes standards.
- 3.6 The other blocks, largely built in the 1960s have not had external renovation works to bring them to a higher standard of environmental performance and as such the environmental efficiency of the buildings is far below current standards.
- 3.7 It is quite likely that some of the homes are capable of refurbishment to a 30 year life with an appropriate level of investment. However, there is no certainty that with refurbishment it would be possible to achieve standards of energy efficiency that new homes could achieve and which will contribute to more sustainable living, reduced use of natural resources and assist in alleviating fuel poverty.

- 3.8 Moreover, a structural survey³ was carried out of Fitzgerald House which identified the following defects:
- a. Vertical cracking and rotation of reinforced concrete cantilever beams supporting external wall panels at second floor level
 - b. Water penetration in end wall panels
 - c. Vertical cracking to pre cast concrete wall panels
 - d. Spalled concrete previously repaired to wall panels to the plant room at roof level
 - e. Water staining of the external facades from overflow pipes
- 3.9 Aspects of the site are of historical and architectural merit. The Lansbury Estate was originally created to exhibit an exemplary neighbourhood centre, with shops, flats and other public amenities during the Festival of Britain (1951) based on a Frank Gibberd masterplan. The need to enhance the heritage features of the site, in particular the existing Festival of Britain housing, the Clock Tower and retaining much of the original 1950s Gibberd masterplan for the market, have also been important considerations for the scheme development process.
- 3.10 The site is located within the Lansbury Conservation Area (designated in 1997). There are two listed buildings within the site area; the Festival Inn and the Clock Tower. There are a number of listed buildings to the immediate south and southwest of the site including All Saints Church with St Frideswide, Poplar Baths and the Susan Lawrence and Elizabeth Lansbury School (all Grade II listed). Full details of all listed and heritage buildings are set out in the Planning application documents.
- 3.11 The urban realm is unpleasant in places, with poorly located service yards, retail units in a state of disrepair, and adjoining developments which obstruct important views of the clock tower. Furthermore, the developments to the south of Market Place and along the northern boundary deviate from the original masterplan and create a sense of disparity between this and the earlier Festival of Britain development. The site lacks a cohesive sense of place. A key consideration for the Scheme was the need to increase the active street frontages as the District Centre is currently inward facing and does not present an attractive outlook to passers-by.
- 3.12 In response to the identified challenges, Poplar HARCA identified the regeneration of the District Centre as the most appropriate approach to achieve the following:

³ RPS Planning and Development – October 2012

- a. creation of more commercial space to accommodate the larger retail units to complement the independent traders;
- b. re-accommodating small businesses run from the lock ups;
- c. regeneration of the Street Market offer;
- d. introducing a wider mix of market tenures (including the provision of shared ownership housing);
- e. increasing the capacity of the Idea Store;
- f. creating affordable workspace; and
- g. introduction of the cinema and restaurants/bars creates an evening economy that is accessible to the whole community, all of which has been absent from the area for some decades.

3.13 There are a multiplicity of users/stakeholders on the site whose needs have also been required to be met within the scheme. These needs include:

- a. A new community hub building accommodating an extension to the Idea Store, affordable workspace, publicly accessible toilets and a community function space overlooking the market square;
- b. New infrastructure for the market stalls including service points, wash down facilities and dedicated food preparation area;
- c. A new canopy for the relocated market;
- d. New public realm including play spaces, paving, street furniture and external lighting
- e. Replacement of defective drainage in the centre;
- f. Infrastructure to provide improved CCTV and facilities for on-site management staff including cleaning and security provision;
- g. Infrastructure to store market refuse until it is collected;
- h. Improved disability access to all of the existing Festival of Britain dwellings;
- i. New shop fronts for all shops at no cost to the retailer;
- j. Refurbishment works to Clock Tower; and
- k. Relocation and enlargement of TfL cycle hire docking station.

4 Summary Planning Policy Context

4.1 At the time that the Scheme was being developed and options appraised, the development plan comprised the published London Plan (2016)⁴, the Tower Hamlets Core Strategy 2015-2025, the Tower Hamlets Managing Development

⁴ Since replaced with Publication London Plan (December 2020) <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/publication-london-plan> For information on the impacts of introduction of a new London Plan see Section * of Statement of Reasons and Appendix 3

Document and the associated Policies Map. The London Plan 2016, Core Strategy and Managing Development Document all sought to increase the supply of retail, market and affordable housing and promote regeneration of district centres.

- 4.2 Development principles for the Poplar area in the former Core Strategy included:
 - Focus higher density development in and around Chrisp Street and adjacent public transport nodes
 - Regenerate Chrisp Street town centre, with improved visual access and entry points while respecting the elements of historic conservation value
- 4.3 The need for regeneration is identified in the Council's Town Centre Spatial Strategy to 2025.
- 4.4 Chrisp Street is a district centre as defined within the Council's former Core Strategy (p36). It is recognised by HARCA and the Council that Chrisp Street is tired, in need of investment, improvement and remodelling to better integrate within the existing street pattern and increase footfall and these objectives can only be achieved through significant reinvestment.
- 4.5 Former Core Strategy SP01 stated the council plans to *“Enhance existing district centres, and create ones that contain a wide range of shops and services to meet the needs of local communities.”*
- 4.6 Former Core Strategy Policy SO4 stated that the Council planned *“To have a hierarchy of interconnected, vibrant and inclusive town centres that are mixed use hubs for retail, commercial, leisure, civic and residential. The purpose of each town centre will differ according to its role and function.”*
- 4.7 Former Core Strategy Policy SO5 stated that the Council plans *“To promote mixed use at the edge of town centres and along main streets.”*
- 4.8 The application site was also mainly within the Chrisp Street Town Centre (Site Allocation 9)
- 4.9 The Managing Development Document identified that this scheme was targeted at delivering a regenerated town centre for Poplar with a range of unit sizes, market square and an Idea Store. As such, this is a district centre led regeneration scheme with housing provision as a subsidiary factor.

- 4.10 The Council adopted its current Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 in January 2020. Although these policies did not inform the development of the Scheme, Poplar HARCA and the Council have reviewed its compliance with them and continue to be satisfied that the Scheme is supported by planning policy and consistent with the latest vision for the area.
- 4.11 Similar to the former Core Strategy and Managing Development Document, the adopted Local Plan continues to designate Chrisp Street as a District Centre (Policy S.TC1), and seeks to promote an increase in retail floorspace.
- 4.12 In addition, Policy D.TC7 (Markets) seeks to improve and expand existing markets within the borough, Chrisp Street being identified amongst these.
- 4.13 The Site Allocation within the adopted Local Plan sets development and design principles specific to Chrisp Street District Centre, which includes the whole Site, where the Council expects a “*regenerated town centre for Poplar with a range of unit sizes (including those suitable for independent and small local retailers), a market square and a re-provided Idea store located on East India Dock Road*”.

5 Policy on Estate Regeneration

National Estate Regeneration Strategy (December 2016)

- 5.1 The National Estate Regeneration Strategy was issued by the then Department for Communities and Local Government. Through a combination of practical advice and guidance, it addresses the common elements and challenges that most schemes will need to consider. It is particularly aimed at the early stages of regeneration, as schemes move from aspiration and concept to developing tangible options and plans.
- 5.2 The National Strategy provides advice and guidance on:
- Resident engagement and protection
 - Role of the Local Authority
 - Financing and delivering estate regeneration
 - Good practice guide
 - Better social outcomes
 - Alternative approaches; and
 - Case studies
- 5.3 To a large extent, the Scheme was developed prior to the introduction of the National Strategy, with the Planning Application being submitted on 15th June

2016, which pre-dates the launch of the National Strategy. However, additional consultation and engagement activities took part after the introduction of the National Guidance along with the introduction of the formal 'offer' brochures for the various affected parties including tenants and leaseholders.

5.4 Despite the fact that the Scheme was already well advanced by the time of the introduction of the National Guidance, based on previous experience of delivering large scale estate regeneration schemes, HARCA/CSDL consider that they are in broad compliance with the guidance set out in the National Strategy, in particular in relation to the extensive consultation and engagement undertaken.

Better Homes for Local People: The Mayor's Good Practice Guide to Estate Regeneration (February 2018)

5.5 Better Homes for Local People is the London Mayor's good practice guide to estate regeneration. An earlier draft issued in late 2016 was consulted upon and responses incorporated into the Good Practice Guide which was introduced in February 2018.

5.6 The guide sets out the detail behind the Mayor's principles of successful estate regeneration schemes (Parts 2-4), and the mechanisms he has to encourage them to be followed as widely as possible in London (Part 5).

5.7 More broadly, the Mayor believes that social housing residents must be at the heart of decisions about the ongoing management and future of their estates.

5.8 The Chrisp Street Scheme was at a very advanced stage prior to either the draft or the adopted policy being in place, with the planning application already having been submitted.

5.9 The objectives of the Guide are to:

- deliver safe and better quality homes for local people;
- increase the overall supply of new and affordable homes; and
- improve the quality of the local environment through a better public realm and provision of social infrastructure (e.g. schools, parks, or community centres).

5.10 The Guide explains that the range of physical interventions available to support the delivery of estate regeneration projects includes: repairs to, and refurbishment of, existing homes; building new homes on 'infill' sites; and demolition and rebuilding. Different schemes will require different interventions,

or a combination of some or all of the above: there is no 'one size fits all' approach.

- 5.11 The Guide further comments that when considering the option of demolishing and rebuilding homes, councils, housing associations and their partners should always consider alternative options to demolition first. They should balance the potential benefits of demolishing and rebuilding homes against the wider social and environmental impacts of this option.
- 5.12 The Mayor's powers to enforce this guidance are limited. However, the Mayor has indicated that he will use his planning powers to ensure schemes protect existing affordable homes, that there is no net loss of affordable homes and that any homes demolished are replaced on a like-for-like basis. The Mayor also expects that these schemes should maximise the delivery of additional affordable homes wherever possible.
- 5.13 Where a scheme involves demolition of existing homes, the Mayor's funding will be conditional on the proposed scheme gaining resident support through a ballot, although there are a number of exemptions to this policy. This policy is set out in detail in the GLA Capital Funding Guide: Section Eight - Resident ballots for estate regeneration projects, along with grounds for exemption.
- 5.14 As the Crisp Street Scheme had already secured contractually committed GLA funding, this means that the scheme is exempt from a requirement to hold a resident ballot.
- 5.15 In respect of all of the other policy requirements set out above, the Scheme is in overall compliance with the Guide. Indeed, the GLA Stage II decision with respect to the planning application for the Scheme (February 2019) confirms that the Mayor agrees that the Scheme accords with his Good Practice Guide.

6 Summary of Key Challenges

- 6.1 Initial development proposals were considered by Poplar HARCA and LBTH in September 2009⁵.
- 6.2 There has been ongoing design evolution since this time, resulting in a planning application being submitted on 15th June 2016.

⁵ Source – LBTH Cabinet report 7th October 2009

6.3 The key challenges arising as a result of the planning, physical and socio-economic context set out earlier in this document and how these are addressed by the Scheme are set out in Table 1:

Table 1 – Key Challenges

Challenges	Approach
Delivering a regenerated district/town centre for Poplar & the Borough	<p>The scheme provides an increase in the retail offer and a significant increase in the night-time economy, including a new cinema. Existing Festival of Britain (FoB) retail units will be retained and enhanced and marketed towards independents.</p> <p>New improved and expanded market with improved facilities for traders.</p> <p>New foodstore anchor store proposed at the northern end of the site to encourage footfall.</p> <p>Extension to Idea Store, new community building and flexible commercial floorspace at affordable rates.</p> <p>All of the above will be a significant driver in the regeneration of Poplar town centre.</p>
Delivery of foot fall right the way through the centre	<p>Create three anchors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The market in the middle 2. A supermarket in the north 3. An evening economy facilitator in the south
How can an evening economy be created to activate the centre during the evenings?	<p>Introduce a cinema and cluster food and beverage outlets around the entrance</p>
How can active frontages be created around the edges of the centre to overcome existing back of house impression that is a magnet for anti-social behaviour?	<p>Create ground floor uses all around the boundaries of the centre for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retail 2. Commercial 3. Residential entrances
How can new dwellings be integrated?	<p>The residential must sit on top of the commercial with access points at ground floor.</p>

<p>How can significant community benefits be generated?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create jobs 2. Provide a community hub building 3. Refurbish the market 4. Provide the setting for businesses to increase their turnover 5. Provide new homes, market and affordable 6. Provide additional children's playspace
<p>Protecting and enhancing heritage assets on the site and surrounding areas</p>	<p>As advised by LBTH conservation officers at very early stages in the pre-application, majority of the proposed massing is all sited away from the listed buildings and the existing FoB retail units and residential flats above. Improved visibility of the Grade II Clock tower from East India Dock Road and All Saints DLR.</p>
<p>Improving walking and cycling connections to and from and within the site</p>	<p>Scheme retains and enhances pedestrian and cycle routes through the site. Improved dedicated cycle route also provided along Kerby Street.</p>
<p>Improving public realm with active edges</p>	<p>Scheme significantly improves active frontages along the edges, particularly at Chrisp Street and Kerby Street. Improved public realm with cross the entire site.</p>
<p>Reinforcing and complementing local distinctiveness and creating a positive sense of place</p>	<p>FoB units retained and enhanced. Listed Clock Tower protected and enhanced. Majority of FoB units aimed at local independents as controlled through the S106 Agreement. Market retained, enhanced and proposes additional pitches with majority of traders remaining.</p>
<p>Delivery of additional housing in accordance with London Plan 2016, Housing Zone and Site Allocations.</p>	<p>Scheme will provide 643 new homes in addition to the 43 retained homes. This is a significant uplift from the existing</p>

	<p>212 homes on site, contributing to LBTH and Housing Zone figures. Scheme will provide 35% affordable units, majority of which will be rented units.</p>
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- 6.4 When assessing how to achieve the desired outcome when the constraints of the Site were taken into consideration, the conclusion was that to leave any of the existing residential units (apart from the FoB units) would not allow the creation of large footprint retail units. It is not practical to remodel the ground floor of an existing block of flats whilst retaining the upper floors. There is a variety of building archetypes that do not lend themselves easily a new design which would be perceived as coherent, attractive or economical to refurbish and/or redesign. The overall site is largely (but not exclusively) inward facing which makes it difficult to remodel given the planning policy aspiration for the site.
- 6.5 At the first pre-application planning meeting this approach was embraced by LBTH planners and HARCA/CSDL were pushed for an even more comprehensive regeneration by including the Co-op and Iceland sites which we have done.

7 Options considered

- 7.1 Following the Stock Transfer, in February 2007 Poplar HARCA commissioned Roger Tym and Partners, via Tibbalds, to undertake an assessment of scheme options, taking into account the following considerations:
- a. Establish the background to proposals to redevelop Chrisp Street through a review of previous studies.
 - b. Review the existing retail provision in Chrisp Street and identify its main competition.
 - c. Compare Chrisp Street with the mix and scale of retail offered in comparable centres in London.
 - d. Assess the scale of development Chrisp Street could achieve from a quantitative and qualitative perspective.
 - e. Review the main options and timescales for potential change at Chrisp Street.
 - f. Suggest a preferred option as to the type of retail development Chrisp Street should aspire to in order to maintain its position in the retail hierarchy and enhance its offer.

- 7.2 The Roger Tyms study largely focussed on the options for revitalisation of the retail element of the District Centre and concluded that there were four options:
- a. Option 1 – No Development
 - b. Option 2 – Refurbishment and amalgamation of retail units to provide additional, larger units
 - c. Option 3 – Extension and refurbishment. Retail led extension of existing centre to provide modern retail units combined with refurbishment of existing units.
 - d. Option 4 – Demolition and rebuild. Demolition of existing centre and rebuilt shopping centre to provide a modern shopping centre.
- 7.3 The Roger Tyms report was provided to the Council to assist in the shaping of the Core Strategy in 2009 and the Development DPD.
- 7.4 In Spring 2008, Poplar HARCA made a series of presentations to council staff setting out a new vision to regenerate Poplar. The vision was developed by Poplar HARCA following a review of development opportunities in the area to deliver a mix of new private and affordable homes. After reviewing development potential on a site by site basis Poplar HARCA concluded that there was an option to promote the redevelopment of the Poplar area on a more comprehensive basis to address some of the physical, social and economic structural regeneration problems. This formed the stimulus for the creation of their “Reshaping Poplar” document.
- 7.5 This assessment coincided with Tower Hamlets’ review of its Local Development Framework Core Strategy. That review concluded that the Core Strategy needed to plan proactively for the distinct areas of Tower Hamlets, (‘town centres’) tailoring policies and delivery mechanisms to the needs of each place (or hamlet). The Core Strategy consultation document also identified Poplar as an area that could benefit from more comprehensive regeneration. The Re-Shaping Poplar document was submitted to the Council Planning Department as part of HARCA's representation on the (then) emerging Core strategy.
- 7.6 A procurement exercise was undertaken from which London and Regional were selected as partners, but this did not progress to contract.
- 7.7 In May 2009, Poplar HARCA commissioned Alan Baxter to undertake a review of all buildings in the Crisp Street Masterplan to provide advice on the implications for the Conservation Area which has been discussed with Planning Officers. The decision to retain the heritage elements of the scheme was

based on advice contained in this report⁶. It was noted that some of the existing buildings were detrimental to the heritage assets.

- 7.8 In view of all relevant considerations, including those described above, Poplar HARCA subsequently discounted the:
- a. Do Nothing Option
 - b. The refurbishment option
 - c. The complete demolition and rebuild option
- 7.9 The conclusion was that the partial refurbishment and demolition and rebuild option was the most satisfactory option in terms of the benefits that it would bring to the retail provision, protection of heritage buildings and opportunity to build additional housing on the site.
- 7.10 Decent homes work was carried out to the majority of the buildings on site but such works were unlikely to address the regeneration priority of making the place a successful District Centre.
- 7.11 Some of the homes are capable of refurbishment to a 30 year life. This would not however deliver homes that meet modern day aspirations and would not allow the additional housing density required to:
- deliver the majority wider social, economic and environmental benefits described in the Statement of Reasons; or
 - deliver value to meet the significant enabling costs associated with the delivery of the Scheme.
- 7.12 Following this decision being made, Poplar HARCA then sought a development partner through a procurement exercise in 2011/12.
- 7.13 The outcome of the procurement exercise was that a joint bid from Allied London/United House was selected to further develop the scheme in conjunction with Poplar HARCA in 2012, following approval from the HARCA Board on 2nd May 2012. Allied London subsequently decided not to proceed with the scheme, leaving United House in partnership with Poplar HARCA.
- 7.14 United House set up CSDL as a special purpose vehicle (SPV) which was subsequently sold to Telford Homes Ltd in 2015.

⁶ Paragraphs 8.7-8.9 refer to considerations by the Council's Cabinet on 7th October 2009

7.15 Architects (Shephard Robson) and Planning consultants (Savills) were appointed in 2013 to further develop the scheme proposals, work with the LPA on a pre-application basis and to prepare and submit a planning application.

7.16 Pre-application discussions with the LPA from 2013 until June 2016 resulted in changes to massing and scheme numbers:

- Sept 2013 – Circa 750 residential units
- Feb 2014 – Circa 850 residential units
- April 2015 – Circa 700 residential units
- Sept 2015 - Circa 650 residential units
- June 2016 - Circa 650 residential units

7.17 The above activity resulted in the planning application being submitted to LB Tower Hamlets on 15th June 2016.

7.18 The planning application submitted and subsequently approved requires 169 units to be demolished, replaced with 643 of which 200 (35% habitable rooms, negotiated up from the initial 25% by the Council) are affordable: 136 at social rent, 37 shared ownership and 27 Tower Hamlets Living rent.

8 Consultation

8.1 Poplar HARCA has carried out consultation on an ongoing basis from 2011 to present, ultimately leading to the current Scheme proposals, which were submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) as a planning application (ref PA/16/01612) on 15th June 2016.

8.2 Further information on consultation is contained within the Statement of Reasons, the Cabinet report of September 2018 and the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), submitted as part of the planning application.

8.3 The key aims of the pre-application stage of public consultation, which the SCI documents, were:

- a. To inform local residents, businesses, councillors and other stakeholders about the redevelopment aspirations for the site.
- b. To gain a full understanding of local views of the proposals, engage with the local and wider community throughout the design development stage, and use these views to identify concerns and opportunities, and where possible inform the evolving final proposals.

- c. To demonstrate how the Applicant has responded to the issues raised by the community and stakeholders and identify how changes have been made to the proposals to address them.
- 8.4 All consultees were involved in the preparation of detailed designs since early 2012. This consultation activity consisted of:
- a. Newsletters
 - b. Presentation of development proposals to Estate board
 - c. Presentation of proposals to local community groups and the Poplar All Faith group
 - d. Presentation of development proposals at public events and regular Chrisp Street festivals
 - e. Surgeries
 - f. Home visits and 'door-step' survey
 - g. Drop in sessions
 - h. Open Events
 - i. Group specific consultation events
 - j. Council members
 - k. Estate Board
 - l. Community Groups
 - m. Updates on the Scheme included in every Chrisp Street newsletter since 2008
 - n. Letters in response to written inquiries
 - o. Emails in response to emailed inquiries
 - p. Feedback Forms
 - q. Chrisp Street consultation website
- 8.5 The wider community consultation did not have a significant impact upon scheme design, other than to confirm that the majority of participants were in agreement that the District Centre needed to be revitalised with a wider range of community uses and increased retail provision.
- 8.6 Amendments to the scheme design have largely arisen as a result of consultation with:
- a. Local residents and businesses
 - b. GLA
 - c. LBTH Planning
 - d. LBTH Housing
 - e. Historic England
 - f. TFL and other statutory authorities

- 8.7 As a result of extensive consultation with the above local stakeholders and statutory authorities, the key changes to the scheme were as follows:
- a. A reduction in total unit numbers proposed from circa 850/870 to 643, including a number of viability reports presented at pre-application stage to ensure maximum number of affordable housing units proposed
 - b. Increased provision of affordable housing (Social Rent and Shared Ownership)
 - c. Moving the massing away from the Clock Tower, market square, Festival of Britain buildings and Festival Inn public house
 - d. External design amendments to the tower to remove a number of horizontal elements
 - e. Increased provision in onsite playspace
 - f. Design amendments to Clock Tower and Festival Inn as a result of Grade II listing
 - g. Increased commercial floorspace
 - h. Measures to facilitate the continued presence of a post office in the District Centre
 - i. Increase in number of trees proposed adjacent East India Dock Road
 - j. Amendments to ground floor to tower to create views to existing Idea Store
 - k. Relocation of proposed cycle hire docking station
 - l. Changes to commercial land uses to ensure no increase in A4 and A5 uses across the site
 - m. Reduction in the amount of proposed Drinking Establishment (Class A4)
 - n. Provision of off-street car parking for traders
- 8.8 Historic England noted that the development identifies the historic Festival of Britain buildings and seeks to enhance these and their setting. It was also considered by Historic England that the new buildings have been designed to strengthen the focus on the market and providing new routes through the site. Overall Historic England believes the proposals have the potential to “*provide significant enhancement to the conservation area*”.
- 8.9 The planning application was considered by the Council’s Strategic Development Committee on 24th July 2018 where it secured unanimous approval.
- 8.10 The Scheme proposals have received significant support from the LPA to the extent that they asked for the scope of the scheme to be extended beyond the original proposals.
- 8.11 As set out in the Planning matters section of the Statement of Reasons and the accompanying appendix, the Scheme is meeting key strategic objectives for the Council and London Plan 2016 in delivering an improved and enhanced district centre and additional housing.

- 8.12 A report was prepared for consideration by the Council's Cabinet on 26th September 2018. The report was seeking approval for a CPO resolution and various other council decisions to enable the scheme to progress.
- 8.13 When Councillor Rachel Blake, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Air Quality, introduced the report to the Cabinet on 26th September 2018, she thanked the officers who had been involved in the project in dealing with the large amount of engagement that had taken place. She then set out the reasons why the Council was seeking authorisation to enter into the agreements on land transfers and compulsory purchase orders.
- 8.14 Cabinet then heard from local business owners who were supportive of the recommendations in the report and wished for the process to happen as quickly as possible to avoid any delays to the planned regeneration scheme.
- 8.15 The Mayor welcomed the report and thanked officers for their hard work. He noted the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Questions and officer responses provided. He agreed the recommendations set out in the report.

9 Financial Viability

- 9.1 A fundamental principle in addressing the issue of refurbishment vs demolition relates to the economics of the Scheme. The Scheme cost relating to relocating retailers and fit out to their new premises, remodelling the retail provision, market square and other community facilities is in the region of £20M.
- 9.2 There is limited availability of public funding to support the delivery of the non-housing elements of the scheme. There is no area based capital funding available i.e. City Challenge Funding, New Deal for Communities or Single Regeneration Budget funding etc. but the scheme does fall with an identified Housing Zone, albeit that none of the funding for this is available for the scheme.
- 9.3 These costs have therefore to be met from within the Scheme, which can only be achieved by an increased retail footprint and numbers of homes on the site, with a significant proportion for sale to provide capital to deliver the Scheme's broader aims.

9.4 In view of this (amongst other matters set out in this statement), the Scheme has been designed to retain premises of architectural merit (the Festival of Britain homes) while demolishing remaining buildings to facilitate the overall Scheme development.

10 Conclusion

10.1 HARCA/CSDL have been working alongside the Council, in their role as LPA, to agree a way to:

- a. achieve the Council's regeneration aspirations for the District Centre
- b. achieve integration with the neighbouring Conservation Area; and
- c. retain heritage features within the Scheme

in order to deliver a vibrant and successful District Centre regeneration scheme while maintaining the financial viability to deliver the Scheme and the wider community benefits.

10.2 Agreement was reached with the LPA at an early stage that significant demolition would be required to deliver the quantum of new homes required for the scheme to be viable and to deliver the social and community benefits of the scheme, while having regard to the general level of investment required to retain existing buildings or their structural condition.

10.3 HARCA/CSDL are of the view that they have had due regard to the option of refurbishment and/or retention of the existing buildings, but that this approach would not allow for the:

- a. remodelling of the retail provision
- b. provision of a cinema
- c. refurbishment of the market square;
- d. additional community and social provision that the scheme is designed to deliver; or
- e. be financially viable

10.4 In all the circumstances, the partial demolition and redevelopment option that has been pursued is considered to be appropriate and justified.