

Issue 14 –Are the proposals for growth and change in this area appropriate and justified, including in relation to the NPPF, the London Plan and the Core Strategy and in terms of environmental, economic and social impact; are they clear and deliverable by 2025?

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Position Statement builds upon representations made by Canary Wharf Group in March 2012 to the draft submission version of the Managing Development DPD. The primary concern in respect of SA16 “Wood Wharf” is in regard to building heights. It is considered that the site allocation is unsound as is not effective.

2.0 Background

2.1 Further to our earlier representations the Wood Wharf site has been removed from the Preferred Office Location (POL). This is welcomed as Wood Wharf is anticipated to deliver a mixed use development opportunity providing significant levels of new housing.

2.2 Planning permission was granted for the major mixed-use development of Wood Wharf in 2009 (ref: PA/08/1215). This permission has subsequently been replaced in 2012 (PA/11/02174). This permission approves a masterplan with multiple buildings which range in height a number of which are approximately 200m AOD. This masterplan was assessed by LBTH, English Heritage and the GLA twice and these heights were considered to be acceptable by virtue of the two consents.

3.0 Effectiveness

3.1 Policy DM26 deals with building heights. Figure 9 provides an summary of indicative building heights for various parts of the borough stating that “Maximum height AOD” for POL will be “Up to 240 m” and for Central Activity Zone, Activity Areas and Major Centre “Up to 150 m”. As such now that Wood Wharf has been removed from the POL, it would be assumed that 150 m would be the maximum height for any future development.

3.2 Figure 9 includes the following text and states:

“This table provides an indication of the heights likely to be considered acceptable in the absence of more detailed guidance provided in the site allocations chapter of this document or in any other supplementary guidance.

Building heights will be subject to the criteria of DM26(2) and will be dependent on the local context.”

3.3 However, SA16 does not provide any particular guidance on building heights. As such any decision maker determining a future planning application will refer back to Policy DM26 and Figure 9. A rigid interpretation of Figure 9 could prevent heights comparable to the approved masterplan being consented (circa 200 m). This would prejudice the redevelopment of the site.

3.4 Officers have agreed that heights in excess of the 150 m threshold would be appropriate on the Wood Wharf site subject to the design criteria at DM26.2 being met. This is coupled with Paragraph SA.14 which states:

“where indicative development capacity of the site is known this has been identified. Where planning consents are in place on sites, this information has been considered”.

3.5 It is not considered that SA16 in its current form is effective as this important site allocation and DM26 are inconsistent and there is scope for different interpretations of what would be considered to be an acceptable height on this site. The Site Allocation is therefore unsound.

3.6 A separate Position Statement has been submitted in respect of DM26.

4.0 Proposed Changes

4.1 The following changes to wording are suggested to SA16 which will add to the effectiveness of the Site Allocation thereby making it sound.

[NOTE: italics have been inserted]

What are the design principles for the site?

- *Tall buildings will be acceptable as is demonstrated by the consented masterplan which allows for buildings in excess of 200 m AOD (PA/11/02174).*
- *Complement the tall building cluster in Canary Wharf through appropriate taller building heights, which may exceed the indicative building heights set out in Figure 9 so long as the criteria in policy DM26 are satisfied, while respecting and being informed by the existing character, scale, height, massing, view and urban grain of the surrounding built environment and its dockside location.*