

# Old Oak and Park Royal Local Plan examination

## Agenda Session 11: Student housing

**Participants:** Inspector, Corporation, Grand Union Alliance

### **Summary of issues**

- 1 Whether the Plan's policies and proposals for student housing would be justified (representation 2/SP4/15 from West Acton RA amongst others. This was also an issue with various organisations at Regulation 18 stage). The following summarises points made at Representation 19(1) and 19(2) stages.
  - (a) Additional student housing in North Acton is not supported as there is already an overconcentration. Policy does not discourage a mono-type of housing (student housing) being delivered in North Acton. Large areas of development of student accommodation creates a transient community, consisting almost exclusively of one demographic – rather than a diverse lifetime neighbourhood. There is a need for social infrastructure and affordable homes that are genuinely needed not lots of student halls.
  - (b) Imperial supports policies for both student accommodation and new homes in this place, especially affordable, for both students and staff. Imperial also recognises the role well designed tall buildings can play in this and other areas. Provision of purpose-built student accommodation frees up more traditional housing stock for occupation by other households.
  - (c) L B Ealing supports the policy of ensuring a balanced approach to student housing.
  - (d) The provision of affordable student accommodation should rest with the higher education institutions rather than be determined by specific requirements.
  - (e) It is not clear how the OPDC will measure and monitor undermining of conventional self-contained housing supply and 'overconcentration' in any one specific location. The policy should include a map that shows areas where this already an over-concentration of student accommodation and where it may be appropriate to deliver more, subject to need being demonstrated.
  - (f) The policy should stress the need for social infrastructure to support the needs of students and avoid putting stress on services.
  - (g) Student housing should ensure delivery of an appropriate quota of publicly accessible green and open spaces.

(h)The supporting paragraphs refer to the façade, however, this is not the only design issue.

**The Corporation's response (This is a summary of responses made to representations at Regulation 19(1) and 19(2) stages)**

Policy P7 seeks to deliver appropriate levels of student accommodation in accordance with Policy H10. It is recognised in Policy P7 that North Acton is home to recently built and permitted high density student accommodation and that in order to deliver a sustainable and mixed community, proposals for new student accommodation will need to accord with Policy H10. Policy H10 sets out guidance to ensure student accommodation contributes positively to an area by requiring proposals to contribute to the vibrancy and diversity of an area, by locating development in areas of high PTAL, to not undermining the delivery of conventional self-contained housing supply and to not result in an overconcentration in any one specific location.

In terms of North Acton specifically, Policy P7 envisages contributing to the delivery of 4,300 new homes during the first 10 years and "appropriate levels of student accommodation". This policy also plans for improving the public realm and infrastructure in the area. Policy SP4 provides for the delivery of 50% affordable housing, subject to viability and delivering and/or contributing to new high quality social infrastructure and improving existing. In relation to North Acton, Policy P7c)ii) will deliver appropriate levels of student accommodation in accordance with Policy H10 in that it does not undermine the delivery of conventional housing.

To ensure the plan is in general conformity with the London Plan, purpose-built student accommodation should be secured for occupation by a higher education institution and provide affordable student accommodation as defined in the policy/guidance.

Change proposed to Policy H1 in accordance with draft London Plan 2017. Every three student bedrooms that are completed equate to meeting the same need that one conventional housing unit meets, and contribute towards meeting OPDC's housing targets. This will enable OPDC to measure and monitor student housing delivery so that it does not undermine delivery of the overall housing target. Any new student housing in locations such as North Acton will be required to meet Policy H10 requirements in delivering a sustainable and mixed community.

The requirement is for providers to produce a Residential Management Plan to ensure that the impacts on local amenity are mitigated. The need for social infrastructure will be assessed against Policy TCC4.

Student housing as well as other housing developments will be required to provide or make appropriate contributions to public open space in accordance with Policy EU1.

Facade design is noted as a particular issue in the design of student accommodation by consequence of the comparable room sizes for student units. Policy H10a)vi) also requires proposals for student accommodation to provide adequate internal private living space and communal space and the policy should also be read in conjunction with Policy D4 which is referenced in paragraph 8.83.

**Matters for discussion**

- 1)** Have I correctly understood the thrust of the representations?
- 2)** Would the policy lead to an overconcentration of student housing?
- 3)** Any other issues related to student housing

*P. W. Clark*

Inspector

26.02.19