



070323 - SE.WS

23 March 2007

**Will Steadman**

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Dear Will,

**Re: 84 Leven Road, Poplar, E14 – PA/06/02304**

Following the committees decision to defer the above application, as confirmed in your email dated 16 March 2007, we recognise that the reason for deferral was:-

*".....a decision should be deferred to allow time for the Swan Housing Group to consider the issues raised by the objector including the characteristics of the alternative proposals prepared by the objector and respond accordingly....."*

We have therefore taken the opportunity to review our proposals in light of the objections received from the Poplar HARCA, and would respond as follows:-

**Quantum of development**

As you are aware this is an issue that we have discussed at length with the LTGDC and LBTH, and the proposed scheme represents a significant reduction in the number of units from our original bid to the Housing Corporation, and also our previous planning submission (PA/06/00789), highlighted as follows:-

	Housing Corp' Bid	PA/06/00789 (withdrawn)	PA/06/02304 (current scheme)
1 Bed	37	40	25
2 Bed	19	19	23
3 Bed	29	19	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>66</b>

Swans primary concern with this reduction in the number of units is commercial viability of the development. I have enclosed a summary of our '3 Dragons' assessment, which highlights a current deficit of £1.6m (excluding any s106 contributions which would be sought). Any further reduction in the number of units would further put the viability of the scheme into question.

However, Swan feels that this is an important scheme in the overall regeneration of the Lower Lea Valley, and see the site as a catalyst for further development in the area.

It is also worth noting that we have undertaken an assessment of the PH proposed scheme, and we believe that this would provide approximately 1042 m2 less residential accommodation space and 530 m2 less commercial space.

### **Provision of amenity space**

We have reviewed the scheme in terms of amenity provision and we believe that the linear nature of the site does not lend itself to meaningful amenity space at ground floor level.

However we have reviewed the possibility of including additional shared amenity space at roof level which would serve the family units within the central block, this is demonstrated on the attached drawings and would provide an additional 350 m2 of amenity space.

A summary of the total private, communal and public amenity space to be provided is as follows:-

<b>Current scheme</b>	<b>Incl. Additional Roof Terrace</b>
767	1103

Amenity space provision has increased and the scheme as presented provides sufficient amenity space in excess of LBTH requirements. The communal amenity space now stand at 454 sq.m or over 4 times the minimum LBTH requirement of 106 sq.m for the development. The draft London Plan SPG on play space indicates 10 sq.m per child, but this is still in draft form. We estimate that the child yield based on GLA guidance (DMAG 2006/11 for all age groups is approximately 63 and hence 630 sq.m is applicable. Our provision at 72% is a significant step towards meeting the draft GLA requirement. We are also aware that the Leaside Area Action plan designates a significant area of new open space within the Leven Road car pound and Gasometer, which is within a short walk from the site.

In addition we have offered PH and their residents the opportunity to jointly develop proposed improvements to amenity space along Nairn Street i.e. grouping together existing land as public amenity space and thus increasing the value of the space available. We have suggested that this could involve commissioning one of the artists from the studios to work with Aberfeldy residents to develop detailed proposals.

Potential options (enclosed) were presented to the Aberfeldy Residents Board on the 5<sup>th</sup> February and subsequently sent to PH for comment.

### **Scale, bulk and massing**

We believe that the building design addresses the linear nature of the site extremely well. The building form has been designed as a series of vertical planes stepping in and out along the Leven Road and Nairn Street elevations, creating variety in the form of the building when viewed from street level. The set back ground floor façade creates a wide footway for pedestrians with the adjacent artist's studios ensuring a lively, overlooked and safe route.

The balcony fronts project beyond the surrounding building facades to emphasise the grouping of the balconies within the elevations, and a bright contrasting colour finish to the balcony recesses provides additional interest.

The application of a palette of materials – brickwork, render and cladding panels - has been carefully considered to complement the form of the building and ensure that the

building does not read as one continuous mass. Glass block is proposed to the three naturally lit circulation cores to complement the façade materials by day, and to ensure interesting contrast to the building appearance at night. The application of bright colours internally within these communal areas will provide a vibrant view day or night.

### **Impact on amenities of existing residents**

In terms of sunlight and daylight, as previously highlighted to the LTGDC we have demonstrated that the 3No. windows along Nairn Street which experience a loss in winter sunlight comprises 2No. bedrooms and 1No. kitchen, with living rooms in these units having a western aspect (see attached plan).

In addition we believe that, when compared to other windows along Nairn Street, these units have been extremely fortunate in terms of the level of sunlight received due to the fact that they previously faced a single storey warehouse.

Swans planning consultant, Simon Dunn-Lwin, met with Mr. Aghomi from LBTH on site yesterday, to examine the circumstances of the affected windows to Flats 1 and 11 and you will have received his email summarising the outcome of the meeting. We await confirmation from Mr.Aghomi next week that this issue is resolved.

### **Car parking provision**

Swan is in the process of assessing the viability of car clubs on a number of new build developments and we are currently working with 'Streetcar' as our preferred partner.

The car club scheme would be available for use to the wider community rather than simply for the use of residents of Leven Road, however Swan would ensure that the arrangements for the car club ensure that it is accessible and affordable to all of our residents.

### **Creation of mixed and balanced communities**

We believe that the current housing mix is suitable for the type of development which is being proposed, particularly when considering the quantum of family housing within the immediate location. This is something that you may recall was supported at our meeting with LBTH Housing on the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

However we recognise that the emerging LDF calls for an increase in the provision of larger family dwellings, as such we have assessed the possibilities of incorporating a number of 4-bed units within the current scheme. The outcome is that we could feasibly incorporate 3No. 4bed units in lieu of 3No. 3Bed units (see attached drawings).

This potential amendment would revise the housing mix as follows:-

	<b>Rent</b>	<b>Shared Ownership</b>	<b>Total</b>
1 Bed	13	12	25
2 Bed	10	13	23
3 Bed	12	3	15
4 Bed	3	-	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>66</b>

Swan still believes that the scheme presented to the committee on the 12 March is suitable for development in its current form, and we have worked tirelessly with LTGDC/LBTH officers to address concerns throughout the pre-application process.

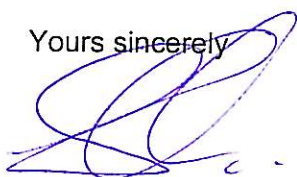
We do however recognise why the committee has asked us to review the objections received, and hope that the LTGDC will see from our approach that we are committed to delivering a high quality scheme on Leven Road.

If the committee are minded to approve the development then we would be more than happy to incorporate the enclosed design changes.

We trust that the above, together with the attached information, will be sufficient for the scheme to be represented to the committee meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> April 2007.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss further.

Yours sincerely



Steve Eccles  
**Senior Project Manager**

Enc

Cc John Allen - LTGDC  
Jeff Ackerman – LBTH Housing Development  
Ila Robertson – LBTH Planning  
David Panton – ACME  
John Brewster - LABO  
Kerry Branford– BPTW  
Derek Cook – Bucknall Austin