

Questions from the Public – CEB 10 December Officer's Responses are in the tables

Questions from:

Sue Brough
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56 Raymund Road, Oxford

Question relating to the Report of the Executive Director of City Regeneration and Housing: *Disposal of the Temple Cowley Pool Site*

(report downloaded from City Council website on Thursday 4 December)

Paragraph 54 states: *Simply on the basis that Catalyst Housing's bid for the Site is £3.6m.*

However a letter from Catalyst Housing dated 15 April for the attention of David Fenton states *Catalyst Housing Ltd are pleased to offer the amount of £3,500,000 (Three Million and Five Hundred Thousand Pound) for the unencumbered freehold interest of the site.*

QUESTIONS

1. Did Catalyst increase their offer from £3.5m in April to £3.6m by December? Alternatively, is the Catalyst offer still £3.5m but the Report includes a **careless mistake of £100,000 in Catalyst's favour?**

The Catalyst offer is at £3.6 million – the original submission from Catalyst contained a typographical error at £3.5 million, and they have confirmed that this figure was submitted in error. The bid price has always been £3.6m.

2. **If Catalyst builds 47 units, will there be any room for residents to have parking space within the site?**

The indicative layout by Catalyst provides for 53 car parking spaces.

Paragraph 11 states:

[The Catalyst] scheme proposes the provision of 47 residential units consisting of 15 x 1 bed dwellings, 19 x 2 bed dwellings, 12 x 3 bed dwellings, and 1 x 4 bed dwelling, of which 50 % will be affordable.

3. **Please clarify the meaning of affordable in the Catalyst bid? - 100% rent private rent / council rent / shared ownership / 100% owner occupied, etc. Expected % below market price?**

50% Affordable housing will be split as social rent at 80% and intermediate tenures at 20 % ,intermediate tenures are affordable rent (up to 80% of market rental value) and low cost home ownership (Eg Shared ownership)

4. Please give an example of at least one development where Catalyst has promised and delivered 50% affordable residential units for Oxford City Council?

As a local example, Catalyst developed 1-113 Owens Way which is in the same ward as Temple Cowley Pool .It provided 100% affordable housing.

5. Has risk / sensitivity analysis been carried out on the cashflows expected if the Catalyst bid is accepted?

Yes

Risks include:

1. That 47 units is an unacceptably high density which does not gain planning permission.
2. That 50% affordable housing becomes 40% or less.

It should be noted that the SaveTCP bid with 8 units of social housing has generous space allowances and provides some parking for residents so is unlikely to be reduced.

These are matters to be considered during the planning process, but all indications from City Development suggest that the Catalyst proposal is deliverable.

Paragraph 33 states

Each unit of affordable housing to which the Council has nomination rights has a value which has been estimated, based on current market value elsewhere, as being of the order of £120K per unit.

6. If possible, please indicate the actual source or justification for the figure of £120K.

From market knowledge of affordable housing on comparable schemes

Questions from:

Judith Harley,
Planning Representative, Old Temple Cowley Residents' Association,
44, Temple Road, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2HB.

Question for Wednesday 10 December Special City Executive Board
Regarding Temple Cowley Pools and Fitness Centre

Policy CS21 (Green spaces, Leisure and Sport) of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026 (Adopted March 2011) states:

"Planning permission will only be granted for development resulting in the loss of existing sports and leisure facilities if alternative facilities can be provided and if no deficiency is created in the area. Alternative facilities should be provided in a location equally or more accessible by walking, cycling and public transport ... "

I appreciate that the City Council's view is that alternative facilities to the Temple Cowley Pools and Fitness Centre (TCP) have been provided at the new Blackbird Leys Pool, so the first test of the grant of planning permission requirement in Policy CS21 could be regarded as being met. However, the loss of TCP will create an enormous deficiency in Temple Cowley, Cowley, and the broader surrounding area, so the second test of the grant of planning permission requirement in Policy CS21 will fail if TCP facilities are lost. In addition, the location of the Blackbird Leys Pool is NOT " ... in a location equally or more accessible by walking, cycling and public transport ... " for the residents of Temple Cowley, or for Cowley in general, which has an ever-increasing population in need of community-accessible fitness provision (rather than private provision).

QUESTION

How can a commercial bid for only high-density dwellings be considered for the TCP Site when any planning consideration for such will clearly be in breach of Policy CS21?

Please see paragraph 31 of the report, in which the Head of City Development has stated that the risk of failing to meet Policy SR2 is minimal. CS21 is a similar Policy and he stated, when the proposal to build the pool at Blackbird Leys was originally considered, that the new facility would fully meet the requirement of the Council's policies.

The Sites and Housing DPD Background Paper 21, Open Spaces and Greenfield Sites, dated February 2012, identifies the Temple Cowley Pools site as having a capacity of 25 dwellings on a site of 0.53 ha. requiring a provision of 10% of the site as public open space.

The report to the Special CEB for Wednesday 10th December on the disposal of the Temple Cowley Pools site (TCP) states in paragraph 11:

" ... As a result of this open market selection process the top scoring bidder is Catalyst Housing. The Catalyst Housing submission offers an excellent financial receipt and has satisfactorily addressed all the requirements set in the open market bidding process. Their scheme proposes the provision of 47 residential units consisting of 15 x 1 bed dwellings, 19 x2 bed dwellings, 12 x 3 bed dwellings, and 1 x 4 bed dwelling, of which 50 % will be affordable, within a high quality well designed environment, which will enhance the existing streetscape."

This site is immediately next to the Temple Cowley Conservation Area, and one of the requirements of developments adjoining Conservation Areas is that they should not be detrimental to the Conservation Area. **Policy HP9, Design, Character, and Context, of the adopted Sites and Housing Plan (February 2013) states:** **"Planning permission will only be granted for residential development that responds to the overall character of the area, including its built and natural features, and meets [various] criteria ... "**

I have several questions around these statements and policies, as follows:

1. How can a commercial bid for 47 dwellings be considered suitable for this site when this is almost twice as dense as suggested in Background Paper 21?

The Housing Plan addresses the delivery of housing across the City. The number of houses that individual sites, outside the City and District centres, may provide is based on a generic City wide density of 55 dwellings per hectare, to provide a broad indication of the scale of dwellings that could be delivered across Oxford. Some sites will be capable of delivering higher numbers, for example if they can support a scheme of flats. This is the case at the Temple Cowley Pool site.

2. How can a development this dense in any way " ... enhance the existing streetscape ... ", which consists mainly of two-storey residential dwellings, or comply with Policy HP9?

The detail of the design will be dealt with through the Planning process. However because the indicative layout is based on flats and houses the report author believes that the density is capable of enhancing the existing street scape.

3. How can a development this dense not be detrimental to the adjoining Temple Cowley Conservation Area?

This is a matter for the Planning Application, but there is no reason to believe that the proposed development will be detrimental to the conservation area.

Question from:

Sarah Lasenby Ox 725991

Deprivation and poverty are both important things to improve inclusiveness. If the Council agree to demolish the Temple Cowley Leisure Centre this will deprive large swathes of people, specifically those in Wood Farm and Rose Hill but also those in Cowley and E Ox from having convenient access to Leisure facilities amounting to them being seriously deprived by the loss of these facilities.

Is this what the Council wants to do?

What the Council wants to do is to provide world class leisure facilities by way of a new pool which will be accessible to all .

Question from:

**Patricia Wright
(80 next year)**

Aren't Executive Board Members aware that many older people like myself, as well as busy working people/parents rely on Temple Cowley Pool for regular non-weight-bearing exercise to keep arthritis/heart problems/diabetes (up over 40% in Oxon, see report in current Oxford Times) at bay, and that occasional fun days out in distant Blackbird Leys won't work for health?

Officers believe that people's concerns that existing users will not transfer to the new pool are unduly pessimistic. In fact, information from Fusion Leisure is that 657 (IE 74%) have already taken up transfer of membership to the new pool. In addition 500 children and adults have registered and paid for swim sessions in the new pool.

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