

Minutes – UDL Sub Regional Meeting: Eastern Area, 9 February 2007

MEETING MINUTES – 09.02.07

AGENDA:

1. Apologies
2. Ensuring Design Quality
3. Feedback on UDL Training Programme
4. Using Design and Access Statements
5. CABE EH Guidance on Tall Buildings
6. Any Other Business
7. Next Meeting

Meeting held at Woolwich Regeneration Agency, Woolwich.

1. Present:

Sarah Walsh, LB Lewisham
Jackie Morrison, LB Newham
Esther Kurland, UDL
Alexandra Reitman, LB Hackney
Mandar Puranik, LB Tower Hamlets
Andrew Parker, Woolwich Regeneration Agency

Apologies:

James Hetherington, LB Redbridge
Tobi Goevert, Design for London
Susan Clark, LB Bexley

2. Ensuring design quality

Concern about schemes being “dumbed down” following planning consent either through architect being changed, masterplan being revised, inferior materials being proposed at submission of details.

Suggested that commitments made in Design and Access statements could be used as the basis for carefully worded conditions that ensure key principles of consented design are retained. E.g on facing materials or landscaping.

Statement of Conformity with consented design could be required through condition or secured through S106.

3. Feedback on UDL Training Programme

First two seminars have taken place. Attendees from Tower Hamlets, Redbridge, Barking and Greenwich (Housing). Feedback for first seminar very good. Mixture of attendees from across disciplines, members and officers. Format a mixture of talks, site visits and workshops. Masterclasses also underway. (Housing design has already taken place). One a month until May on different subjects. Masterclasses assume a greater level of expertise than seminars. UDL looking to rerun seminars in September. In-House Learning for Work workshops also available for Boroughs.

4. Using Design and Access Statements

Recommended that applicants are required to begin work on D+A Statement and send draft in before any pre-app meetings. This means applicant will have had to have thought about scheme and context and officers will have something to comment upon. Should mark the beginning of dialogue between LPA and applicant, which should ensure final D+A statement considers all the relevant issues in appropriate depth.

Not clear as to what will happen on schemes below D+A threshold, however this will only include householder, change of use and engineering and mining operations.

In order to increase the quality of statements some boroughs have run training sessions for their local agents.

5. CABE/EH Guidance on tall buildings – consultation on revisions

Deadline 1 May 07. Appears to have weakened on heritage issues. Refers to identifying suitable locations, but criteria for assessing suitable locations does not include issues such as transport accessibility and mix of uses. Does not go into sufficient detail about how to define what is good and bad in terms of the criteria specified. Has become more focused upon environmental sustainability. Has no specific guidance on residential tall buildings and does not discuss the economics of building tall and why some locations will never get a good quality tall building, if any at all.

6. Any Other Business

EK reminded meeting that UDL had meeting with Planning Inspectorate on 19th March re how it deals with design quality at appeal. She would like examples good and bad as examples are needed to support assertions about how inspectors are interpreting guidance (Action - All).

7. Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place in Hackney on 13 April 07 (Action – AR). Bexley possibly to follow (Action – MP).