

## West Wickham Library and Housing Project – Statement of Community Involvement

12<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

### Introduction

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been produced to accompany a planning application for the refurbishment and extension of West Wickham library and the redevelopment of Station Road car park transforming it into a new residential development including a social-tenured block of flats and a Mews development.

The applicant London Borough of Bromley Regeneration and Libraries team (the applicant) and Brimelow McSweeney Architects undertook a consultation programme to engage with stakeholders and the local community in relation to the proposals for the site.

This report details the public consultation the applicant has undertaken which have been carried out in accordance with national and regional policies and meets the requirements of the Bromley Borough Council Statement of Community Involvement policy document (revised and updated in 2016).

### Policy Framework

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2018** The NPPF identifies the role of local authorities in encouraging high quality pre-application consultation by applicants and developers.

Paragraph 40 states that local authorities should ‘encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community before submitting their applications’, where this would be beneficial.

Paragraph 128 also states that “Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.” This report has been written in accordance with national and local planning policy regarding community engagement and involvement.

**Localism Act 2011** The Localism Act received Royal Assent in November 2011 and makes pre-application consultation a statutory obligation. It also requires developers to bring their proposals to the attention of nearby residents and businesses. The applicant’s pre-application consultation strategy was developed in line with these key policy directives.

**Bromley Statement of Community Involvement, revises 2016** Bromley SCI provides guidance on consulting the community on planning applications. Paragraph 4.3 states that: “applicants will be expected to: • contact local residents and interest groups informing them of the development proposed; • arrange a public meeting or exhibition at a suitable location in close proximity to the application site in order to allow the proposal to be more fully understood by the local community prior to submission.”

## Summary of the Proposed Development

The proposal site comprises of West Wickham Library on Glebe Way and the redevelopment of the public car park on the site behind, accessible from Croft Avenue and is located in the West Wickham area of the London Borough of Bromley.



The proposed scheme includes:

- The refurbished and extended library
- New services to the library including a Café, Maker Space, Community Hire Space and Business Lounge
- A newly landscaped public square for local residents to use at the junction of the High Street
- 26 high quality homes in a block of flats and a new Mews development
- This includes 14 affordable flats for local residents in need
- A communal playground, private balconies, terraces, and gardens for all residents to enjoy
- 41 cycle spaces
- 13 car parking spaces including 3 disabled parking bays and 3 with electric charging points.



## Consultation Methods and Approach

The pre-application consultation has been underpinned by national and local planning policy regarding community engagement and involvement.

The project team conducted a thorough and inclusive program of consultation to give people the opportunity to review and comment on the proposals.

Direct engagement has taken place with the neighbouring residents, businesses, stakeholders, and elected representatives.

The stakeholder consultation methods discussed here are focused on the political and community consultation process and therefore do not detail pre-application meetings which took place with London Borough of Bromley officers.

The consultation programme undertaken was based on two separate strands: meetings with local representatives and holding public exhibition sessions for local residents and businesses.

The public exhibition offered the opportunity for the project team to present the scheme to local residents, businesses and interested members of the public and to answer any questions they may have had about the redevelopment. It also allowed for the attendees to submit feedback on the proposed scheme and offered the opportunity for the project team to collate the views of local residents.

## Pre-Application Discussions with Local Stakeholders

Prior to the public exhibition, we identified the community groups and individuals in the local area who would be interested in our proposals for the site and offered to meet with them at a time and date which was most convenient to them.

The stakeholder groups we contacted to ask for opinions on the proposals and to offer a meeting to discuss the proposals were as follows:

- GLL – the service provider for the library. GLL attended numerous project team meetings during the pre-application process informing the development of the brief.
- Local library employees. An online meeting took place on 1<sup>st</sup> July with local library employees prior to the public exhibition. Thereafter, Paula Young, Head of Culture, provided a fortnightly update to them.
- Ward Councillors Mark Brock, Nicholas Bennett, and Hannah Gray. An online ward councillor briefing took place on 13<sup>th</sup> May with these three councillors prior to the submission of the second pre-application proposals to the planning officers.
- Friends of West Wickham Library – The Friends were contacted for their views by Paula Young, Head of Culture at the London Borough of Bromley.
- Residents Association, Rotary Club and Business Association – Contacted by Lorraine McQuillan, Place Shaping & Local Economy Manager at the London Borough of Bromley.

All the meetings that took place allowed the project team present to talk through the proposals and answer any questions in advance of the public exhibition. We will continue to maintain regular contact with these individual and groups as the planning application progresses and are happy to meet anytime to discuss the application in more detail.

## Publicising the Consultation

Ahead of the public exhibition 344 leaflets were delivered directly to residents and businesses surrounding the site in the w/c 12 July, before the public exhibition took place. In addition to the leaflets that were delivered, additional copies were also provided to West Wickham Library for people to pick up. The objective of the leaflet was to invite the local community to the consultation event, to communicate information about the scheme, and to allow feedback mechanisms from those not able to attend the session. A copy of the leaflet can be found in **Appendix 1**.

Leaflets were delivered to residents and businesses on the following streets around the site:

- Ash Grove
- Croft Avenue
- Glebe Way
- High Street
- Oak Grove
- Station Road
- Wickham Court Road

Invitation emails and digital copies of the leaflet were sent out to ward councillors, Friends of West Wickham Library, Residents Association, Rotary Club and Business Association.

The ward councillors were provided with additional digital imagery of the proposals for the purpose of publishing on their social media accounts in order to reach a wider audience.

A project website <http://www.bm-architects.co.uk/westwickham> also contained information about the public exhibition, the display boards and contact details for people to provide their feedback. The Council and the library service provider, GLL, also created webpages for the scheme ahead of the exhibition.

## Public Exhibition

A staffed public exhibition took place between 19th and 23rd July in order to provide local residents and businesses with the opportunity to view, discuss and comment on the proposed scheme. This took place on site in the library during library opening hours, between 9am – 4pm, with the exhibition being extended for another week due to ongoing demand, during which time visitors were able to further complete and submit feedback forms, however without additional attendance from the project team or applicant.

160 people attended the first week of the exhibition to view the proposals and speak to members of the team. 25 people attended on Monday, 35 people attended on Tuesday, (Wednesday was closed), 55 people attended on Thursday, and 45 people attended on Friday.

By holding an exhibition throughout the day over two weeks, the applicant aimed to mitigate any barriers in attendance from members of the local community. The applicant, and the architect were available across various days throughout the week to answer any questions and take visitors through the proposals on display. The panels on display can be found in Appendix 2.

Visitors had the opportunity to view 9 display panels, containing details of the proposed redevelopment.

- West Wickham Library and Housing Proposals - Welcome
- West Wickham Library Proposals – Enhanced Community Offer
- West Wickham Library Proposals – Layouts
- West Wickham Library Proposals – Design and Appearance
- West Wickham Library Proposals – Urban Context
- West Wickham Housing Proposals – Scheme Layout
- West Wickham Housing Proposals – Urban Design Approach
- West Wickham Housing Proposals – Building Typology
- West Wickham Housing Proposals – Neighbouring Amenity

A feedback form was available for attendees to give their feedback on the proposals. Attendees were given the option to either fill it out at the venue and put it in the feedback box, or to take it home and send comments via email. 95 feedback forms were received over the course of the two weeks and comments were also sent to the project email account ([housing.development@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:housing.development@bromley.gov.uk)). A copy of the feedback form can be found in **Appendix 3**.

Throughout the process, an email address ([housing.development@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:housing.development@bromley.gov.uk)) and a telephone number were supplied, providing further information to residents, businesses, and stakeholders on request. Information about the proposals for the proposed scheme was also provided online at <http://www.bm-architects.co.uk/westwickham>.

## Summary of Feedback on the Proposals

Attendees at the consultation event were asked to complete a feedback form on the proposals to record their views on different aspects of the proposals, as well as raise any additional issues, points, suggestions, or comments.

The analysis in this chapter is drawn from 95 feedback forms completed by participants along with emails received and verbal feedback provided at the events. This suggests, it was a very successful consultation as 95 forms were received after one week of staffed exhibition and another week of public viewing of the exhibition. The majority of forms were filled in completely for each question, and often with a lot of effort and detail. Only a minority of comments were illegible or only partially illegible, though therefore still very helpful as a comment. The exhibition achieved an average rating of the value of the exhibition of 8.3 points and the presentation of the exhibition of 8.1 points out of 10.

value of exhibition total/average	presentation of exhibition total/average
7-10	7-10
71/8.8	69/8.6
4-6	4-6
8/6	11/6
1-3	1-3
3/3	1/3
no rating	no rating
11	13

Members of the public were pleased to see the proposals to extend the services to the library, refurbish and extend the spaces and overhaul the services. A regular point made was a relief that the library would remain at its original site without being relocated to the Leisure Centre site as was intended in a previous review of the scheme. The majority of feedback (80) from those who completed a feedback form supported the library proposals. Most comments of concern received were regarding the loss of the car park and potential pressure on neighbouring roads which came from a range of residents whether they support the housing development (35), are undecided (25) or are against it (31). 15 comments were received via the email system which reflect comments as received via the feedback forms regarding the library and the housing proposals.

total feedback forms received	Partially illegible comments	library element support	comments received	housing element support	comments received
		yes		yes	
95	8	80	72	35	31
		undecided		undecided	
		8	8	25	19
		no		no	
		2	2	31	31
		no comment		no comment	
		4	1	4	1

The summary below highlights the key topics and themes which were raised as part of the consultation exercise.

### Library

A large number of the submitted feedback for the library reflected positive on the proposals, most notably the extended services, the architectural design and the external improvements. Examples of submitted comments below:

- "I like the proposals. It will make the library a more prominent structure than it is at the moment."
- "The library building looks very sympathetic to the area and will be a big asset to the High Street. The community space and outside classroom are a great addition."
- "The fact that it still be situated in the High Street. The fact that it will be a valuable community space which we need. More books. A fantastic idea."
- "I like the fact it is remaining on the same site. It will be a hub for the WW community. The space will be used creatively and eco-friendly."

Overview of Key Topics raised on Feedback Forms regarding the Library Proposals

Comments on Library	Positive
Added facilities and improvements	35
Architectural design	29
External improvements - good	23
Location good	23
Community space included - good	21
Outdoor classroom included - good	19
Café included - good	18
Design of children's library - good	12
Publicly accessible toilets included - good	11
Workstations included - good	7
Maker space included - good	1

Comments on Library	Notes
More greenery to square	6
More parking	5
Café to rear of library building	3
Good access to be included in layouts	3
Temporary library?	2
Sustainability	2
More benches	2

Comments on Library	Negative
Too many Cafés in West Wickham already	12
Dislike architectural design	4
Too many workstations	2
Too much focus on children's library	1
Community space not needed	1

## Housing

Support for the housing development on the feedback forms was split, with a majority in support (35), undecided (25) or against (31). Comments on the housing development received were dominated by concern regarding the loss of the car park and potential pressure on neighbouring roads which came from a range of residents. Examples of submitted comments below:

- "West Wickham needs a greater variety of properties which this will provide."
- "Social and affordable housing. Good design."
- "Not enough parking spaces. Needs to be affordable housing to encourage younger people to live in West Wickham."
- "At present, we find it difficult to park in Oak Grove (*as residents*). ... Oak Grove is currently "unrestricted" for parking. I suggest it needs to be tighter controlled for residents of Oak Grove."

## Overview of Key Topics raised on Feedback Forms regarding the Housing Proposals

Reasons on Housing:	Supported: yes
Housing is needed/mix of private and affordable	13
Housing fits in/not too tall/not dominant	15
Good green space provided	3
Car Park not needed	1
It is funding a community facility	1
Improvement of area	1
Concerns:	
Loss of car park/provision of car parking	6
Proximity to neighbours	3
Density of scheme	2
Accessibility	1
Strain to local services	1

Overview of Key Topics raised on Feedback Forms regarding the Housing Proposals

Reasons on Housing:	Supported: undecided
Loss of car park	8
Should be affordable housing	6
Too few parking spaces for development	2
Proximity to residents	1
Why is it needed	1
Strain to local services	1
Overdevelopment/density of scheme	1
Concerns proposals will be cut back	1
Positive Notes:	
Good Design	1

Reasons on Housing:	Supported: no
Loss of car park	16
Proximity to residents/overlooking	12
Pressure on local roads	11
Too tall/out of keeping	10
Too few parking spaces for development	9
Strain to local services like GP, schools, transport	6
Over-development/density of scheme	6
Dislike of social housing	3
Noise from new neighbours	2
Not enough green space in scheme	2
Public money should not fund private housing	2
Impact during construction	1
Is footfall to library worth the expenses for housing	1

## Conclusion and Next Steps

In conclusion, the applicant has sought to undertake an open and inclusive consultation in relation to the proposals to refurbish and extend the library and redevelop the Station Road car park site to provide much needed housing.

The project team has, throughout the consultation process, actively sought to both communicate with and gain feedback from, a wide variety of stakeholders throughout the pre-application process.

Comments received through the consultation process were evaluated and picked up in an amended design where possible. The scope of the consultation was met through engaging with a range of stakeholders including local residents, library users and the library management and local politicians.

The applicant is committed to ongoing engagement throughout the lifetime of the project. The applicant will also inform stakeholders and other interested parties, via a press release, emails and information on display in the library, once the planning application is submitted. The applicant will also continue to respond to questions and comments from local residents, businesses and community groups.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1 – The Exhibition Leaflet



The Regeneration and Libraries teams at the London Borough of Bromley are exploring proposals to extend and refurbish West Wickham Library and to construct a small housing development behind the library.

The proposals for West Wickham Library include the following:

- Provision of community hire space.
- Improvements to the children's library.
- Provision of an outdoor classroom for children's activities.
- Provision of a makerspace, promoting STEM and creativity.
- More support for job seekers and local businesses.
- Increased number of PCs and work/study space.
- Provision of display space for the Bromley Historic Collections.
- Provision of accessible toilets for mobility impaired people.
- Provision of a café with sheltered outdoor seating.
- Improvements to the landscaping around the building.
- Improved energy efficiency and sustainability of the building.



#### Housing Proposals

A small housing development is also proposed on the land behind the library. There is a significant need for affordable housing in the borough and there is also a housing target for the borough set by the GLA. Town centre sites provide an opportunity to meet our housing targets without building on green spaces. It is proposed that there will be some private sale homes in this scheme to help to fund the library works.

#### How can I have my say?

A public consultation exercise is being undertaken with opportunities to share your views both in person and online. The public exhibition is due to be hosted in West Wickham Library from the 19th July 2021 to 24th July 2021. The exhibition will be manned on the following days:

- Monday 19th July
- Tuesday 20th July
- Thursday 22nd July
- Friday 23rd July

Feedback forms will be provided at the library to enable you to have your say.

For any other queries about the proposals please contact: [housing.development@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:housing.development@bromley.gov.uk)

Appendix 2 – The Exhibition Boards

**WEST WICKHAM LIBRARY AND HOUSING PROPOSALS - WELCOME**

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ATTEND OUR EXHIBITION TODAY AND LOOK THROUGH THE PROPOSALS.**

Bromley Council Regeneration and Homes teams and our library operator Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) welcome you to their exhibition to view the proposals for West Wickham Library and housing.

Members of the project team are here to provide more information and are happy to take you through the proposals and answer any questions you may have.

We have provided feedback forms on tables around the room and would like to hear your views on the proposals before a planning application is submitted.

Alternatively, you can give your feedback via the email below.

Email: [housing.development@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:housing.development@bromley.gov.uk)

**WHAT HAPPENED PREVIOUSLY?**

The Council previously considered relocating the West Wickham Library service on to the leisure centre site as part of a mixed-use development proposal. Following feedback from residents and further clarity work it was decided to re-evaluate both sites separately. The Council will still look to make improvements to the leisure centre, in addition to bringing forwards the library project.

**WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

- AUGUST 2021** - The project team will consider all comments received to seek to incorporate these where possible
- SEPTEMBER 2021** - The proposals will be finalised and a planning application will be submitted.
- SEPTEMBER 2021** - Planning application determined
- SUMMER 2022** - Work commences on site



GREAT ADDITION TO THE TOWNSCAPE OF WEST WICKHAM



HIGH QUALITY HOUSING WITH IMPROVED ACCESS

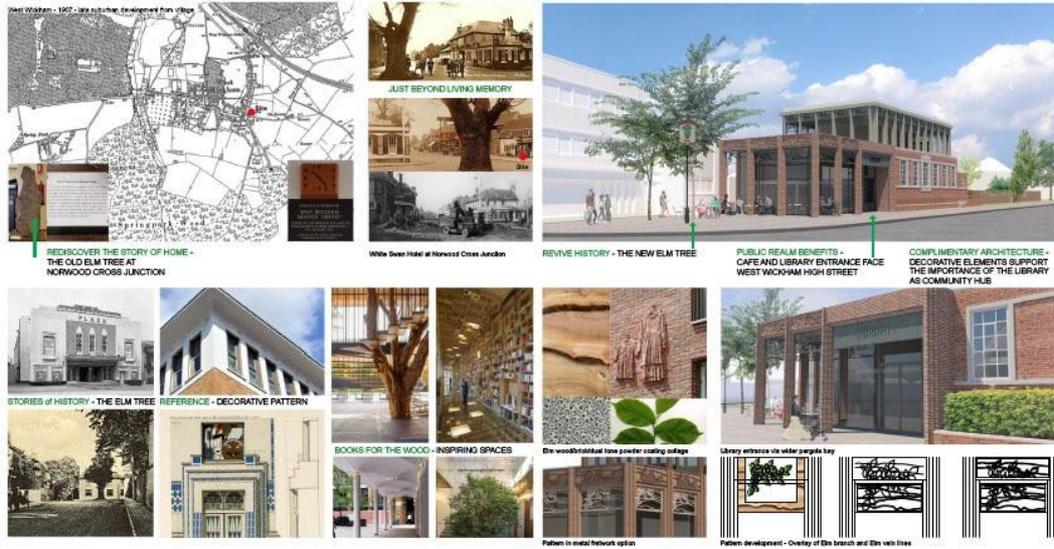
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WEST WICKHAM LIBRARY PROPOSALS - DESIGN AND APPEARANCE

DEVELOPING A NARRATIVE FOR THE LIBRARY



WEST WICKHAM LIBRARY PROPOSALS - URBAN CONTEXT

BRINGING HISTORY INTO THE 21ST CENTURY



## WEST WICKHAM HOUSING PROPOSALS - SCHEME LAYOUT

### MUCH NEEDED HOUSING

#### THE PROPOSALS ARE FOR 26 NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS

- 26 flats
- 26 balconies, terraces, gardens
- 90 sqm communal playground
- 40 bikes in communal bike stores
- 12 car parking spaces

#### UNIT MIX

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
0	18	1	0	8	0	0	0	0	0
0%	69%	4%	0%	30%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%



Masterplan

#### REVIEW OF CAR PARK FACILITIES

The Station Road car park site was selected following an earlier assessment of car park usage in the town centre, prior to the pandemic. We have undertaken quantitative parking surveys of the existing car parks, as well as overnight parking surveys for the roads surrounding the site.

These confirmed the pre-assessment and are summarised below:

1. There are a total of 370 spaces across the 4 car parks surveyed.
  2. There are 64 spaces within Station Road car park.
  3. Peak parking occupancy was recorded at 13:00 on Friday with 255 cars parked, which represents 69% occupancy, with 131 spaces still available.
  4. Peak parking would increase to 82% occupancy should Station Road car park be developed, with 81 spaces still available. Based on this, there would still be sufficient parking provided in West Wickham to accommodate future demand should the site be developed.
- On average across the ten overnight surveys, there were 55 cars parked with 30 available spaces which represents a parking occupancy of 56%. This is below the 85% threshold and would therefore be acceptable as any potential parking overspill can be accommodated on local roads.



Site plan showing amenity, parking and other facilities within the site

## WEST WICKHAM HOUSING PROPOSALS - URBAN DESIGN APPROACH

### COMPLETING THE COMMUNITY

**NORTH ROAD DEVELOPMENT**  
Create a historic urban heart at the high level of residential use with local gardens and dominant pedestrian use.

**THE SITE**  
Long, narrow parcel with direct neighbours in Station Road proposals immediately to the east and Croft Avenue to the west.

**STATION ROAD DEVELOPMENT**  
Tall, narrow blocks of high density housing with residential use, access from the side of the site with access from the east.

**CROFT AVENUE DEVELOPMENT**  
Tall, narrow blocks of high density housing along access road with high garden priorities, but no rear access to other side of site.

**West Wickham High Street - Housing Developments**

Reference Images for shared surface roads with pedestrian priority

**Community interaction along access road**

Proposed Section through access road

**Private car park site behind library**

**Condition of access road and link to Station Road**

**Rear of Station Road proposals**

**Proposed Visual of re-finished access road**

How Mews houses create a neighbouring presence to the Station Road properties supported by the pedestrian priority approach of the shared surface treatment.

## WEST WICKHAM HOUSING PROPOSALS - BUILDING TYPOLOGY

### A NEW WEST WICKHAM BUILDING ENSEMBLE



## WEST WICKHAM HOUSING PROPOSALS - NEIGHBOURING AMENITY

### CAREFULLY CONSIDERED INFILL DEVELOPMENT

CRITICAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT  
 An infill development is one that is built on a site that is currently vacant or under-used, and is typically located in an existing urban area. It is a key strategy for addressing housing shortages in city centres and other urban areas, and for promoting sustainable development.

0m - NO IMPACT    10m - NO IMPACT    30m - MINIMAL IMPACT



Appendix 3 – The Feedback Form

Page 1 of 2

July 2021



**WEST WICKHAM LIBRARY AND HOUSING PROJECT FEEDBACK  
PLEASE LET US KNOW YOUR THOUGHTS**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organisation (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

**NB If you prefer you can complete this form anonymously.**

**WE VALUE YOUR FEEDBACK....**

1. Do you use West Wickham **library**? (please circle one)

Yes / No

If No, please can you explain why you do not use the library: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you support the proposals for the **library**? (please circle one)

Yes / No / Undecided

3. What aspects of the **library** proposals do you particularly like or dislike?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you support the proposals for the **housing**? (please circle one)

Yes / No / Undecided

5. What aspects of the **housing** proposals do you particularly like or dislike?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Questions continued overleaf.*

