



POPLARWORKS

ABERFELDY

JOLLYS GREEN

CYCLE CAFE

Tall Buildings Statement  
Revision C | November 2023

**ABERFELDY VILLAGE MASTERPLAN**

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Fig.1 The Underbridge and Highland Place (Illustrative proposal)

**Please note:**

- All references to the Design and Access Statement: The Masterplan refer to Revision B dated August 2022, which must be read in conjunction with the Addendum document (Revision E) dated November 2023.
- All references to the Design and Access Statement: Detailed Proposals refer to Revision B dated October 2022 and must be read in conjunction with its Addendum Revision B dated November 2023.
- All references to the Parameter Plans refer to Revision 3 dated September 2023.
- All references to the Design Code refer to Revision D dated November 2023.
- For other supporting documents please refer to the most recent revision as set out in the Planning Application Documents and Drawing Schedule dated November 2023, prepared by DP9.

This Tall Buildings Statement has been prepared by Levitt Bernstein, DP9 Ltd, KM Heritage and The Townscape Consultancy, and is submitted in support of a hybrid planning application for the Aberfeldy Village Masterplan. The hybrid planning application is made in relation to the north of East India Dock Road (A13), east of the Blackwall Tunnel Northern Approach Road (A12) and to the south west of Abbot Road (the “Site”) on behalf of The Aberfeldy New Village LLP (“The Applicant”). The hybrid planning application is formed of detailed development proposals in respect of Phase A for which no matters are reserved (“Detailed Proposals”), and outline development proposals for the remainder of the Site, with all matters reserved (“Outline Proposals”). The Detailed Proposals and Outline Proposals together are referred to as the “Proposed Development”.

The Proposed Development comprises the comprehensive redevelopment of the Site. The Proposed Development will provide new retail, workspace and community floorspace along with residential dwellings and the pedestrianisation of the A12 Abbott Road vehicular underpass to create a new east to west route. The Proposed Development will also provide significant, high quality public realm, including a new Town Square, a new High Street and a public park.

Following submission of the Hybrid Application in October 2021, the Applicant and LBTH officers jointly agreed that the works to Jolly’s Green should be included within the red line and secured as part of the future planning permission. The Applicant has updated the red line and amended the Proposed Development to incorporate the provision of a direct link from the proposed pedestrianised underpass to Jolly’s Green. The extension of the redline boundary does not result in any fundamental alterations to the development that is proposed. Updated planning documents were submitted in August 2022 reflecting this change, with a further amendment made in January 2023 to remove building A3 from the masterplan.

In summer 2023, the scheme was amended to include second stairs to all buildings over 18m following the publication of the Government’s Long Term Plan For Housing. The Applicant has updated the planning application plans and documents where necessary to reflect these changes.

The purpose of the Tall Buildings Statement is to demonstrate that the overall heights strategy for the Proposed Development, which includes tall buildings, responds appropriately to responds appropriately to the London Plan’s Policy D9, and the London Borough of Tower Hamlet’s (LBTH) policy and guidance. This Tall Buildings Statement provides a detailed assessment and commentary of the policy, and is submitted in support of both the Outline Proposals, where the majority of tall buildings lie, and the Detailed Proposals.

It has been over a decade since the Aberfeldy New Village LLP, the joint-venture partnership between Poplar HARCA and EcoWorld London secured planning permission for a residential led mixed-use regeneration of the Aberfeldy Estate, an area with some of the starkest inequalities in the UK.

Since 2012, the Applicant has delivered 911 new homes offering a range of mixes and tenures, as well as new and highly valued green spaces, such as East India Green, and upgraded health and community facilities. The last phase of the previously approved Aberfeldy Village Masterplan is now complete, and provides a new public square, shops, a café and new homes.

Due to the success of Aberfeldy Village, The Applicant has been consulting over the last four years on a new and even more ambitious masterplan for the wider Aberfeldy area, reflecting the changing nature of the area and shifting priorities towards the environment and neighbourhood living. These plans have been subject to extensive engagement with the local community, including reaching out to and involving young people in the design process. In Autumn 2020, the regeneration plans were resoundingly endorsed in an estate ballot, with 93.1% of residents in favour on a 91.1% turnout.

The new Aberfeldy Village Masterplan presents a unique opportunity to secure significantly improved infrastructure and facilities that will benefit the wider Poplar community, as well as increase the overall number of new homes to be delivered, including high quality new affordable homes for existing residents.

Crucially, the Aberfeldy Village Masterplan seeks to address and tackle the wider strategic challenges facing the area, notably poor connectivity that contributes significantly to stubborn social and economic inequalities, as well as a lack of high-quality and well-maintained open spaces. At the heart of the proposals are plans to repurpose the existing vehicular underpass, creating a safer and greener pedestrian and cycling connection - the Underbridge - beneath the A12, helping to connect local communities via a new green corridor stretching from Langdon Park in the west to Braithwaite Park and the new Poplar Riverside in the east. These new, safer, greener pathways will significantly improve connectivity across this part of East London, helping to unlock its exciting potential.

The Aberfeldy Village Masterplan sets out to deliver a substantial package of benefits for existing residents and the wider Poplar area. The plans have been shaped by the local community and reflect their desire for new homes, more attractive open spaces, safer streets, a stronger retail offering and upgraded community facilities. The Applicant is confident that the Proposed Development will match and exceed these expectations.



Fig.2 Courtyard spaces in Phases 1-3 of Aberfeldy Village

## The Proposed Development

The Aberfeldy New Village LLP have successfully delivered phases 1, 2, 3A and 3B of the previously approved Aberfeldy Village Masterplan.

Aberfeldy Village is located in Poplar, East London, around one mile away from Canary Wharf. The Site is bounded on all three sides with the A12 Blackwall Tunnel to the west, the A13 East India Road to the south and Abbott Road to the north east. These features have isolated the Aberfeldy Estate despite its proximity to central London. Poplar is undergoing significant regeneration and as a result, the planning context for the area is changing. This is a crucial consideration in the revision and expansion of the previously approved Aberfeldy Village Masterplan.

The Proposed Development would realise the regeneration of the Site and secure growth on a strategic scale, on one of London's most important brownfield sites. The development will bring about a range of social, economic, and environmental benefits and will fulfil the potential of the Site as an Opportunity Area, Housing Zone and Neighbourhood Centre.

The development would result in a substantial number of new homes of different sizes and tenures, including new affordable homes which will contribute significantly to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets' and London's housing need requirements.



Fig.3 Phases 1-3 of the previously approved Aberfeldy Village Masterplan

## Estate regeneration context

The Proposed Development constitutes complex estate regeneration, and the local and strategic policy requirements as they relate to estate renewal are intrinsically linked to all aspects of the proposal, including overall scale of development. Notwithstanding our belief that the Proposed Development aligns with the LBTH's policies on tall buildings, it is vital that any discussion on scale is held within the context of what is a challenging policy to deliver, on a Site that has well documented viability issues.

In accordance with local and strategic policy requirements on estate regeneration, the proposals are predicated on full replacement of existing affordable rent floorspace. Any additional affordable housing provision is to be determined through a Financial Viability Assessment to represent the maximum reasonable level and therefore deliverability is key to the proposals.

It is essential that the Proposed Development provides the much-needed replacement affordable homes and addresses the area's significant infrastructure requirements to support regeneration. This requires development of scale, with a considerable number of market homes to cross-subsidise the delivery of the replacement affordable rent accommodation and additional affordable housing provision.

However, notwithstanding the inherent complexities of this estate regeneration project, and the challenging viability context, it remains that the overall heights strategy for the Proposed Development, which includes tall buildings, fully align with LBTH's policy and guidance. In order to assist the Council in its assessment of the proposed tall buildings, a detailed commentary is provided in this document.



Fig.4 Aberfeldy Street today

## Introduction

The Proposed Development has been arrived at following a detailed and comprehensive assessment of the existing Site and its existing and emerging context. Careful attention has been paid to the Site's immediate surroundings and wider context, particularly in regard to neighbouring heritage assets, key townscape views and lower scale residential development neighbouring the Site.

Throughout the Pre -Application process LBTH acknowledged that the scheme responds well to its context and that they were content with the Proposed Development's relationship with Balfour Tower. Officers recognised that the Site is suitable for tall buildings, notably as the draft Leaside Area Action Plan allocates Aberfeldy as a site for regeneration, and were in agreement that the taller elements are best suited to the north, as proposed.

This Tall Buildings Statement demonstrates the suitability of the proposed height, specifically in relation to the proposed 28 storey building at Highland Place.

Unless stated otherwise, any building heights used in this document correspond to the maximum parameter scheme for the Outline Proposals and the proposed building heights for the Detailed Proposals (Phase A). Where imagery supports the detailed assessment and commentary of the policy, the illustrative scheme for the Outline Proposals is used.



Further information on the maximum parameters is set out in the **Parameter Plans** prepared by Levitt Bernstein.

Information on the proposed building heights for the Detailed Proposals is included in the **Design and Access Statement: Detailed Proposals** and **Application Drawings** prepared by Morris +Company.

A **Built Heritage Assessment** prepared by KM Heritage and a **Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment** prepared by The Townscape Consultancy have been undertaken in support of this hybrid planning application.



Fig.5 Aerial view showing the Site

## Site context

As part of the overall assessment of a Proposed Development which includes tall buildings, it is important to begin with an understanding of the Site and its immediate surroundings.

The Site is located in an area that is marked with a range of existing buildings, with heights rising to 27 storeys within the vicinity of the Proposed Development. Unbuilt phases of the extant permission include AOD heights on the parameter plans which would allow for building heights of up to 41m AOD. This sets a precedent for tall buildings at this location.

Located within the Site is a Neighbourhood Centre, as defined in LBTH's Town Centre Hierarchy. The Site is located within the Poplar Riverside Opportunity Area as designated in the London Plan (2021) which identifies the Site as a significant location with development capacity to accommodate new housing, commercial development and infrastructure. The Site has a PTAL of 3-4 which represents good accessibility.

The Site is not located within a conservation area, and does not include any listed buildings. However, the Site is near to the Balfour Tower Conservation Area and several statutorily listed buildings, most notably Balfour Tower (Grade II\*) which is also identified as a Local Designated Landmark in the Local Plan.

The Local Plan also introduced two Borough views which cover part of the Site: View 6 - 'View from East India Dock Road to Balfour Tower & Canary Wharf in the background' and View 5 - 'View from Langdon Park to Balfour Tower & Canary Wharf in the background'.

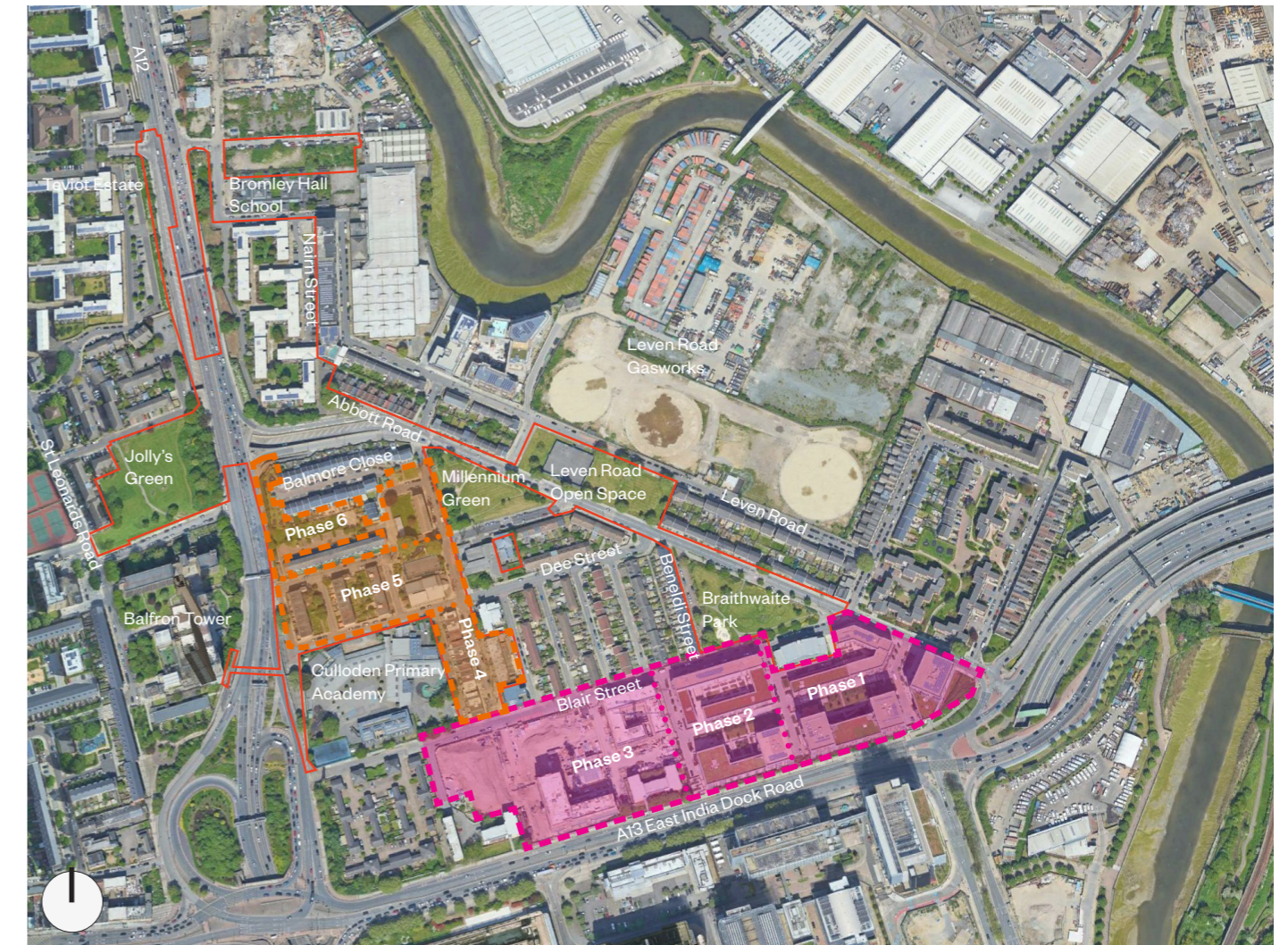


Fig.6 Site location plan showing Aberfeldy Village Phases 1-6