

Committees: Community and Children's Services Committee	Dated: 08/02/2019
Subject: Progress report of the provision of additional primary school places and social housing on the former Richard Cloudesley School site	Public
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Summary

This report is to update Members on the progress being made on the capital build of a 2 Form Entry (2FE) primary school and nursery, City of London Primary Academy Islington (COLPAI), and 66 social housing units on the former Richard Cloudesley School site and adjoining City of London Corporation (COLC) land (the Site), since it was last reported on 12 October 2018.

In October 2018, the Community and Children's Services (C&CS) Committee approved the projected costs for the housing element of the development, and in November 2018, Policy and Resources (P&R) Committee further approval for funding that may be needed for the school element of the development. In December 2018, the land held by London Borough (LB) Islington transferred to the COLC and the COLC entered into a contract with ISg for the building of the development.

Demolition of the site is underway, with the main build due to start in February 2019. There have been some delays which are detailed in the report. The projected completion of the school is quarter two (Q2) in 2020, with completion of the housing projected for Q2 in 2021.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the progress being made.

Main Report

Background

1. At the 13 December 2013 meeting of the C&CS Committee, Members resolved to support the principle of a development to provide affordable homes for social rent and additional nursery and primary school places, utilising the former Richard

Cloudesley School site owned by LB Islington, and part of the adjacent site owned by the COLC. This was followed by a decision at the 18 November 2016 C&CS Committee meeting to approve the provision of a 2 FE primary school and nursery, and 72 social housing units in a single 14-storey block of flats. In the event of this option being altered, the Committee agreed to delegate authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, to reconsider the proposal from officers.

2. The proposed development of the Site has had a history of delays at both pre-planning and planning approval stage, the details of which were reported in June 2018. The final planning approval was received on 19 July 2018.
3. The LB Islington agreed to transfer the former Richard Cloudesley School site to the COLC in return for nominations rights to 50% of the social housing units on the Site and a covenant on the part of the COLC to build the development. Subsequently LB Islington have agreed to contribute 30% of the housing unit costs up to £7 million for the housing element of the development.
4. In October 2018, C&CS Committee approved the projected costs for the housing element of the development. In November 2018, P&R Committee provided further approval for funding that may be needed for the school element of the development which the Department for Education (DfE) may not fund.
5. COLPAI opened in September 2016 and is presently housed temporarily on the Moreland Primary School site, with a lease that will expire in July 2020.

Current Position

6. During December 2018 the COLC entered into a bilateral development agreement with LB Islington while finalising a development agreement that includes the DfE was ongoing. This enabled approximately 96% of the land for the Site, previously owned by LB Islington, to transfer to the ownership of COLC, and the COLC to entered into contract with ISg, the contractor for this development.
7. Pre-commencement works, which included demolition, were agreed with LB Islington under licence prior to the transfer of the land and were due to be completed by the end of the 2018 calendar year. However, while carrying out these demolition works a gas leak occurred in Basterfield House and works on site were temporarily suspended. The Health and Safety Executive visited the Site and Cadent Gas Limited were called out to investigate who reported on the gas leak and advised that the situation had been made safe. ISG have completed further intrusive surveys and an inspection of basements to all adjoining buildings. Any services thought to be directed to the site have been traced using a signal generator and a computed tomography (CT) scan. ISG are also completing excavated of a slip trench to the perimeters of the site to expose any services. During these pre-commencement works large quantities of notifiable asbestos has been discovered buried in the floor slab of the old Richard Cloudesley School building, the removal of which is likely to further impact on the completion date for the school building.

8. At the time of writing this report a variation of a planning condition for the removal and replacement of 4 trees was scheduled to be heard at the Planning and Transportation Committee on 29 January 2019. The trees in question are of poor quality, identified as being “Category C” with a limited life expectancy in the region of 10 years. They are not subject to any statutory protection via a conservation area designation, nor have LB Islington deemed it appropriate to issue a Tree Preservation Order. Having explored the design and delivery options for the school in further detail, it has been concluded that these trees cannot be retained without damage, thus we seek their removal and replacement with 7-8 metre high Category A trees. Should this not be agreed this will have an impact on the completion of the build and may result in a variation of the planning application being submitted. When further key planning conditions are due to be discharged, consultation will take place where appropriate.
9. To keep all stakeholders informed of progress a regular newsletter is being produced and distributed to approximately 4000 households, and monthly Community Liaison Group meetings are held on the Golden Lane Estate. Two drop-in sessions have taken place with the third on 6 February 2019.
10. Officers are also presently exploring what, if any, VAT and Stamp Duty Land Tax liability (SDLT) there may be from the transfer of the Site to the COLC and the nominations agreement between LB Islington and COLC.
11. Main works for this development is due to commence in February 2019, with the projected completion of the school in Q2 in 2020 and completion of the housing projected for Q2 in 2021

Corporate & Strategic Implications

12. The COLC has a target of building 700 social housing units by 2025. This development makes a significant contribution to this target.
13. The COLC’s Education Strategy states Pupils in the Family of Schools have access to transformative education, enabling them to achieve their potential, flourish and thrive.
14. The Department of Community and Children’s Services Business Plan’s priority objective ‘Potential’, states: “People of all ages can achieve their ambitions through education, training and lifelong learning”, with the outcome to be achieved by “Delivering an outstanding education offer through the City of London family of schools”.

Legal Implications

15. These are included in the body of the report.

Conclusion

16. This development makes a significant contribution to the COLC target of 700 social housing units. COLPAI opened in September 2016 and is presently housed temporarily on the Moreland Primary School site, with a lease that will expire in July 2020. The project is experiencing some delays against the programme but the projected completion of the school is still on schedule for Q2 in 2020, and the housing Q2 in 2021.

Appendices

None.

Background Papers

- Provision of affordable homes and additional nursery and primary school places, C&CS Committee, 13/12/13
- Provision of additional primary school places and social housing on the former Richard Cloudesley School site, C&CS Committee, 18/11/16
- Former Richard Cloudesley School Site, C&CS Committee, 11/05/18
- Gateway 4C Report, Provision of Additional Primary School Places and Social Housing on the Former Richard Cloudesley School Site, C&CS Committee, 11/05/18
- Progress report of the provision of additional primary school places and social housing on the former Richard Cloudesley School site, C&CS Committee 08/06/2018
- Progress report of the provision of additional primary school places and social housing on the former Richard Cloudesley School site, C&CS Committee 12/10/2018
- Land Transactions – Former Richard Cloudesley School Site, C&CS Committee, 12/10/2018
- City of London Primary Academy Islington (CoLPAl) –Tender Award Gateway 5, Policy and Resources Project-Sub, 15/11/2018
- COLPAI Capital Build approval, Policy and Resources Project Sub, 15/11/2018

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