

The Selby Trust,
c/o SMART Urban Ltd (Agent) and Sona Mahtani , Chief Executive of Selby Trust

Site Allocation Development Plan Document Site SA63 The Selby Centre

Representors ID: 49 The Selby Trust

Hearing Statement

This statement responds to the Inspector's Draft Matters and Issues for Examination. The changes we would like to see made to the policy for this site were set out at the end of the previous letter, however we have had further time to consider both your questions and the future of the Selby Centre and so we would propose further changes which we set out at the end of this statement.

1. Does the allocation adequately take into account the social value of the existing centre?

1.1 No as it stands it does not.

1.2 This is a complex and unusual 1.2 ha site with 100 organisations in a mix of D1 and B1 uses including: offices, education and training, employment support, offender rehabilitation services, youth projects, health services, boxing, two large halls, café, recycling, woodwork centre, bicycle repair, food bank, global garden and community engagement projects. The buildings are 99% occupied as of 2015 and attract over 500 people a day. The range of clients and support provided is set out below in the Social Value of Selby appendix.

1.3 Many people fail to see the range and scale of what is actually delivered onsite, seeing instead a collection of slightly run down buildings and poor communities. This is to wholly overlook the value and accomplishments of the Selby Trust and their tenants who actually deliver high quality services while making the best of the available assets.

1.4 Research into the economic value of community hubs is limited and they resist definition in terms of standard economic measures such as SIC codes and other definitions of economic sector. However, the council grant forms just 18% of the Selby Trust's income with 77% earned or fundraised from other sources. For every £1 invested a further £17.85 is reinvested into activities and the community with c £35m funding secured by the Trust between 1997 and 2014. Without these services the public authorities would have to support the clients in other ways and probably at higher cost than currently; or the clients would be forced into deeper poverty.

1.5 When considered in terms of the economic and social breakdown of the surrounding area the value of this investment and its focus on the community is even more enhanced. The GLA Draft Economic Evidence Base 2016 Chapter 7 (weblink in appendix) provides a range of socioeconomic data for London much of which is mapped. The location of Selby and the wider Tottenham area is easily found as the borough of Haringey is marked and the east of the borough is the broad catchment for the Selby Centre. Map 7.1 on page 326 shows that mean net equivalised household incomes before housing costs in the east of Haringey are in

the lowest bracket of £440-£520 (compared to £667 for London as a whole). Table 7.5 on page 333 shows the average weekly cost of childcare in London ranges from £54-£152 depending on the age and nature of the childcare. Put in context childminding and youth provision at Selby is essential for some families. Map 7.3 on page 344 shows that in north Tottenham the levels of children in out of work benefit households are amongst the top 10% with the wider area in the highest 10-30%. Map 7.5 on page 346 shows the concentration of wards in the top 20% most deprived in the country with several in the top 5% (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015). The range and complexity of the issues faced by Selby's clients is masked by that data but it does show the need for such a proactive community structure.

- 1.6 Since 2008 with increasing public sector cuts and austerity measures the voluntary and community sector has suffered the loss of a number of organisations and community services. The Selby Trust has had cuts to grant but despite this has sustained and increased services to its community with newer projects including the Food Bank and Global Garden. However, as it faces change and particularly the possibility of redevelopment (with uncertain levels of control) there is a greater risk that the work done by the organisation will be lost unless measures are taken to address the risks.
- 1.7 Research by the Baring Foundation into the need for independence and control in the voluntary sector is pertinent. They state 'Voluntary sector organisations are – rightly – highly valued for their connection and commitment to the people and communities they serve. This allows them to meet real and sometimes previously hidden needs, to speak up without fear or favour and to deliver services in original and effective ways. This independence – of purpose, voice and action – is what makes the voluntary sector special and enables it to serve the interests of those who might otherwise be left without support or a voice because they lack power or influence.' They conclude that this independence is under threat from a 'negative climate' with unsupportive statutory funding and contracting arrangements and threats to independent governance being amongst the key trends. The Selby Trust considers that a move away from a long lease to a short lease with a requirement to pay rent and a lack of control or role in the development process of their site would both be a threat to independence and to the future success of the Centre. Of the Baring Trust's 5 recommendations is the need to 'provide targeted financial support to the voluntary sector, particular for smaller organisations working with disadvantaged groups who are most at risk, to support it deliver common social goals' is relevant here. Targeted financial support may mean grant and in this case also means the financial benefit that comes from retaining control over the organisations key asset which is its land and buildings.
- 1.8 We contend that planning policy can support the organisation maintain some control over future changes by ensuring that the process of development that takes place is community led and developed and that the end scheme is a community use led mixed use development.
- 1.9 In return the Selby Trust recognises it needs to find intelligent solutions for the use of land that enable a redevelopment to also provide much needed housing. This is a shared objective with Haringey Council and the Selby Trust understands the need to meet complex needs for the wider community and the need to use land effectively.

2. Would the site requirement and development guidelines bring about the envisaged site allocation description at 2.171?

- 2.1 The site requirement fails to capture the quality of the community and social hub created at the site and we consider a fuller description of the nature of what is already being delivered in this policy would assist in its retention.
- 2.2 The site requirement should refer to Asset of Community Value status as guidance states this may confer planning weight if the Planning Authority considers it. This can be provided with reference to the date it was given as 22 August 2014 if necessary. The Selby Trust intend to renew this listing when the five year period is nearing its end.
- 2.3 We consider that Planning Policy SP8 Employment land, SP9: Improving Skills And Training To Support Access To Jobs And Community Cohesion And Inclusion, SP14 Health and Wellbeing, SP 15 Culture and Leisure, SP16 Community Facilities together with the Asset of Community Value Listing would combine to give weight to the continuation and furtherance of the uses on the site in any future development. Despite that we thin the SSAD gives an opportunity to add site specific detail and context that will support a better quality future land use. To this end we consider the current use should be listed under the site requirements and that the proposed development should be community led mixed use development.
- 2.4 The Trust are not keen to see replacement provision of the services off site as is currently suggested in the first bullet point of the site requirements. The various organisations all receive support from the Trust's small team based at the Centre; there are economies of scale to them all being co-located; there is joint working and networking between the organisations; and the users find it convenient as many of them access more than one service in the same place. By being together in one location the Trust's motto of 'Many Cultures, One Community' is achieved. Having said this all the organisations would potentially benefit from a redevelopment and modern, energy efficient facilities. The main tenant 5E a training and employment provider currently occupies 57 rooms across the site and they have welcomed the opportunity to consolidate their spaces into a flexible workspace and fewer but better equipped classrooms.
- 2.5 With an organisation of this scale any redevelopment is likely to require a well-planned and considered decant strategy in order for the operations to be maintained while development goes ahead. The development guidelines should give priority to the needs to decant and re-provide for the existing users before any other form of development (for example housing) is commenced. This would protect replacement of uses and could further be detailed through conditions in any future planning consent.
- 2.6 Our initial proposed change suggesting the potential to use Community Right to Build for all or part of the site should be retained as an indicator of the importance of the community in play in key role in design and planning of the development however, we recognise that this is a somewhat cumbersome process as it requires a referendum but it does put the community in a lead role for any development. Therefore, it may be that there is still scope for this process to be used on part of the site.

3. Would they be sufficient to protect the existing community uses and job numbers?

- 3.1 In 2014-15 the site employed 217 staff and 287 volunteers in the range of projects mentioned above. This is a considerable level of employment for north Tottenham's White Hart Lane ward, which is in the top 5% most deprived in the country (LBH ward profile). The Selby Centre serves a wider area than the ward it is located in.
- 3.2 Planning policy can play an important role in setting the way forward for land use change. In this instance of this site other factors also play a very important role which will impact on the future of the Selby Centre.
- 3.3 Issues of delivery and timescale are important here. The SADPD has put the timeframe for delivery of this site as 2020 onwards. However, we think this reflects the resources and ability of the Council to consider the site and does not acknowledge the challenges faced by the Selby Trust.
- 3.4 While the Selby Trust was given a long lease in 1997 this is due to expire in 2022 so there is only 6 years remaining on the lease; with only 2 years remaining if redevelopment commenced in 2020. In addition the organisation is currently in a receipt of a non-cash circular grant which covers the rent of the entire site, however, in 2017 the grant will be cut by 40%, in 2018 by 60% and in 2019 there will be no such grant. The organisation will be required to pay rent in cash to the council to make up the shortfall. Furthermore, after the existing lease expires the Council intend to give the voluntary sector only 5 year rolling leases. So when the buildings were a liability for the Local Authority the Selby Trust was in possession of a long lease but also faced all the challenges of establishing itself and growth and now that change is an accepted outcome for the land and buildings on site the Trust will only have the benefit of short leases at full rent.
- 3.5 The combined effect of this is twofold. Firstly, the organisation will face contraction due to the financial implications and the progressive pressure on them will be sustained damage and likely job cuts. Secondly, this limits their ability to play an effective role in the future of their own site as potential developers will not take their land interest seriously and potential equity and charitable funders consider their interest too short to enable them to access capital funding intended for community groups. While this is not a planning matter we intend to continue to pursue discussions with the Council to seek a longer lease agreement.
- 3.6 To date, there has been one meeting between the Council and the Trust regarding the Bull Lane site to the north (mentioned in development guidelines on page 153) which is also owned by Haringey Council but is within the London Borough of Enfield and the Trust has supported a proposal by Haringey to improve the leisure potential of that site. The Selby Trust has had 5 meetings with the council in the last year to discuss the future of their site, development options and leases. The Council have written a conditional letter of support to the Big Potential Advance bid, which if successful will enable Haringey Council and the Selby Trust to work out a business model and financial plan for the Selby Centre. These discussions have been relatively open and friendly although they are slow and uncertain, with the Trust being given no clarity as to their role in the development. This is the larger problem for them as they face an imminent uncertain future with pressures of grant

reduction and rent hikes whilst development plans for this site are earmarked at the end of the plan period.

- 3.7 We consider that planning policy can play a proactive and supportive role to acknowledge and require the role of the existing community in the future development plans of the site and that that would enable them to have greater confidence in setting out their future plans.
- 3.8 We further consider that the level of jobs and volunteering the planning policy seeks to protect on this site should be based on current levels as it is likely that proposed changes in the Council grant to the Trust may cause diminution.

4. Conclusion

4.1 To conclude we consider the Selby Centre to be a valuable asset for Haringey and a unique organisation within the community sector in terms of breadth, scale and value of services it provides. This use should be protected and enhanced. The Trust recognise the need for redevelopment and welcome it as an opportunity to resolve existing problems of poor quality buildings, spaces not entirely fit for purpose and high heating and maintenance cost but they need to be at the heart of the development to ensure that the community uses are developed in a way that enables them to be sustained and grow in the future. We consider the following changes to the policy would further support this objective:

- Page Site requirements, p153,
 - First bullet point to be amended as follows: The future consolidated re-provision of all the existing community uses should be secured as part of redevelopment providing a replacement community asset in a manner that secures flexible, sustainable space ideally within the existing site. Currently the site is managed by the Selby Trust and houses c100 organisations on site in a mix of D1 and B1 uses including: offices, education and training, employment support, offender rehabilitation services, youth projects, health services, boxing, two large halls, café, recycling, woodwork centre, bicycle repair, food bank, global garden and community engagement projects.
 - And to also include a third bullet point as follows: Employment and volunteering levels currently on site to be retained at existing levels (c 220 jobs and 250 volunteers) and potentially maximised
 - The site was designated an Asset of Community Value 22 August 2014
 - The site to be redeveloped as Community Use led mixed use
- Page Development Guidelines, p153, to also include
 - The Community should be a key partner to the development process to ensure that community development activities remain at the heart of the site
 - There is potential for all or part of the development to be brought forward under the Community Right to Build or through a partnership mechanism which ensures a joint role for the Selby Trust

- Retention of a significant amount of open space should be included in the new development to support the community use
- A decant strategy should be put in place to ensure the new community facilities are fully re-provided in order to enable continuity of services before other uses are developed out

Words 2,808

References to evidence cited

White Hart Lane ward data

http://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/census11_white_hart_lane_ward_profile.pdf

GLA Draft Economic Evidence Base 2016

<https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/draft-eeb-2016.pdf>

The Baring Foundation report of The Independence Panel

<http://www.independencepanel.org.uk>