

GLA APPROVES #1BN ELEPHANT AND CASTLE REDEVELOPMENT

Publication **Estates Gazette Online**
Date **12 December 2018**

The Greater London Assembly has approved Delancey and APG's £1bn redevelopment of the Elephant and Castle shopping centre, SE1.

The plans for the phased, mixed-use redevelopment will see the existing shopping centre demolished and replaced with buildings of up to 34 storeys, with 979 homes and commercial space, along with a new Underground station entrance.

The decision was taken under delegated authority by the deputy mayor for planning, regeneration and skills, Jules Pipe.

Transport for London has a land holding at the site and Sadiq Khan, London mayor and chairman of the TfL board, had a conflict of interest.

In January, the scheme was recommended for approval a second time by Southwark Council planning officers. The council then approved plans on 3 July, two years after the developer had submitted the original application. However, it relied on GLA approval for the final go-ahead.

A City Hall spokesperson said: "This development will include nearly 1,000 new homes for rent – of which 35 per cent will be at social rent or other genuinely affordable levels – as well as community space, leisure facilities, offices, an enhanced college campus and improvements to the nearby Underground station.

"By working with the developer, the council and local ward councillors, City Hall has secured an unprecedented level of support for traders affected, with their rents now capped below market rates for 15 years, and has got the level of rents in the affordable homes down even further.

"City Hall has used the planning powers available to their fullest extent to make sure these plans represent a good deal for the local area and, having considered all the evidence available, has decided to approve this application."

Ledbury Action Group, which opposes the scheme, posted on Twitter: "We can't repeatedly have developers coming in, doing whatever they like and sticking two fingers up to the existing community."

Sian Berry, co-leader of the Green Party and chairwoman of the GLA housing committee, responded on Twitter: "Absolutely gutting for the community fighting for a better deal – especially as the effects on traders are still so severe, social housing so low, and linked developments not yet agreed."

On 7 December 2018, Berry wrote to Sadiq Khan, asking him to call in the application. She pointed out that the scheme was not compliant with affordable housing policies for number of homes or tenure split, did not provide adequate relocation strategies or funds for local businesses and did not include the required 10% affordable retail space, as well as noting that the nearby Castle Square does not have planning consent.

Delancey and jv partner APG acquired the shopping centre for £80m in 2013. It was purchased from Key Property Investments, a 50:50 joint venture between St Modwen and Kuwaiti investor Salhia Real Estate Company.

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