

London Borough of Islington

**Planning Committee - 16 December 2019**

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held at Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD - Islington Town Hall on 16 December 2019 at 7.30 pm.

**Present:**      **Councillors:**      Klute (Chair), Kay (Vice-Chair), Picknell (Vice-Chair), Clarke and Convery

**Councillor Martin Klute in the Chair**

**131      INTRODUCTIONS (Item A1)**

Councillor Klute welcomed everyone to the meeting. Members of the Committee and officers introduced themselves.

**132      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item A2)**

Apologies were received from Councillors Graham, Poyser, Spall and Woolf.

**133      DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item A3)**

There were no declarations of substitute members.

**134      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item A4)**

There were no declarations of interest.

**135      ORDER OF BUSINESS (Item A5)**

The order of business would be as per the agenda.

**136      MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item A6)**

**Item B2 – PAUL ANTHONY HOUSE, 724 HOLLOWAY ROAD, LONDON, N19 3JD**

It was noted that a paragraph on the above item in the minutes be amended to read that Councillor Clarke proposed a motion to defer and was seconded by Councillor Graham.

**RESOLVED:**

That subject to the above amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2019 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

**137      145-157 ST JOHN STREET, LONDON, EC1V 4QJ (Item B1)**

Refurbishment and extension of existing building including additional seventh floor level as well as an extension to the rear of the existing building (from ground level to roof level) and front and rear roof terraces at the upper level, replacement of the

building's facade to accommodate retail (Class A1) / professional and financial services (Class A2) and office space (B1(a) use) on the ground floor and office space (Class B1(a)) in the remainder of the building, with public highway improvements and other associated works.

(Planning application number: P2018/1229/FUL)

In the discussion the following points were made:

- Members were reminded that at the meeting on 15 October 2019, a decision was taken to defer so that the applicant could carry out a BRE assessment of sunlight/daylight impacts to the neighbouring commercial building; officers to consider the impact of the proposal on heritage assets and for a site visit by members to understand the impact of the scheme on neighbouring occupiers.
- The Planning Officer informed the meeting that applicant had undertaken a sunlight/daylight testing and members had attended a site visit to the neighbouring property. Meeting was informed that in addition to addressing objector's concerns, the applicant had submitted revised plans and elevations.
- The Planning officer highlighted changes to the scheme since it's consideration at the last meeting. The changes included the reduction to the building envelope; the increase in separation distances to neighbouring buildings to the north and west and a contextual analysis examining gaps between buildings was highlighted.
- The Planning Officer reiterated the Council's Design Officer's view, that some harm to heritage assets would occur, however this is to be weighed against the public benefits that will arise from the scheme and includes a mix of uses and off site contributions towards housing and affordable workspace.
- In terms of daylight loss, meeting was advised that test shows that 1 window at each floor at 42-47 St John's Square would see reductions in VSC beyond the BRE guidance, however officers consider that the weight afforded to the transgressions is at the lower end of the spectrum. Similarly, with 159 St John's Street, 5 windows on the 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> floors and 1 window at the 4<sup>th</sup> floor would see reductions beyond the BRE guidance. The Planning Officer acknowledged that although the reductions range between 30% to approximately 70% and impacts weigh against the scheme in the planning balance, it was noted that at the first floor the windows are generally to large open plan area used as a kitchenette and break out space (which is not as sensitive as residential accommodation).
- With regard to sunlight loss, the Planning officer advised that applicant's revised plans setting the building further away from neighbouring properties (6m from 159 St John's Street), has reduced the impact to the neighbouring occupiers in terms of both light loss and outlook. The increase in separation

distance between elevations has improved the light.

- Members were reminded of the statutory duty requirement in assessing the impact of the proposal on the heritage assets, and the Council's Conservation Officer views that the extensions to the building will cause some harm to the setting of the Grade 1 Listed Church and the character and appearance of the Clerkenwell Green Conservation Area as a result of the additional visual prominence of the additional massing. Members were informed that there is a requirement that the impact of the proposal on the heritage assets be very carefully considered. If the overall heritage assessment concludes that the proposal is harmful then that should be given 'considerable importance and weight' in the final balancing exercise having regard to other material considerations (including public benefits).
- Enhancements have been proposed to make the scheme more accessible. Additionally, £75,000 of funding from the applicant would be provided to cover the cost of a heritage lead landscaping scheme to St John's Church Yard. In addition the footway to the front of the site is to be altered so that access into the building for wheel chair users will be greatly enhanced which will be secured by a planning obligation.
- Other benefits from the scheme include an offsite contribution of £871,724 towards delivery of affordable workspace and £216,320 which will be secured to help deliver affordable housing elsewhere in the borough. Members were advised that this is a car free development and the refurbished building proposed will be more energy efficient which is to be welcomed. The presenting officer drew members attention to the report which set out other benefits of the scheme.
- During deliberation Members welcomed the applicant's response in particular to objectors' concerns regarding loss of sunlight by altering the footprint of the building and notable that the two elevations running parallel to one another. In addition the Chair acknowledged officers explanation of the impact on heritage assets with it's revised building plans and separation distances

**RESOLVED:**

That following consideration of the case officer's report (the assessment and recommendations therein), the presentation to Committee, submitted representations, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions and informatives set out in Appendix 1 of the officer report and subject to the prior completion of a Deed of Planning Obligation made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 securing the heads of terms as set out in Appendix 1 of the officer report.

Demolition of existing buildings and construction of 7 residential dwellings (Use Class C3) and a new 3 storey (plus basement levels) 1,419 sqm office building (Use Class B1a), with landscaping, access and associated works.

(Planning application number: P2019/2429/FUL)

In the discussion the following points were made:

- Members were advised that an extant permission existed for this scheme with regards to site layout, footprint, height, scale and massing and the issue for consideration is the alternative use, the addition of windows and relocation of the lift overrun to the business use of the building. In addition, the Planning Officer reiterated that the extant planning permission is a relevant material consideration in determining the application.
- In land use terms, the planning officer advised that the proposal complies with the overarching land use objectives as it re-provides an increase business use floorspace and new housing in the location. The proposed land use mix is therefore acceptable in principle.
- The Planning Officer reminded members that the height, scale and massing is identical to that of the consented scheme and that the proposed scale, height and massing is considered contextual and is supported by Council officers. Similarly the design of the proposed buildings would remain simple and consistent, employing similar design language to the existing adjacent mews and similar materials.
- Members were advised that although no windows were being proposed to the set-back upper floor at the rear, the side elevations feature a series of smaller openings in the copper cladding to the same grid pattern as the lower floors. The Planning Officer advised that it is considered that all three elevations are improved by the addition of windows.
- On the proposed basement development, the Planning Officer acknowledged that the extent of the basement levels is consistent with the extant permission and that the 2-storey basement beneath the detached office building is to be set away from the site boundaries and the proposed houses.
- Members were advised that the lift overrun has been relocated and rotated to be more central to the building so as to be less intrusive to the roofscape.
- In terms of overlooking, the Planning Officer advised that at both ground and first floor, there would be no window-to-window overlooking because the existing west elevation wall would be retained with an attached timber screen which together would prevent overlooking. With regards to loss of privacy, members were informed that at second floor level, there will be no bedrooms on the west elevation of the proposed houses, which will have north facing windows and windows facing into an internal courtyard thereby not facing any neighbours.

- With regards to daylight and sunlight loss, the Planning Officer advised that the applicant has submitted a Daylight and Sunlight report which indicates that all the 293 windows facing the site would meet the BRE guidance ensuring that there is no reduction in excess of 20% in either VSC or DD. The report also recognises some loss to the sunlight on the ground to properties at 126, 128 and 130 Aberdeen Park
- The Planning Officer informed the meeting that although there are no trees on the site, except around the adjoining surrounding sites, the application would not obstruct the root protection zones of these trees and would not result in the removal of any trees especially during construction which is to be secured by condition 5 in the report.
- With regard to objectors concerns about the perceived lack of turning circle within the proposed development, meeting was advised that servicing would be undertaken within the site whilst the separate Parking and Servicing Strategy shows a 12m turning circle between the business and residential buildings allowing for vehicles. Members were reminded that this is consistent with the extant permission.
- On the issue of car parking, the Planning Officer advised that the proposal would provide a maximum of 3 standard car parking spaces which is a reduction to the existing parking situation for the storage use.
- Members were concerned that the proposal still provides for 3 standard car parking spaces on the site contrary to council policy promoting car free developments and the difficulty of enforcements by traffic wardens especially as the car spaces are on private land. A request by the Planning Officer that condition 21 should be amended to state a maximum of 3 accessible wheelchair parking spaces instead of 4 as stated in the report.
- With the provision of car parking spaces for wheelchair parking, the Planning Officer acknowledged that providing alternative parking spaces on the public road is not ideal for wheel chair users considering the steep gradient to the public road and was in line with council policy for wheelchair accessible parking.
- In response to a question on where the mechanical plant will be located and the ventilation strategy for the building considering its two subterranean floors, the applicant indicated that the light well will provide some ventilation and that all plant and equipment had been designed to be subterranean, necessitating external plant and equipment.
- The Planning officer informed members that due to health and safety concerns and maintenance details of the lightwell a condition is being proposed, the wording to be delegated to officers to finalise.

- In response to a request to introduce some further environment improvements to the scheme, the planning officer suggested that wording of condition 21 can be amended to incorporate some more measures in the location where the 3 standard car parking spaces will be removed. Members agreed that condition 6 to be amended to incorporate the request, details of the wording to be delegated to officers and the Chair.

**RESOLVED:**

That following consideration of the case officer's report (the assessment and recommendations therein), the presentation to Committee, submitted representations and objections provided verbally at this meeting, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions and informatives set out in Appendix 1 of the officer report and the additional condition outlined above; and subject to the prior completion of a Deed of Planning Obligation made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 securing the heads of terms as set out in Appendix 1 of the officer report as amended above, the wording of which was delegated to officers; and subject to any direction by the Mayor of London to refuse the application or for it to be called in for determination by the Mayor of London.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm

**CHAIR**