

Planning Sub Committee B - 19 September 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Sub Committee B held at Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 19 September 2023 at 7.30 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Poyser (Chair), Hayes, Klute, Jackson and Ogunro

Councillor Dave Poyser in the Chair

1 INTRODUCTIONS (Item A1)

Cllr Poyser welcomed everyone to the meeting. Members of the Committee and officers introduced themselves and the Chair outlined the procedures for the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item A2)

None.

3 DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item A3)

None.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item A4)

None.

5 ORDER OF BUSINESS (Item A5)

The Chair outlined the order of business. This had changed so that item B1 was presented last.

6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item A6)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

7 3 MIDDLETON MEWS, N7 9LT (Item B2)

Planning Officers explained there was an error in the report, and they needed further time to speak to the applicant and assess this.

Councillor Poyser proposed a motion to defer the item. Councillor Klute Seconded.

RESOLVED:

That the item be deferred.

8 WHITE LION YOUTH CENTRE, 45 WHITE LION STREET, N1 9PW (Item B3)

Proposed erection of new standalone dance studio in southwest corner of car park following demolition of vacant outbuildings and associated plant area. Plus, the addition of a new accessible WC at third floor.

(Planning Application Number: P2023/0562/FUL)

Jake Sheils, planning officer, introduced the report. They explained an updated version of the NPPF was published on 5th September 2023. The changes relate to an update regarding a Written Ministerial Statement to update policy on planning for onshore wind development in England. After assessment of this updated policy and its impact on the applications presented tonight – officers consider that this does not materially alter our assessments.

In response to questions from the committee the Planning Officer explained that the outbuilding has been vacant for several years and is to be demolished, with the bricks repurposed for a bin enclosure wall and gate at the rear.

Concerns were raised about noise, particularly from the plant equipment on the northern section of the roof. The applicant had conducted a noise assessment and explained all windows and openings will be closed when the studio is in use, and trained staff will be on-site to ensure there was no adverse noise. This approach is expected to reduce noise for all neighbours.

The proposed studio would be mechanically ventilated to prevent the need for open windows when the building was in use. The CGI in the presentation may have shown a glass ceiling, but there will only be roof lights, not a full glass ceiling.

Objectors had raised concerns primarily related to noise. They had pointed out that the windows at the studio were often left open, which allowed sound to easily travel, making it possible to hear everything happening inside. Additionally, there were concerns about the then-current use of the existing facilities. They were worried that the usage of the new facility might exacerbate the issue, particularly when it came to enforcing the closing of doors and controlling activities. They also expressed apprehension regarding the private hire of the space. They were seeking more information about what activities would be permitted during private hires and how they would be regulated. Furthermore, they sought a restriction on the timing of such activities, suggesting a preference for no activities beyond 8 or 9 PM to minimize disruptions.

The applicant explained that the management strategy had been to relocate noisy activities to a new dance studio with a sealed façade and implement mechanical ventilation to eliminate the need to open windows. A status monitoring point had been established.

It had been planned that the new dance studio would not be in use while the existing building was not in use. This strategy was expected to benefit both the residents and young people in Islington. While some exercise and movement had continued in the existing dance studio, the majority of its use had been for conferences and meetings.

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The sub-committee sought further explanation from the applicant. They wanted assurance that there would be less noise compared to the current levels. The response indicated that sealed windows that couldn't be opened would significantly reduce noise breakout, with calculations based on various levels of amplified music and receptors situated 20 meters away.

Regarding the usage of the second floor, the plan was for exercise and movement to continue at a lower volume, with most activities being conferences and meetings. The old dance studio was not going to continue as a dance studio as the new one would be.

Private functions and hires were part of the consideration, with plans for longer-term solutions incorporated into the design to reduce instrument noise. The windows were operable as per the conditions applied, but there was no reason not to condition them to be fixed shut. The space was designed to manage rising temperatures with a design planned to cool the space for 30 people dancing even in extreme heat and the system would also providing heating in the winter.

Concerns were raised about continuing exercise in the existing space and whether a condition disallowing recorded music would be effective. The applicant explained the primary aim was to serve young people, and they aimed to work with residents to address noise complaints. They took these very seriously explaining there had been minimal complaints while having been in operation from 1970s. Private hires were also facilitated through a designated route to access the space and were closely monitored for security and safety.

The facility typically closed at 10 PM, with activities ceasing at 9 PM. The existing space was to be used for less noisy movement. The management was also committed to addressing anti-social behaviour in the area with well-trained staff, procedures, and good management processes.

The Councillors discussed the application and stated they were supportive of work with the youth centre, but noise has been problematic and there were concerns over a sealed space to rely on mechanical ventilation with the extreme heat the UK has been having over the last few summers.

Councillor Klute proposed a condition that the roof lights be fixed shut. Councillor Poyser seconded.

Councillor Klute proposed a condition that the plant fully ventilated the space to room temperature when external temp is 30 degrees or higher. Councillor Poyser Seconded.

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, the planning permission be granted subject to the conditions and informatives set out in Appendix 1 (page 136-141 of the Agenda) of the officer report and an addition of the further condition set out above.

9 **29 CLERKENWELL ROAD, EC1M 5RN (Item B1)**

Proposed partial demolition at roof level and to west elevation; the erection of a single roof extension for office accommodation (Class E(g)(i) Use) and external plant compound, erection of a side extension at first, second, third and fourth floor levels, installation of a new shopfront with the replacement of ground floor shopfront windows to Clerkenwell Road and lowering of front slab to allow accessible entrance and other associated works.

(Planning Application Number: P2022/2987/FUL)

Mark Heaney, Planning Officer, introduced this report. They explained an updated version of the NPPF was published on 5th September 2023. The changes relate to an update regarding a Written Ministerial Statement to update policy on planning for onshore wind development in England. After assessment of this updated policy and its impact on the applications presented tonight – officers consider that this does not materially alter our assessments.

In response to a question from the sub-committee the planning officer explained the new building is architecturally sympathetic to the surrounding structures as much as is possible. It replicates a traditional mansard design, showing a considerate approach to its architectural compatibility with the area. Additionally, the front roof terrace is planned to be set back by a meter, further indicating a thoughtful design that blends with the existing surroundings.

The objectors expressed concerns. The main concern was that they felt strongly overlooked during the planning process. Noise assessments were conducted elsewhere, leaving them impacted by construction work and other disturbances. Loss of daylight is a pressing issue, and the terrace is now overlooked by concrete parts of the extension, with no mention of this in the planning process. This led to a feeling of being ignored and misled throughout the planning process, with no communication even after raising complaints and objections. The increase in noise due to the extension does not seem significant enough to justify the 12 to 18 months of work it entails. They requested a review of the terrace's usage times, possibly considering the use of plants to address some of the concerns. It's suggested that these disruptions be confined to Monday to Friday, given the significant amount of construction work in the vicinity.

The Applicant was not present at the meeting. Planning officers answered questions arising from the sub-committee. They explained the planning processes were duly followed, and all assessments were considered correct. There was a planning construction plan in place. The hours of use of the terrace are documented in the application papers. The applicant resisted and did not wish to submit amended plans at this stage but was open to making necessary changes under specific conditions. Concerning the hours of operation for the terrace, it was suggested that limiting its use on weekends, particularly in the evening, could help address noise concerns.

Councillor Poyser proposed a condition to reduce hours of use of terrace to 18:00hrs during week and nothing on weekends. Councillor Klute seconded.

Councillor Poyser proposed a condition that air conditioning condensers be at the same level as previous applications. Councillor Klute seconded.

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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, the planning permission be granted subject to the conditions and informatives set out in Appendix 1 (page 38-46 of the Agenda) of the officer report and an addition of the further condition set out above.

The meeting ended at 9.10 pm

CHAIR