

London Borough of Islington

Planning Committee - 2 March 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 2 March 2020 at 7.30 pm.

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

Councillor Martin Klute in the Chair

147 INTRODUCTIONS (Item A1)

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

148 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item A2)

Apologies were received from Councillors Jenny Kay, Marian Spall and John Woolf.

149 DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item A3)

Councillor Nick Wayne substituted for Councillor John Woolf.

150 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item A4)

Councillor David Poyser declared that he had studied for a post graduate certificate at City University in the 1970s.

151 ORDER OF BUSINESS (Item A5)

The order of business would be as set out on the agenda.

152 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item A6)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2020 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

153 2-7 CLERKENWELL GREEN LONDON EC1R 0DE (Item B1)

Demolition of the existing building and redevelopment of the site to provide a six storey (plus basement) office building (use class B1a) involving 3,021sqm of commercial floorspace including 446sqm (NIA) of flexible space (use class A1/A2/A3/B1/D1) on part of the ground floor and basement; provision of refuse storage, cycle storage and plant; and re-location of the substation from ground to basement level.

(Planning application number: P2019/2791/FUL)

In the discussion the following points were made:

- The Planning Officer noted two updates required as follows: (a) to paragraph 7.1 of page 17 of the agenda pack, as four objections had been received, rather than the three stated in the report and (b) Condition 10 on page 52 of the agenda pack, by the inclusion of the following: "including the proposed windows closest to 9 Clerkenwell Green at 3rd and 4th floor level"(to be obscured)
- A member of the Committee noted that, as part of the proposal "Sandy coloured brick is proposed as the main material for the façade and a light grey glazed brick for the ground floor" (paragraph 5.4 of the report) and, given that this was an iconic area, queried how the new building would look compared to those around it? The Planning Officer replied that the site was bordered on one side by brick-built mixed use residential/commercial buildings, a 5-storey residential building with commercial use on the ground floor. The buildings on Clerkenwell Green were generally finer grain Victorian or pre-Victorian buildings in commercial and office use, but there were larger early 20th century warehouse buildings in Aylesbury Street. The proposed building offered a transition between the two and was considered to be a compromise. The original proposal had included a copper roof, but this had now been revised to red brick.
- A member of the Committee asked whether the basement excavation would be affected by underground water. The Planning Officer stated that the development was not in a flood risk zone in which flooding was considered to be a risk. "Small scale" in paragraph 10.136 referred to relative to the site size. A Basement Impact Assessment had been submitted. There was an existing basement.
- A member of the Committee noted that the red bricks and light buff bricks needed good contextualisation. The Planning Officer noted that the Design and Conservation Team were happy with the building materials.
- A member of the Committee queried why there was a roof terrace on an office block. A question was also asked about water collection from the roof and whether it became stagnant. The Planning Officer replied that this was covered by Condition 7, which dealt with the drainage strategy for a sustainable urban drainage system, which would have to be approved by the Council.
- One of the objectors, who lived next to the site, referred to the obscured windows at the rear of the building which looked into his living room. He asked whether the Committee agreed that those windows should be obscured? He would prefer the second and third floor windows to be obscured. He suggested that it would be easy to achieve this and would make a difference to him. He also noted a mention of a possible café/restaurant use and queried whether an alcohol licence would be granted?

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- An objector asked about the plant noise assessment, pointing out that plant noise assessments needed to be carried out at 8 Clerkenwell Green
- The Founder and Director of the Clerkenwell Green Preservation Association stated her objections to the proposed plan, including that it was “bulky”, that it would dwarf the surrounding buildings and that the proposal was not contextual within Clerkenwell Green.
- A member of the Committee asked why the applicant had found the use of PV panels to be feasible, but had not specified their use and queried how they would achieve the Council’s zero carbon by 2030 target. The applicant said that the development was meeting the London Plan and Islington’s carbon reduction targets without their need. The applicant said that there would be space for one line of PV panels on the roof, which would not be worthwhile in a building of this size.
- In response to the question from a local resident about windows, the Planning Officer confirmed that the windows closest to 9 Clerkenwell Green at 3rd and 4th floor level would be obscured.
- In response to the question from a local resident about café/restaurant use at the site, the Chair pointed out that this would be subject to the usual alcohol and saturation zone policy. The resident would be able to object to any application for an alcohol licence at the premises and to attend the Committee where the application was considered.
- The roof terrace was to be installed for office users and was a feature of new builds and their use was conditioned in Condition 14. It was for use during office hours only for office workers to use during their break and to take some fresh air away from their desks. The applicant confirmed that, as part of the fire strategy for the building, a no-smoking policy would be in operation.
- Referring to paragraphs 10.115 (“more roof space that could accommodate more green roof”) and 10.116 (“Thames Water have not raised objections to the proposal in relation to foul or surface water drainage subject to informatives. Further details of Sustainable Urban Drainage would be required...”) on page 41 of the agenda pack, a member of the Committee expressed dismay that the applicant appeared reluctant to include more carbon eliminating elements on the development.
- A member of the Committee queried whether, in response to that, it might be possible to demark the areas specified for green/brown biodiversity roofs in Condition 13. If it was for the use of office workers to take breaks, it need not be so large.
- A Planning Officer said that an increase in PV panels would affect the appearance and visual impact of the area. The current suggested provision was compliant with policy. The green roof was not visible from the street, but the relevant condition would ensure that the area of green roof would be maximised.

RESOLVED:

1. 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, as revised, 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.

2. That Planning Officers review all facing materials in consultation with the Chair as set out in condition 3.

3. That the proposed windows closest to 9 Clerkenwell Green at 3rd and 4th floor level be obscured, in addition to those already specified in the report.

4. That Condition 13 be reviewed with a view to adjusting and increasing the area of green roof.

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33 FINSBURY SQUARE LONDON EC2A 1BB (Item B2)

Application for continued use of the building as a Non-Residential Institution (use Class D1) to be personal to City University and successor bodies (and to revert to B1 [Business] in the event of the cessation of the University's use (Planning application number: P2019/3742/FUL)

In the discussion the following points were made:

- The Planning Officer highlighted an amendment required to line 2 of Condition 3 on page 87 of the agenda pack, by the addition of a comma and the words "of London" after the words "City University" to read "City, University of London"
- The Planning Officer also proposed an amendment to the planning obligations on page 86 of the agenda pack, Recommendation A to read as follows: "Approval recommended (consent personal to City, University of London), subject to conditions and the satisfactory conclusion of the legal agreement to secure the following planning obligations and in consultation with the Chair of the Planning Committee:
 - A detailed plan, updated on a biannual basis that sets out quantifiable education, training and employment opportunities, as well as support for small businesses, ring-fenced for Borough small businesses and residents from the Council's priority groups and aligned with the councils existing services and programmes (including the Council's Inclusive Economy Team) together with an annual planning and quarterly monitoring meeting.
 - Submission and agreement of a Green Performance Plan.
 - Submission and agreement of a framework Travel Plan with set targets."
- A member of the Committee suggested that it would be important to maintain reference to "Social and Economic Statement" in (revised) bullet point 1 of Recommendation A above and the Planning Officer suggested that it be incorporated into the planning obligations above and that a version be included in the S106 Statement.

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- A member of the Committee suggested that the second bullet point in the planning obligations was too vague "Submission and agreement of a Green Performance Plan" and queried what it would contain. The Planning Officer stated that this would need to be assessed and agreed by the Council. Advice and a recommended framework was contained in the Environmental Design SPD.
- Mr Graham Oliver, representing the City University of London Federation, stated that the use would be complementary to the economy of the area and would support the central London economy. It was an exciting opportunity. There had been no objections to the proposals. With reference to the S106 agreement, they had been satisfied with the original wording on benefits and would need to review the new wording to ensure there was sufficient flexibility.
- The Chair emphasised the need for further work on the Social and Economic Statement. It would be important to have a statement with measurable outcomes. The applicants were asking the Council to set aside planning policy, so the onus was on them to provide exceptional reasons in the Social and Economic Statement to justify this, for example by the inclusion of additional education programmes.
- In response to a question from the Chair as to whether the applicant was prepared to robustly revisit the document to quantify what would be done to produce measurable outcomes in the Social and Economic Statement, the applicant replied that he would meet with officers. In response to a further question from the Chair, the applicant's representative confirmed that the application was committed to the building being solely for the use of the Cass Business School.
- A member of the Committee concurred with the view that the social and economic statement needed to be "smart" and sought reassurance from the applicant's representative that only the Cass Business School would occupy the building. He noted that the Core Strategy (CS7) mentioned educational premises and that, if this was a new application, it would be compliant. He sought reassurance that the Council was prepared to lose B1 use of this building. The Chair stated that it would have to be a policy balance of supporting an education use in an area designated for B1 use.

RESOLVED:

1. 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, as revised, 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, including measurable outcomes in the Social and Economic Statement.
2. That the revised Social and Economic Statement be submitted and approved, in consultation with the Chair, prior to permission being granted.

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3. That recommendation 3 be amended to make it clear that planning permission has been granted on a personal basis to the City, University of London - Cass Building School, who will occupy the whole building.

The meeting ended at 9.05pm.

CHAIR