

Castle and Fitzroy House

Local Planning Authority: Islington

Local Planning Authority reference: P2022/2893/FUL

Strategic planning application stage 1 referral

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended); Greater London Authority Acts 1999 and 2007; Town & Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008.

The proposal

Demolition of the existing buildings and construction of a part 5, part 6 and part 7 storey building with basement, comprising office floorspace, including the provision of affordable workspace, alongside Class E retail; food and drink; and gym/leisure uses at ground, lower ground, and basement levels. The proposals also include a dedicated off-street servicing yard and cycle parking; landscaped roof terraces; wider public realm works at grade; and all associated and ancillary works.

The applicant

The applicant is Lion Portfolio Ltd and the architect is Morris + Company Ltd.

Strategic issues summary

Land use principles: The proposed redevelopment for an office with affordable workspace and ancillary retail and gym uses within the CAZ and City Fringe Opportunity Area is supported in land use terms (paragraphs 16 to 30).

Urban Design: Additional information is required relating to the functional and cumulative impact assessment of the proposed tall building (paragraphs 33 to 54).

Heritage: The proposed development would not harm the significance of the adjacent conservation areas or Wesley buildings. Additional information is required to establish the harm to the St Michaels buildings (paragraphs 55 to 60).

Other issues on **equality; fire safety; transport; sustainable development; and environmental issues** also require resolution prior to the Mayor's decision making stage.

Recommendation

That Islington Council be advised that the application does not yet comply with the London Plan for the reasons set out in paragraph 115. Possible remedies set out in this report could address these deficiencies. The Mayor does not need to be consulted again if the borough decides to refuse the application.

Context

1. On 19 October 2022 the Mayor of London received documents from Islington Council notifying him of a planning application of potential strategic importance to develop the above site for the above uses. Under the provisions of The Town & Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008, the Mayor must provide the Council with a statement setting out whether he considers that the application complies with the London Plan, and his reasons for taking that view. The Mayor may also provide other comments. This report sets out information for the Mayor's use in deciding what decision to make.
2. The application is referable under the following Category/categories of the Schedule to the Order 2008:
 - 1Bb "*Development (other than development which only comprises the provision of houses, flats, or houses and flats) which comprises or includes the erection of a building or buildings in Central London (other than the City of London) and with a total floorspace of more than 20,000 square metres*"; and
 - 1Cc "*Development which comprises or includes the erection of a building of more than 30 metres high outside the City of London*".
3. Once Islington Council has resolved to determine the application, it is required to refer it back to the Mayor for his decision as to whether to direct refusal; take it over for his own determination; or allow the Council to determine it itself.
4. The Mayor of London's statement on this case will be made available on the GLA's public register: <https://planning.london.gov.uk/pr/s/>

Site description

5. The site comprises two 1960/1970's commercial office buildings and basement level data storage centre which fronts Paul Street, Epworth Street and Clere Street. The site is located in the London Borough of Islington and is located close to the administrative boundary of the London Borough of Hackney.
6. The site is located within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ). The Islington Core Strategy identifies the site as part of the Bunhill and Clerkenwell key area and is covered by the Bunhill and Clerkenwell Area Action Plan (AAP) (2019). The Core Strategy identifies this area as Islington's most important employment location which may need to accommodate an additional 14,000 B-use jobs by 2025. The site is within an Employment Priority Area (General) pursuant to the Islington Local Plan, which seeks to ensure there is no net loss of business floor space unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated, and to ensure a mix of business-type uses.
7. The site is located within the City Fringe Opportunity Area, which is identified by the London Plan to provide 15,500 new homes and 50,500 new jobs.

8. The A501 (City Road) is the closest part of the Strategic Road Network and is approximately 100m west of the site. The nearest section of the Transport for London Road Network is the A1202 (Great Eastern Street), approximately 300m east of the site.
9. The site has a very high public transport access level (PTAL) of 6b, on a scale of 0 to 6b with 6b being the highest. The site is within 350m of Old Street Station which provides access to Northern Line and National Rail Services. Liverpool Street and Moorgate Stations are approximately 600m south of the site and provide access to further London Underground and National Rail services, as well as Elizabeth Line services from Liverpool Street. Shoreditch High Street Station, which is served by London Overground Services, is approximately 800m east of the site. The nearest bus stops to the site are located on the A501 approximately 150m north west of the site.
10. Cycleway 1 runs along Paul Street directly east of the site as a contraflow to general traffic. The area is also served by TfL Cycle Hire with docking stations located at St Leonard Circus and Clifton Street with 43 and 24 docking points respectively.

Details of this proposal

11. The application is for the demolition of the existing buildings and construction of a part 5, part 6 and part 7 storey building with basement, comprising office floorspace, including the provision of affordable workspace, alongside Class E retail; food and drink; and gym/leisure uses at ground, lower ground, and basement levels. The proposals also include a dedicated off-street servicing yard and cycle parking; landscaped roof terraces; wider public realm works at grade; and all associated and ancillary works.

Case history

12. There have been 7 formal pre-application meetings with the Council. There was also an initial pre-application meeting with GLA officers ref: 2020/5545/P2i on 15 July 2020 and a follow up pre-application meeting ref: 2022/0446/P2F on 30 June 2022.

Strategic planning issues and relevant policies and guidance

13. For the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the development plan in force for the area comprises Islington's Core Strategy (2011); Islington's Local Plan Development Management Policies (2013); Finsbury Local Plan Area Action Plan for Bunhill & Clerkenwell; and the London Plan 2021.
14. The following are also relevant material considerations:
 - The National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance;

- Islington Environmental Design Planning Guidance;
- Islington Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017);
- Islington Planning Obligations (Section 106) Supplementary Planning Document (2016);
- Inclusive Design in Islington Supplementary Planning Document (2014);
- Islington Local Plan Strategic and development management policies (Regulation 19 draft); and
- Islington Local Plan Bunhill and Clerkenwell area action plan (Regulation 19 draft).

15. The relevant issues, corresponding strategic policies and guidance (supplementary planning guidance (SPG) and London Plan guidance (LPG)), are as follows:

- Good Growth - London Plan;
- World City role - London Plan;
- Economic development - London Plan; the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy; Employment Action Plan;
- Central Activities Zone - London Plan;
- Opportunity Area - London Plan;
- Non-strategic Industrial land - London Plan;
- Retail - London Plan;
- Urban design - London Plan; Character and Context SPG; Public London Charter LPG; Characterisation and Growth Strategy draft LPG; Optimising Site Capacity: A Design-Led Approach draft LPG;
- Fire Safety – London Plan; Fire Safety draft LPG;
- Heritage - London Plan; World Heritage Sites SPG;
- Inclusive access - London Plan; Accessible London: achieving an inclusive environment SPG; Public London Charter LPG
- Sustainable development - London Plan; Circular Economy Statements LPG; Whole-life Carbon Assessments LPG; 'Be Seen' Energy Monitoring Guidance LPG; Energy Planning Guidance; Mayor's Environment Strategy;

- Air quality - London Plan; the Mayor's Environment Strategy; Control of dust and emissions during construction and demolition SPG; Air quality positive draft LPG; Air quality neutral draft LPG;
- Transport and parking - London Plan; the Mayor's Transport Strategy;
- Equality - London Plan; the Mayor's Strategy for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Planning for Equality and Diversity in London SPG; and,
- Green Infrastructure - London Plan; the Mayor's Environment Strategy; Preparing Borough Tree and Woodland Strategies SPG; All London Green Grid SPG; Urban Greening Factor draft LPG.

Land use principles

Proposed office

16. London Plan Policy SD5 seeks to ensure the provision of office space over residential development in the CAZ and states that mixed-use development proposals should not lead to a net loss of floor space in any part of the CAZ.
17. London Plan Policy E1 seeks to facilitate improvements to office spaces of different sizes through supporting new office provision, refurbishment and mixed-use development and increasing current office stock in specific locations, including the CAZ. This should be supported by improvements to walking, cycling and public transport connectivity and capacity.
18. The scheme proposes an office-led redevelopment of the site comprising 24,433 sq.m. of market office floorspace as well as 2,008 sq.m. of affordable workspace (see below). The proposed office use is consistent with the existing use of the site, and the scheme would provide an uplift in office floorspace of 15,008 sq.m. from what is existing.
19. The proposed office use is consistent with Policies SD5 and E1, and accords with the CAZ designation and the site allocation pursuant to the Islington Local Plan and Finsbury Area Action Plan. Further, the scheme would provide an uplift in employment floorspace which is consistent with the objectives of the City Fringe Opportunity Area. It is also noted that the site is allocated in the Islington Local Plan Bunhill and Clerkenwell Area Action Plan Regulation 19 Draft which is currently under examination. The site allocation (ref: BC48) is for "intensification of office use". The proposed development involves optimisation of the existing office use, providing an uplift in office floorspace, and is therefore consistent with this draft allocation. As such, the proposed office use is supported in principle in land use terms.

Loss of industrial floor space

20. London Plan Policy E7 states that development proposals should be proactive and encourage the intensification of business uses, including those in Class B8 (storage and distribution) occupying all categories of industrial land. London Plan

Policy E7 also states that mixed-use proposals on non-designated industrial sites should only be supported where:

- 1) there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for the industrial and related purposes set out in Part A of London Plan Policy E4 (which includes Use Class B8);
- 2) it has been allocated in an adopted Local Development Plan Document for residential or mixed-use development; or
- 3) industrial, storage or distribution floorspace is provided as part of mixed-use intensification.

21. London Plan Policy E4 states that the retention, enhancement and provision of additional industrial capacity across all categories of industrial land, including non-designated industrial sites, should be planned, monitored and managed. Any release of industrial land in order to manage issues of long-term vacancy and to achieve wider planning objectives should be facilitated through the processes of industrial intensification, co-location and substitution.

22. As existing, approximately 645 sq.m. of data storage centre space (Use Class B8) is provided at basement level. The initial GLA pre-application scheme (2020/5545/P2i) included the re-provision of B8 data storage floor space at basement level. However, the current scheme does not propose retention or re-provision of this space.

23. Following discussion with the applicant on this issue it is noted that the existing data centre use only takes up a small part of the existing building and is no longer a viable use for the site. The applicant has stated that the previous data centre operator ceased operations in January 2021 and this floor space has been vacant since. The site is located in the CAZ and the City Fringe Opportunity Area, identified in the local plan as one of Islington's most important employment location and is within a locally designated Employment Priority Area (General). It is further noted that the Regulation 19 draft Islington Local Plan Bunhill and Clerkenwell Area Action Plan allocates this site for "intensification of office space" and does not seek re-provision of any B8 data storage or equivalent use.

24. Paragraph 9.6.7 of the London Plan notes that data centres depend on reliable connectivity and electricity infrastructure, with specific requirement for communications access and security. The surrounding area is not characterised by data centre uses, which in the modern standard often requires more space and connectivity than this site and its context would allow.

25. The proposed office is located in an area identified for employment generating uses and GLA officers therefore consider the proposals an appropriate use of the site in line with the emerging local plan site allocation. Moreover, the proposal includes a good affordable workspace offer (see below). As such, where the affordable workspace provision is appropriately secured, it is considered that the loss of non-designated industrial floor space in this instance would be acceptable on balance.

Affordable workspace

26. London Plan Policy E1 states that development proposals related to new or existing offices should take into account the need for a range of suitable workspace including lower cost and affordable workspace. London Plan Policy E3 seeks to ensure affordable workspace at rents maintained below market rent for a specific social, cultural or economic development purpose. Policy E3 specifies that consideration should be given to the need for affordable workspace in areas such as the City Fringe around the CAZ.
27. The scheme proposes 2,008 sq.m. of affordable workspace which equates to 13.38% of the total floorspace proposed. The applicant proposes the affordable workspace provision for a period of 15 years. The proposal was supported by an Affordable Workspace Strategy which states that the affordable workspace would look the same as the market workspace and tenants will have access to the same amenities. The affordable workspaces would be leased to the Council, who would then lease the workspace(s) out.
28. The proposed 15 year time frame is consistent with Paragraph 6.3.2 of the London Plan which states that affordable workspace should be secured in perpetuity or for a period of at least 15 years by planning or other agreements. Prior to Stage 2, the Council should confirm whether it is satisfied with the proposed affordable workspace offer. The Council should ensure that the affordable workspace offer is robustly secured through a s106 agreement, and that the affordable workspace offer is in accordance with the definition set out in Paragraph 6.3.2 of the London Plan.

Proposed retail and gym use

29. London Plan Policy E9 promotes sustainable access to goods and services for all Londoners in line with the wider objectives of the Plan and Policy SD4 seeks to promote a rich mix of strategic and local uses within the CAZ.
30. The proposed retail and gym uses would provide ancillary amenities and services for the proposed office use and surrounding area. This would be in accordance with London Plan Policies E9 and SD4 and this proposed land use is supported in principle.

Equality

31. Objective GG1 (H) of the London Plan seeks to support and promote the creation of an inclusive city to address inequality. More generally, the Equality Act 2010 provides that in exercising its functions (which includes the functions exercised by the Mayor as Local Planning Authority), that the Mayor as a public authority shall, amongst other duties, have due regard to the need to a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act; b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief,

sex and sexual orientation. The Equality Act acknowledges that compliance with the duties set out may involve treating some persons more favourably than others, but that this does not permit conduct that would otherwise be prohibited under the Act.

32. The National Deaf Children's Society currently occupies floorspace within the existing Castle House building. It is noted that the Affordable Workspace Strategy states that the National Deaf Children's Society is currently undertaking a national review of its operations which involves downsizing, with the potential to exit its existing lease to 2025 at Castle House early. Clearly GLA officers seek to avoid a situation where the National Deaf Children's Society would be displaced before it is ready to move – particularly where this may result on impacts to individuals with protected characteristics. Accordingly, further information is sought in relation to the National Deaf Children's Society relocation programme. This information should be provided prior to Stage 2, to confirm the National Deaf Children's Society would not be unfairly disadvantaged by the proposals.

Urban design

33. Chapter 3 of the London Plan sets out key urban design principles to guide development in London. Design policies in this chapter seek to ensure that development optimises site capacity; is of an appropriate form and scale; responds to local character; achieves the highest standards of architecture, sustainability and inclusive design; enhances the public realm; provides for green infrastructure; and respects the historic environment.
34. Policy D4 sets out that development proposals referable to the Mayor must have undergone at least one design review early on in their preparation before a planning application is made or demonstrate that they have undergone a local borough process of design scrutiny. The scheme has undergone two Design Review Panel meetings, the recommendations of which have been outlined in the Design and Access Statement (DAS) which provided broad in principle support but sought improvements relating to screen planting; entrances hierarchy; sustainability; and development of medium and long term views. The scheme has since been revised by the applicant team. A GLA urban design assessment is set out below having regard to the recommendations of the DRP and the design changes that the applicant team has made since.

Tall buildings

35. London Plan Policy D9 seeks to manage the development and design of tall buildings within London. Policy D9 (Part B3) states that tall buildings should only be developed in locations that are identified as suitable in development plans.
36. The Finsbury Local Plan AAP for Bunhill and Clerkenwell (2013) defines tall buildings as those that are substantially taller than their neighbours and/or which significantly change the skyline. The AAP goes on to specify that buildings with a height of 30m or more may be appropriate only within the areas indicated on Figure 17 of the AAP, which does not include the application site. The proposed

building height would exceed 30m at some points (e.g. core, lift overruns). As such, the proposed development is classified as a tall building.

Visual impacts

37. In terms of visual impacts, the proposed development is of a scale that would be in keeping with the neighbouring development and the surrounding area. In the longer range views illustrated in the TVHIA, the development would not be in view. Where the proposed building would be in view in the mid and shorter range views, the TVHIA illustrates that the building would be in keeping with the scale of the existing nearby development. Further, the THVIA assesses the cumulative impacts, taking consented but not-yet-constructed schemes into consideration. In these cumulative views, the scale would not exceed that of other consented schemes. The proposed materials and colours have been selected following a review of the local context and this is supported. GLA officers consider that the development is acceptable in terms of visual impacts.

Functional impacts

38. The development would provide an intensification of an existing office use within the CAZ and City Fringe Opportunity Area and is therefore considered to be an appropriate land use. Some concerns have been raised regarding Healthy Streets and Active Travel Zone assessment; cycling; cycle parking; trip generation; deliveries and servicing; and travel planning, which should be resolved prior to Stage 2. Further information is also required on fire safety before the functional impacts can be considered addressed.

Environmental impacts

39. In terms of environmental impacts, the applicant's technical information will be assessed in detail by the Council, including whether mitigation measures and conditions are necessary to make the application acceptable. An update will be provided to the Mayor on these matters at his decision-making stage.

Cumulative impacts

40. The buildings would not appear out of keeping with the taller buildings in the vicinity of the site and would not significantly impact the established building heights in the area. The Council should clarify the environmental impacts cumulatively with other tall buildings in the surrounding area.

Tall buildings conclusion

41. The tall building would not be located within an area which is identified as suitable for tall buildings. GLA officers consider that the visual impacts are acceptable and that functional impacts of the proposal could be broadly acceptable, subject to further assessment of transport and fire safety matters. Furthermore, the environmental and cumulative impacts of the proposal will need to be finalised at Stage 2 following review of the Council's detailed assessment. GLA officers will consider the acceptability of the proposed tall buildings on balance at Stage 2.

Built form, height and massing

42. The proposed scheme appears to have been developed through a rigorous and logical design process. As a result, the key design elements – namely the layout; massing; architectural approach; and façade design – are generally well-considered.
43. Notwithstanding, the further assessment against London Plan Policy D9 as discussed above, the building height and massing seem to respond well to the existing surrounding context. The proposal respects the existing streetscape and sits well within the wider townscape.

Materiality and façade expression

44. Façade treatment and architectural details appear to have been developed through a rigorous analysis of the surrounding warehouses. Vertical and horizontal articulation of the façade are in line with the surrounding buildings. This is supported.
45. The proposed materials appear to be a sensible selection which follows through the design process and the analysis of the existing context. The variation in tones/materiality is such that it supports legibility and enhances the street experience.
46. The detail on how the tonal value recedes from base to crown is welcomed. Similarly, the roughness in texture gradually increases from base to crown, with the material being smoother at ground floor level. This is supported.

Fire safety

47. Policy D12 of the London Plan requires a fire safety statement to be submitted which has been prepared by a suitably qualified third-party assessor, demonstrating how the development proposals would achieve the highest standards of fire safety, including details of construction methods and materials, means of escape, fire safety features and means of access for fire service personnel.
48. Policy D5 of the London Plan seeks to ensure that developments incorporate safe and dignified emergency evacuation for all building users. In all developments, where lifts are installed, as a minimum, at least one lift per core (or more subject to capacity assessments) should be a suitably sized fire evacuation lift suitable to be used to evacuate people who require level access from the building.
49. A fire statement has been submitted which was prepared by a qualified third-party assessor (Hoare Lee) with listed qualifications. The fire statement provides details relating to construction methods; materials; means of escape; features to reduce the risk to life; access for fire services personnel and equipment; fire appliance access; and protection of the base build in the context of future modifications.

50. While GLA officers are satisfied that the fire statement has been prepared by a suitably qualified third-party assessor, the fire statement lacks details relating to where building occupants could evacuate to, the ongoing maintenance and monitoring of fire access for fire service personnel and equipment. This should be provided prior to Stage 2.
51. In line with Policy D5 of the London Plan, the fire statement states that evacuation lifts and a firefighting lift is to be provided. These lifts should be clearly identified/labelled on a floor plan within the fire statement prior to Stage 2. This lift provision should be secured by condition by the Council in accordance with Policy D5 of the London Plan.

Inclusive access

52. London Plan Policy D5 seeks to ensure that new development achieves the highest standards of accessible and inclusive design (not just the minimum). The future application must ensure that the development can be entered and used safely, easily and with dignity by all; is convenient and welcoming (with no disabling barriers); and provides independent access without additional undue effort, separation or special treatment.
53. The DAS states that the proposal is designed to incorporate the highest levels of inclusive and accessible design, adopting the key principles set out within London Plan Policy D5, and seeks to reach beyond the minimum standards and incorporate best practice guidance. The DAS specifies that the design includes step-free access into all entrances and to all levels; level access to all external terraces; at least one fire evacuation lift; inclusive cycle parking for non-standard cycles and a suitably sized lift; WC's designed to BS8300-2 and at least one ambulant facility where self-contained WC's are provided.
54. Prior to Stage 2, the applicant should ensure that all opportunities to maximise inclusive design principles have been taken to ensure the highest standards of accessible and inclusive design in accordance with London Plan Policy D5. The Council should secure inclusive access design principles by planning condition.

Heritage

55. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the tests for dealing with heritage assets in planning decisions. In relation to listed buildings, all planning decisions should "*have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*". In relation to conservation areas "*special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*".
56. The NPPF states that when considering the impact of the proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Significance is the value of

the heritage asset because of its heritage interest, which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic, and may derive from a heritage asset's physical presence or its setting. Where a proposed development will lead to 'substantial harm' to or total loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Where a development will lead to 'less than substantial harm', the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

57. London Plan Policy HC1 states that proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings should conserve their significance, avoid harm, and identify enhancement opportunities. The NPPF states that when considering the impact of the proposal on the significance of a heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. The NPPF states that in weighing applications that affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement is required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The site is not within a Conservation Area and does not comprise a Listed building. However, the site is located adjacent to the Bunhill Fields and Finsbury Square conservation area to the west and the South Shoreditch Conservation Area to the east. The site is within close proximity to a number of listed buildings including Wesley's Chapel (Grade I); John Wesley's House and attached railings (Grade I); Church of St Michael (Grade I); Bunhill Fields Burial Ground (Grade II*); several buildings associated with Wesley's Chapel (see below for specific details); House to the west of the Church of St Michael (Grade II*); and several Grade II buildings. The site is also within close proximity to one registered park and garden, being Bunhill Fields Burial Ground (Grade I), located approximately 250m to the west.

58. The application was supported by a Townscape, Heritage and Visual Impact Assessment (THVIA) which considers the potential impacts of the development on the adjacent conservation areas and the nearby Listed buildings. The THVIA concludes that the proposals would have no harm on the heritage significance of these heritage assets, and that the scheme would lead to an improvement in setting for the nearby listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets; and would enhance the character and appearance of the adjacent conservation areas.

59. On review of the views provided in the THVIA, GLA officers, having had regard to the statutory duties and the policies, agree with the findings of the THVIA that the proposed development would not harm the significance or the setting of the adjacent conservation areas and the adjacent Wesley buildings (John Wesley's House and attached railings [Grade I]; Wesley's Chapel [Grade I]; Benson Building [Grade II]; Chapel Keeper's House [Grade II]; The Manse [Grade II]; Statue of John Wesley in the Forecourt of Wesley's Chapel [Grade II]; Gates to John Wesley's House [Grade II]; Entrance Gates to Wesley's Chapel [Grade II]; Wesley's Chapel Memorial to Susannah Wesley in the Forecourt [Grade II]; and Tomb of John Wesley in the burial ground of Wesley's Chapel [Grade II*]). However, in terms of the Church of St Michael (Grade I), Clergy House to west of

Church of St Michael (Grade II*) and St Michael's Church School (Grade II*), the THVIA does not clearly depict the impact of the proposed development on these buildings. The views shown in the THVIA do not clearly depict the proposals in the backdrop of these buildings, even if to show the proposed development would not be visible.

60. Prior to Stage 2, the applicant should submit an additional view(s) to show the proposed building in the background of the Church of St Michael; Clergy House to west of Church of St Michael; and St Michael's Church School to enable officers to fully understand the impact of the proposals on the setting of these listed buildings. In line with the NPPF, this harm, if any, will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal at the Mayor's decision making stage.

Transport

Transport assessment

61. The Mayor's Healthy Streets (HS) Approach is central to delivering good growth in London and enabling people to travel by walking, cycling and public transport. TfL expects all streets and public realm within and around the site to be designed in line with the HS Approach to help achieve the outcomes of the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) relating to healthy streets and healthy people, a good public transport experience, and delivery of good growth.
62. The proposal is supported by an Active Travel Zone (ATZ) Assessment. To ensure compliance with London Plan Policies T2 and T4, the design of local highway and public realm that will serve the development should reduce vehicle dominance and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists.
63. As recommended in the ATZ Assessment, dropped kerbs and tactile paving should be introduced to the crossing across Worship Street from Paul Street to Wilson Street. It also notes that the pedestrian crossing at the junction between Clere Street and Paul Street is poor with no crossing from the southern Clere Street footway, a constrained and narrow northern footway and poor pedestrian and driver visibility due to adjacent buildings. These should be funded and delivered by the applicant through section 106 or 278 agreement as appropriate.
64. Discouragement through design limiting on-site capacity for vehicles, and progressive reduction through ongoing management of motor vehicle delivery and servicing trips to and from the site, and facilities for cargo bikes, should be secured with this development to help mitigate local air quality issues identified in the TA.
65. At pre application stage, the applicant was urged to assess road traffic collision data (KSI) and take a proactive approach to KSI prevention in line with the Mayor's Vision Zero initiative. The ATZ should therefore be updated to include the most recent collision data available, extend the scope of the area to include Finsbury Square and a minimum three year period should be reviewed. The 2018-2020 data already indicates that highway safety improvements should be proposed, funded and implemented by the development proposal between the

site and Moorgate. TfL welcomes further discussion about this matter – any necessary highway safety improvements in this area should also be secured for delivery by the Council through the section 106 or 278 agreement as appropriate.

Travel plan

66. An outline workplace Travel Plan has been submitted. It should contain robust target to encourage active travel. Funding for the implementation and monitoring of a full Travel Plan should be secured in line with London Plan Policies T1 and T4 part B which states that travel plans should be submitted with development proposals and supported by planning decision makers to ensure that impacts on capacity on London's transport network are fully assessed and mitigated.

Cycling

67. At the pre application stage, proposals for cycling access via Plantina Street raised concerns about potential for conflict with servicing vehicles and because it does not represent the best opportunity for convenient and direct access from cycleway 1. The applicant is still urged to reconsider the layout as it raises potential for conflict and highway safety risk, potentially failing to prioritise and promote active travel to the site in line with London Plan Policies T1 and T2.

68. A TfL Cycle Route Quality Criteria check of Cycleway 1 and Wilson Street has identified poor carriageway surfacing at this location as a problem for cycling which requires improvement to enable cyclists to use the route comfortably and safely. A contribution towards upgrading this route to compliment that secured from other nearby development should be secured.

Cycle parking

69. The proposed amount of long stay cycle parking complies with London Plan Policy T5 part B. A shortfall of 42 retail short stay spaces should be addressed and space within the proposed public realm could be identified. If not feasible, spaces on the adjacent public carriageway facilitated by removal of on-street car parking should be explored with Islington Council.

70. The office short stay cycle parking should also be separate from the long stay cycle parking and located in the public realm. The current proposal to locate this in the basement should be reviewed.

71. All cycle parking, in line with London Cycle Design Standards (LCDS), should be located in easily accessible and safe locations. 5% of spaces should be Sheffield stands with sufficient access space to accommodate adapted bikes for inclusive cycles, cargo cycles, and tricycles. This should be demonstrated prior to determination with scaled drawings.

Trip generation

72. The trip assessment forecasts a considerable uplift in peak hour trips on the underground. Whilst TfL notes that the area is well served by various stations,

those trips should be assigned accordingly to those stations to understand any impacts. Pending any outcome, further analysis could be necessary for particular stations, platforms, and lines where those will actually occur.

73. Whilst the expected trip generation impacts on the local bus network should not be described as negligible, they are unlikely to require specific mitigation.
74. The methodology and assumptions used to project expected delivery and servicing trips to and from the site make no allowance for the use of cargo bikes, which should be strongly encouraged adjacent to a Cycleway.
75. The forecast of vehicle trips including servicing is based on London wide data. Given the location in the City Fringe, there is an opportunity to proactively plan for fewer private motor vehicle visits.
76. Currently 37 vehicles per day are expected to access the site to serve the office use should be reduced. Similarly, the proposed gym, would receive 8 vehicle visits per day in the final arrangement. This is considered with the DSP and travel plan below.

Deliveries and servicing

77. The MTS aims to reduce freight traffic in the central London morning peak by 10% by 2026, and total London traffic by 15% by 2041. All deliveries and servicing arrangements and management measures proposed should also seek to limit overall vehicle activity, consolidate loads and the processing of arriving and departing goods and services as far as possible, and prevent conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists as required by London Plan Policy T7.
78. A Delivery and Servicing Plan (DSP) has been provided which refers vaguely to these requirements in principle. However as mentioned the cycle parking access should ideally not be shared with servicing vehicles to support Vision Zero and London Plan Policy T4. The DSP commits to set specific numerical targets to reduce and consolidate deliveries in future once specific occupiers are identified. This should be secured by condition and monitored by the Council if possible.
79. It also states occupiers will be encouraged to schedule deliveries outside of the morning peak period (07:00-10:00) and afternoon peak period (15:00-19:00).
80. Given the close proximity of Cycleway 1, the DSP should include measures to restrict all deliveries except on foot or by cargo bike would also be strongly supported during cycling traffic peaks. This should be considered by the Council for 07:30 to 09:30 and 16:30 to 19:30 on weekdays.

Construction logistics

81. An outline Construction Logistics Plan (CLP) has been provided. A full CLP should be secured by condition in line with London Plan Policy T7 and discharged in consultation with TfL prior to commencement. The full CLP should detail all logistics and construction proposals to ensure that pedestrian and cyclist

movement and safety and bus operations are maintained throughout construction.

82. This will support sustainable travel in line with London Plan policies and the Mayor's Vision Zero goal to eliminate deaths and serious injuries from London's transport networks by 2041 and ensure compliance with London Plan Policy T4 part F, which states development proposals should not increase road danger.

Sustainable development

Energy strategy

83. London Plan Policy SI 2 requires development proposals to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in accordance with the energy hierarchy. Reductions in carbon emissions beyond Part L of the 2013 Building Regulations should be met on-site. Only where it is clearly demonstrated that the zero-carbon target cannot be fully achieved on-site a contribution to a carbon offset fund or reductions provided off site can be considered.
84. Energy comments have been provided to the applicant and the Council in full under a separate cover. The applicant should respond to this detailed note to address outstanding issues to ensure compliance with the London Plan in advance of the borough planning committee to ensure that any conditions can be appropriately secured.
85. Conditions should be appropriately secured to ensure the development meets London Plan standards, particularly in respect to energy performance including PV installation maximised pre-occupation. Carbon offset payments and a commitment to 'Be Seen' energy monitoring should be appropriately secured by a s106 agreement.

Energy strategy compliance

86. An energy statement has been submitted with the application. The energy statement does not yet comply with London Plan Policies [SI2, SI3 and SI4]. The applicant is required to further refine the energy strategy and submit further information to fully comply with London Plan requirements. Full details have been provided to the Council and applicant in a technical memo that should be responded to in full; however outstanding policy requirements include:
- Be Lean – supporting modelling;
 - Managing heat risk – further details to demonstrate the cooling hierarchy has been followed.
 - Be Clean – further exploration of DHN potential with network operator and energy borough and energy strategy to be futureproofed for connection to future DHN;

- Be Green – demonstration that renewable energy has been maximised, including roof layouts showing the extent of PV provision and details of the proposed air source heat pumps;
- Be Seen – confirmation of planning submission, with compliance to be secured within the S106 agreement;
- Energy infrastructure – further details and justification of the heating strategy and on the design of future district heating network connection is required, the future connection to the DHN must be secured by condition or obligation.

Carbon savings

87. For the non-domestic, the development is estimated to achieve a 49% reduction in CO2 emissions compared to 2013 Building Regulations.
88. The development falls short of the net zero-carbon target in London Plan Policy SI 2, although it meets the minimum 35% reduction on site required by policy. As such, a carbon offset payment is required to be secured. This should be calculated based on a net-zero carbon target using the GLA's recommended carbon offset price (£95/tonne) or, where a local price has been set, the borough's carbon offset price. The draft s106 agreement should be submitted when available to evidence the agreement with the borough.

Whole Life-cycle Carbon

89. In accordance with London Plan Policy SI 2 the applicant is required to calculate and reduce whole life-cycle carbon (WLC) emissions to fully capture the development's carbon footprint.
90. The applicant has submitted a whole life-cycle carbon assessment. The WLC assessment does not yet comply with London Plan Policy SI 2. Further information is required on whole building energy assessment methodology; cost plan evidence; quality assurance of the assessment; clarification regarding Build Environment Carbon Database submission; estimated WLC emissions; demolition; WLC emissions reductions; material quantity and end-of-life; and C1 demolition emissions.
91. A condition should be secured requiring the applicant to submit a post-construction assessment to report on the development's actual WLC emissions. The template and suggested condition wording are available on the GLA [website](#)¹.

Circular Economy

92. London Plan Policy D3 requires development proposals to integrate circular economy principles as part of the design process. London Plan Policy SI 7

¹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/implementing-london-plan/london-plan-guidance/whole-life-cycle-carbon-assessments-guidance>

requires development applications that are referable to the Mayor of London to submit a Circular Economy Statement, following the Circular Economy Statements LPG.

93. The applicant has submitted a Circular Economy (CE) Statement; however this reporting is with reference to the previous guidance version (Draft for Consultation, October 2020). The London Plan Guidance for CE Statements was updated in March 2022. The Applicant should follow this guidance to produce an updated written CE Statement and populate the template. A pre-redevelopment audit; pre-demolition audit; and an operational waste management plan should also be submitted for this type and scale of development. This detailing should be submitted prior to Stage 2.
94. A condition should be secured requiring the applicant to submit a post-construction report. The template and suggested condition wording are available on the GLA [website](#)².

Digital connectivity

95. A planning condition should be secured requiring the submission of detailed plans demonstrating the provision of sufficient ducting space for full fibre connectivity infrastructure within the development in line with London Plan Policy SI 6.

Environmental issues

Urban greening

96. The proposed development presents a well-considered approach to integrating green infrastructure and urban greening. This includes the incorporation of green roofing which supports multifunctionality, in accordance with London Plan Policy G1. The opportunity for the provision of biosolar roofing should be explored. Biosolar roofing is pictured in the DAS but it is unclear as to whether it is included in the design.
97. The applicant does not appear to evidence linking to the wider green infrastructure network through green links and species selection. This should be explored.
98. The applicant has calculated the Urban Greening Factor (UGF) score of the proposed development as 0.3, which meets the target set by London Plan Policy G5. This should be treated as a minimum with any enhancements made to the quality and quantity of urban greening where possible.
99. London Plan Guidance on Fire Safety restricts the use of combustible materials, limiting the use of green walls where they form part of the external wall of a building. The proposed urban greening should therefore be reviewed against this

² <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/implementing-london-plan/london-plan-guidance/circular-economy-statement-guidance>

guidance and updated as appropriate. Where this review finds it necessary to remove a green wall, opportunities should be sought to make up any reduction in the UGF by improving the quality or quantity of greening across the wider masterplan. Further information on combustible materials can be found [here](#)³.

Sustainable drainage and flood risk

100. London Plan Policy SI 12 requires development proposals to ensure that flood risk is minimised and mitigated, and that residual risk is addressed.
101. The application was supported by a flood risk assessment and SUDS strategy report. This is being reviewed in detail and detailed comments will be provided to the Council and the Applicant in full under separate cover.

Air quality

102. Construction dust risk assessment carried out and 'high risk' site mitigation recommended, based on highly sensitive local receptor. Given the location of the proposed development in proximity to a number of human health receptors, construction works mitigation relevant to a *high risk* site, along with requirements for NRMM to comply with Low Emission Zone standards for the Opportunity Areas, should be secured by condition, in line with London Plan Policy SI 1(D).
103. A detailed assessment of the impacts associated with emissions from construction traffic was not carried out. Based on the scale of the development and the trackout peak outward HGV trips falling in the 10-50 category, there is potential for the EPUK/IAQM screening criteria to be exceeded; thus, further assessment of the impacts of construction traffic emissions on air quality is required, unless it can be demonstrated that traffic will be managed to prevent a sustained exceedance of the EPUK/IAQM criteria on any roads links.
104. No on-site energy plant is proposed, and the development will have a negligible impact on air quality at existing sensitive receptors as a result of additional road traffic emissions. This demonstrated that all impacts are considered to be not significant – compliant with London Plan Policy SI 1(B)(1a-b).
105. No discussion of whether the proposed development will include a backup diesel generator, even if to say there will be no generator. It should be explicitly stated whether there will be any backup generators and, if relevant, an assessment of the impacts of emissions should be undertaken.
106. Exposure of future users of the development assessed and conditions found to be acceptable for the proposed land uses, with concentrations well below the relevant short-term objectives – compliant with London Plan Policy SI 1(B)(1c).
107. An Air Quality Neutral assessment was carried out and the development was found to meet the building and transport benchmarks, as it will not include any

³ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/implementing-london-plan/london-plan-guidance/fire-safety-lpg>

centralised combustion plant and will be 'car-free' – compliant with London Plan Policy SI 1(B)(2a).

Biodiversity

108. London Plan Policy G6 states that proposals that create new or improved habitats that result in positive gains for biodiversity should be considered positively. Policy G6 further states that development proposals should aim to secure net biodiversity gain.
109. The applicant has provided a Biodiversity Impact Assessment. As the baseline is 0 the report states that it is not possible to calculate a % increase, however, also states that the proposals will deliver 1.37 biodiversity units. No further information is required and recommendations in the report should be adhered to.

Trees

110. The applicant has provided a Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) (AIA). The Tree Survey states that there are five existing Category B trees within the site. The AIA states that no trees are to be removed to facilitate the proposed development. Recommendations within the Tree Survey and AIA should be adhered to.
111. The applicant appears to demonstrate a consideration of a diverse range of proposed tree species, which is positive in terms of biosecurity and should be brought to fruition. The applicant should also consider large-canopied trees to target urban heat island (UHI) effects as the site is identified within the London Green Infrastructure Focus Map as within an area of medium to high-risk areas for UHI. Further information can be found [here](#)⁴.

Local planning authority's position

112. Islington Council planning officers are currently assessing the application. In due course the Council will formally consider the application at a planning committee meeting.

Legal considerations

113. Under the arrangements set out in Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008 the Mayor is required to provide the local planning authority with a statement setting out whether he considers that the application complies with the London Plan, and his reasons for taking that view. Unless notified otherwise by the Mayor, the Council must consult the Mayor again under Article 5 of the Order if it subsequently resolves to make a draft decision on the application, in order that the Mayor may decide whether to allow the draft decision to proceed unchanged; or, direct the Council under Article 6 of the Order to refuse the application; or, issue a direction under Article 7 of the Order that he

⁴ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/green-infrastructure-focus-map>

is to act as the local planning authority for the purpose of determining the application (and any connected application). There is no obligation at this stage for the Mayor to indicate his intentions regarding a possible direction, and no such decision should be inferred from the Mayor's statement and comments.

Financial considerations

114. There are no financial considerations at this stage.

Conclusion

115. London Plan policies on non-designated industrial floorspace; affordable workspace; equalities impact; urban design and tall buildings; fire safety; inclusive design; heritage; transport; sustainable development; and environmental issues are relevant to this application. Whilst the proposal is supported in principle, the application does not fully comply with these policies, as summarised below:

- **Land Use Principles:** The proposed redevelopment for an office with affordable workspace and ancillary retail and gym uses within the CAZ and City Fringe Opportunity Area is supported in land use terms.
- **Equality:** Additional information is required prior to Stage 2 to confirm the National Deaf Children's Society would not be unfairly disadvantaged by the proposals.
- **Urban design:** Additional information is required relating to fire safety; and the functional impact assessment for tall buildings.
- **Heritage:** The proposed development would not harm the significance of the adjacent conservation areas or Wesley buildings. Additional information is required to establish the harm to the St Michaels buildings.
- **Transport:** Additional information is required regarding Healthy Streets and Active Travel Zone assessment; travel planning; cycling infrastructure; cycle parking; trip generation; and deliveries and servicing.
- **Sustainable development:** Further information is required regarding the energy strategy; whole life-cycle carbon; and circular economy.
- **Environment:** Further information is required regarding urban greening; air quality; and clarification on whether proposed planting would comprise a green wall.

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