

London Borough of Islington

**Planning Committee - 27 November 2023**

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held at Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 27 November 2023 at 7.30 pm.

**Present:**      **Councillors:**      Klute (Chair), North (Vice-Chair), Poyser (Vice-Chair), Clarke, Convery, Hamdache, Hayes, Jackson and Ogunro

**Councillor Martin Klute in the Chair**

84      **INTRODUCTIONS (Item A1)**

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

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

Apologies were received from Councillor McHugh.

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

There were no declarations of substitute members.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

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

The order of business would be as per the agenda.

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

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2023 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

90      **BRANDON ROAD LONDON N7 9AA (Item B1)**

The demolition of the existing building and redevelopment of the site to provide a five storey building plus basement and set-back roof-level plant, involving light industrial floorspace (Use Class E(g)(iii)) at ground and first floor levels and flexible Lab / R&D / light industrial space (Use Class E(g)(ii-iii)) on the upper levels along with waste storage, cycle parking, associated plant room, landscaping / public realm and other associated works.

(Planning application number: P2023/1719/FUL)

In the discussion the following points were made:

- Planning Officer informed the meeting of additional conditions to consider if planning permission is granted, that in the interest of providing functional and useable industrial floorspace condition 36 to read 'that notwithstanding the plans hereby approved, a ground floor plan and corresponding front elevation, showing a wider and more generous entrance to the ground floor industrial floorspace, shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to superstructure works commencing.
- Also in the interest of providing suitable floorspace to a variety of businesses of different type and sizes, condition 37 to read 'that notwithstanding the plans approved, updated floor plans showing a layout suitable for a range of occupiers shall be submitted and approved in writing to the Local Planning Authority prior to practical completion of the development hereby approved.
- Committee to note that within the Head of Terms, the £11,669 towards employment and training quoted in Appendix 1 is correct and should be revised accordingly in paragraph 10.209 where it was misquoted and that the carbon offset contribution (Appendix 1 – Recommendation A) should be revised accordingly in the event of the carbon emissions being improved upon in line with conditions 28.
- Site is located on the south side of Brandon Road within the Vale Royal/ Brewery Road Locally Significant Industrial Site (LSIS), which comprises predominantly light industrial and warehouse / storage uses interspersed with commercial and cultural uses, mainly focused around Tileyard Studios.
- In land use terms, the proposal is considered to meet the aspirations of adopted Local Plan Policies, in particular Policies SP3, B2, B3, B4 and B5 as well as London Plan Policies GG5, E1, E6 and E7, which support the protection and intensification of the industrial area as outlined in the main body of the report.
- The proposed development would provide a gross internal area (GIA) of up to 4,794sqm, which is an uplift of 2,508sqm.
- The proposal is set back from the street, leaving a more generous pavement edge and a landscaped area to the front of the building as well as a delivery and servicing bay and accessible parking bay. The main entrance leads to a reception area at ground floor level providing access to the main stair / lift core, bathroom and toilet facilities and 601sqm (NIA) of light industrial floorspace. There is also a proposed secondary entrance on the eastern boundary (or on the left when looking at the property), which leads to a secondary staircase and goods lift with access to the upper floors and basement. The basement has a slightly reduced footprint compared to the rest and includes a bike store, refuse storage, shower and end-of-trip facilities, ancillary staff rooms as well as plant room.
- Meeting was advised that proposal includes the co-location of industrial use with office and/or research development, which is also permitted by policy, where there would be an intensification of industrial use on the site.
- it was also stated that the 2,962sqm of proposed R&D/light industrial floorspace (Use Class Eg(ii)/(iii)) on the upper floors is identified as flexible floorspace, i.e. could be used for light industrial or research and development

purposes, that the applicant being a life science operator has made it clear on plans and in the submitted documentation that the upper three floors would be occupied as labs and write-up space, i.e. as R&D floorspace.

- Meeting was advised that while the proposal involves a significant uplift in industrial floorspace (1,827sqm of light industrial) when compared to the existing uses on site, this is only due to the applicant having used the privileges afforded to them by Class E, which has allowed them to convert the building into an office from its original light industrial use prior to lodging this planning application.
- It was also noted that given that there were no conditions controlling the lawful uses on site, the applicant has been issued a Certificate of Existing use for the site confirming that the floorspace on site falls within a Class E use and evidence has since been provided of the building's subsequent existing use as an office, there is no way of preventing or controlling this change.
- The applicants have confirmed that the space has been designed for end tenant adaptability with multiple access points with internal entrances to the industrial space from both the main reception and goods core, as well as a dedicated street entrance. The dedicated street entrance is configured as an enlarged double door which will provide direct access from the street-side loading bay for larger deliveries.
- With regard to the remaining floorspace on the upper floors, it is proposed to be flexible light industrial / R&D floorspace, which is supported in the LSIS where there would be an intensification of industrial floorspace on site. For the floorspace involving research and development uses, it would allow for future flexibility for a range of occupiers, including future subdivision and/or amalgamation, and provides a range of unit types and sizes, including a significant proportion of small units, particularly for SMEs.
- Planning Officer advised that proposed height of building is 21.5m to the parapet of the top floor, that it is deeply recessed from the street frontage (by over 3m) as well as being set in from the top floors of the adjacent 5 – 10 Brandon Road to the east. A further 3.5m allowance has been made to accommodate a screen to the roof-top plant and set back still further from the street edge which rises to a height of just under 25m. A small module rises above the screen accommodating the goods lift overrun, which takes the building to 26.3m in height.
- Planning Officer advised that given its central position on the roof, its impact on the public realm will be negligible.
- In addition to the above, the Planning Officer advised that to accommodate laboratory enabled floorspace, the use necessitates the erection of a pair of ventilation flues which takes the overall height of the building to 29.6m. It was noted that relative to the scale of the building and indeed the surrounding built form, is such that they will not adversely impact on the appearance of either the building or the streetscape. Although the flues would not be visible from street-level in front of the site, they would be visible from further along Brandon Road to the east and west. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that presence of flues or chimney on a building in the industrial area does not constitute an incongruous feature.

- In response to a question from the Chair, officers confirmed that the spot heights shown in large text in the presentation are included on drawings in the proposed drawing pack for the scheme.
- With regards to the elevational treatment, meeting was advised that the front elevation is considered to be smart, crisp and modern and based on a grid that is then reconstructed in a variety of ways across the façade. The ground floor is sufficiently active and 'open' with the double height entrance lobby in particular creating a welcome and generous response to the street.
- In addition to the above, the elevational treatment to the recessed upper floors is screened with finely designed balustrading that is considered to give a lightness to these floors and an urban elegance as a result of their design. The rear façade faces south and backs onto the rear of (currently) low rise industrial buildings. It arranged on the same grid-like basis as the front façade but with an increase in solid to void due to its aspect. Vertical and horizontal precast concrete fins animate the façade as do the projecting solar shading brise-soleil fitted above the windows.
- The materials proposed include fluted glass to the plant screen; powder coated metal balustrading to the recessed upper floors; precast polished concrete cladding; curtain wall glazing with powder coated aluminium frame; precast concrete fins; architectural metal work aluminium screens with horizontal fins (part ground floor frontage) as well as render. Notwithstanding this, the materials would be subject to a suitably worded planning condition (*condition 3*) in order to ensure that the materials are of a high quality.
- Main issues considered include acceptability of land uses, design and appearance, impact on neighbouring amenity, energy and sustainability of the scheme, highways and transport impacts including delivery and servicing arrangements.
- In land use terms, the proposal is considered to meet the aspirations of adopted Local Plan Policies, in particular Policies SP3, B2, B3, B4 and B5 as well as London Plan Policies GG5, E1, E6 and E7, which support the protection and intensification of the industrial area. It is also considered that the proposed development would deliver suitable employment and training benefits in accordance with the relevant policy framework and that the proposal would provide the range of spaces and uses required to support the economic function of the industrial area.
- It was noted that although proposal does not trigger the provision of affordable workspace on site, discussions with applicant has resulted in an employment and training strategy which provides a number of benefits to the local community and in particular targeted groups.
- In terms of neighbouring impact, meeting was advised that subject to the conditions, the proposed development would not give rise to unacceptable impacts on neighbouring residential amenity in terms of daylight, sunlight, privacy, overlooking, outlook or sense of enclosure, dust, noise, light pollution and air quality.
- The scheme proposes to increase landscaping features and enhance biodiversity across the site, that as well as ground floor landscape interventions which have been integrated into the public realm and the

approach to the building, the upper levels incorporate additional measures, for example the first floor of the proposed building, to the rear of the site, a significant area of biodiverse roof is proposed to enhance urban greening and biodiversity.

- Meeting was advised that a number of energy and sustainability matters are still unresolved and although some justification for non-compliance has been provided, further details will be required by condition (*conditions 14, 17, 22, 24, 28, 31-34 and 35*).
- In terms of highways and transport impact, the planning officer advised that the site serviced by a number of bus routes within walking distance of the site on York Way, Camden Park Road and Caledonian Road. Caledonian Road London Underground station as well as Caledonian Road & Barnsbury station are within a short walk of the site and Kings Cross & St Pancras stations are a 5-minute bicycle ride away.
- No vehicle parking is proposed on-site, apart from the disabled parking bay at the front of the site, which is considered acceptable and in accordance with Local Plan Policy T3, which requires for all new developments to be car free.
- With regards to servicing, delivery and waste management, planning officer advised that the application proposes to make alterations to the highway in order to create an on-street servicing / delivery bay which would cater for the servicing needs of the development.
- Planning Officer advised that it is recommended that final details of servicing, delivery and refuse storage would need to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Council prior to the occupation of the development and this would be secured by condition (*condition 15*).
- With regards to design and appearance, meeting was advised that the Council and Design Officer welcomed the scheme.
- It was noted that although there are some discrepancies with planning policy, notably the proposal's failure to meet specific energy and sustainability targets including the non-compliant operational energy and consequent carbon emissions reductions which fail to meet policy expectations and that non-compliance with policy, on balance these are outweighed by the benefits outlined above. It was also stated that the application is also considered to comply with relevant standards and requirements relating to transport, inclusive design, safety and security.
- Planning officer highlighted a number of planning obligations which is secured in the s106 legal agreement notably the submission of agreed Employment & Training Strategy; £6k for off-site tree planting; a carbon offset contribution £75k; 3 construction placements or employment/training contribution of £15k; Employment and training contribution for local residents of £12k; Accessible Transport Contribution of £6k; Section 278 agreement to ensure public realm improvements; submission of a Green Performance Plans and Travel Plans.
- On the question of addressing potentially high contamination levels, the applicant advised that as life science operators, building is built to cater for all operators.

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- Councillor North noted that considering the scheme is flexible to attract a range of occupiers, condition be amended to ensure that there is a management plan to limit the contamination level under the current proposals to containment level 2. Councillor North moved a motion to amend condition 8 which was seconded by Councillor Klute.
- In summary it was noted that building has been designed with life sciences user in mind; the section drawings indicate that the height of the building is within the tall building requirement scheme is to be welcomed; the positive comments from the Council's Design Officer and the additional conditions included to modify the industrial and good access on the ground floor.

Councillor North proposed a motion to grant planning permission. This was seconded by Councillor Poyser and carried.

### **RESOLVED:**

That following consideration of the case officer's report (the assessment and recommendations therein), the presentation to Committee, submitted representations 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 conditions 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;

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm

**CHAIR**