

## PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 29 June 2021

**Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 10.30 am**

### **Present**

#### **Members:**

Deputy Alastair Moss (Chair)	Deputy Jamie Ingham Clark
Oliver Sells QC (Deputy Chairman)	Shravan Joshi
Randall Anderson	Alderman Alastair King
Douglas Barrow	Andrew Mayer
Peter Bennett	Deputy Brian Mooney (Chief Commoner)
Mark Bostock	Deputy Barbara Newman
Deputy Keith Bottomley	Graham Packham
John Edwards	Susan Pearson
Sophie Anne Fernandes	Judith Pleasance
John Fletcher	Deputy Henry Pollard
Marianne Fredericks	Alderman Sir David Wootton
Graeme Harrower	

#### **Officers:**

Angela Roach	- Assistant Town Clerk
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
Rhiannon Leary	- Town Clerk's Department
Jayne Moore	- Town Clerk's Department
Ben Dunleavy	- Town Clerk's Department
Shani Annand-Baron	- Media Officer
Bukola Soyombo	- Technology Support Partner
Fleur Francis	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Alison Bunn	- City Surveyor' Department
Gwyn Richards	- Chief Planning Officer and Development Director
Neel Devlia	- Department of the Built Environment
Elisabeth Hannah	- Department of the Built Environment
Gordon Roy	- Department of the Built Environment
David Horkan	- Department of the Built Environment
Paul Beckett	- Department of the Built Environment
Ian Hughes	- Department of the Built Environment
Bhakti Depala	- Department of the Built Environment
Peter Shadbolt	- Department of the Built Environment
Toni Bright	- Department of the Built Environment
Gemma Delves	- Department of the Built Environment
James Gibson	- Department of the Built Environment
Maureen Joyce	- Department of the Built Environment
Kerstin Kane	- Department of the Built Environment

Janet Laban	- Department of the Built Environment
Kieran Mackay	- Department of the Built Environment
Emmanuel Ojugo	- Department of the Built Environment
Joanna Parker	- Department of the Built Environment
Jake Tibbetts	- Open Spaces Department
Robin Whitehouse	- Department of Markets and Consumer Protection

**Also Present:**

Ann Holmes – Common Councillor

David Bass – resident – speaking in opposition to the application

Adam Hogg – Chair of the Barbican Association – speaking in opposition to the application

Stefan Astley – RWDI, on behalf of the applicant

Martha Alker – Townshend Landscape Architects, on behalf of the applicant

Roaa Babiker – Sweco, on behalf of the applicant

Piers Blewitt – Great Portland Estates, on behalf of the applicant

Artur Carulla – Allies and Morrison, on behalf of the applicant

Janine Cole - Great Portland Estates, on behalf of the applicant

Helen Hare - Great Portland Estates, on behalf of the applicant

Lance Harris – Anstey Horne, on behalf of the applicant

Simon Holmes - Anstey Horne, on behalf of the applicant

Matthew Mapp – Sweco, on behalf of the applicant

Miguel Peixoto – Allies and Morrison, on behalf of the applicant

Ed Shearer – Arup, on behalf of the applicant

Tom Sweetman – DP9, on behalf of the applicant

Meg Swift – TPP Consulting, on behalf of the applicant

Ben Toseland – Tavernor Consultancy Architecture and Heritage, on behalf of the applicant

Robert Tavernor – Tavernor Consultancy Architecture and Heritage, on behalf of the applicant

Luke Tatton – Concilio, on behalf of the applicant

Miles Wilkinson - Great Portland Estates, on behalf of the applicant

Mike Worthington – DP9, on behalf of the applicant

**Introductions**

The Town Clerk opened the meeting by introducing herself.

A roll call of Members present was undertaken.

The Town Clerk highlighted that the meeting was being recorded as well as live streamed and would be made available on the City Corporation’s YouTube page for a period of time after the meeting had concluded. With this in mind, it was confirmed that participants in the meeting had all individually agreed and given their consent to being recorded and that all personal data would be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. The Town Clerk highlighted that, for further information on this, viewers could contact the City Corporation using the details provided on the public webpages.

The Town Clerk also reminded Members, and any members of the public observing the meeting on-line, that this was an informal meeting and that any views reached by the Committee today would therefore have to be considered by the Director of Markets and Consumer Protection or those deputising for him after the meeting in accordance with the Court of Common Council's COVID Approval Procedure and that they would make a formal decision having considered all relevant matters. The Town Clerk highlighted that this process reflected the current position in respect of the holding of formal Local Authority meetings and the Court of Common Council's decision of 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021 to continue with virtual meetings and take formal decisions through a delegation to the Town Clerk and other officers nominated by him after the informal meeting has taken place and the will of the Committee was known in open session. Details of all decisions taken under the COVID Approval Procedure would be available online via the City Corporation's webpages.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Peter Dunphy, Sheriff Christopher Hayward, Deputy Tom Hoffman, Alderwoman Susan Langley, Natasha Lloyd-Owen, Oliver Lodge, Alderman Bronek Masojada, James de Sausmarez and William Upton.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

The Committee considered the public minutes and summary of the meeting held virtually on 8 June 2021 and approved them as a correct record.

**MATTERS ARISING**

**Panel Arrangements – Wider Consultation** (page 28) – In response to a question requesting an update on this, the Chair confirmed that discussions were still ongoing in this regard.

4. **CITY TOWER AND CITY PLACE HOUSE, 40-55 BASINGHALL STREET LONDON EC2V**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Planning Officer and Development Director regarding City Tower and City Place House, 40-55 Basinghall Street London EC2V – specifically demolition of the existing building at 55 Basinghall Street (known as City Place House) and the erection of a thirteen storey Class E building for commercial, business and service use with Class E retail use at ground floor level with works to include partial removal, realignment and reinstatement of the Basinghall Highwalk\*; partial demolition, reconfiguration and refurbishment of the basement, lower ground, ground and mezzanine floors of 40 Basinghall Street (known as City Tower) for Class E commercial, business and service and retail use works to include the provision of a new lift and staircase between street and Highwalk level and reconfiguration and re landscaping of the existing first floor terrace area; formation of a new pedestrian route between London Wall and Basinghall

Street; hard and soft landscaping works including alterations to and within the public highway; other works incidental to the proposed development (49,119 sq. m).

The Town Clerk introduced the item, highlighting that Members had also received a virtual site visit clip as well as an addendum, published and circulated yesterday.

Officers presented the application and began by making a point of clarification with regard to paragraph 249 of the report which implied that passive ventilation was not being proposed on pollution grounds which was not strictly correct. Passive ventilation was not being proposed as, in order for the office building to obtain the proposed sustainability credentials, it needed to operate as a sealed unit. Officers went on to provide a brief summary of the proposal and the main issues. Members were shown a site location plan with Officers clarifying that the application site was made up of City Place House (a late 1980s/early 1990s office building), the bridge link across Basinghall Street which links City Place House with the Grade II listed 65-65A Basinghall Street and also included City Tower, mainly its podium levels and podium level terrace as well as the City owned Brewer's Hall Gardens.

The Committee were shown existing images of the site, with Officers commenting that City Place House currently lacked active frontage when viewed from London Wall with the colonnade over London Wall creating quite a dark and enclosed environment for pedestrians. Integral to the building at first-floor level was also a pedestrian walkway which took pedestrians from ground-floor level on London Wall up to the City Tower podium. With regard to the City Tower podium level terrace, Officers noted that the space was somewhat dominated by the large roof lights serving space in the adjacent two office buildings. Members were informed that, as part of the proposal, City Place House would be demolished and replaced with a new thirteen storey office building which would have an element of flexible retail, café and gym use at ground floor-level. The podium of City Tower and its terrace would be reconfigured which would enable a new pedestrian route to be formed linking London Wall and Basinghall Street at ground-floor level. The Basinghall Street bridge link would be removed, and a new walkway link would be created linking the Guildhall plaza through to the bridge link over London Wall. Brewer's Hall Gardens would be improved with the applicant providing £200,000 through the Section 106 agreement for the City to re-landscape this area.

Officers referred Members to the representations received concerning the demolition of City Place House from a circular economy perspective, with many questioning why the building could not be refurbished and reused. Officers clarified that the applicant had undertaken detailed analysis of the refurbishment options and had concluded that limitations with the existing steel structure, foundations and the set back in the elevations would mean that typical approaches to providing modern, sought-after office floor space would be inefficient and carbon intensive and that mechanical and electrical services had come to the end of their life. It was reported that the design of the new building would embody circular economy principles through measures such as

priority, flexibility and adaptability and identifying options for the re-use of materials and designing for disassembly.

Officers went on to look at the proposal in more detail, beginning with the existing basement level where a lot of the space was currently taken up with carparking. As part of this proposal, this would be removed and long-stay cycle parking (which was policy compliant) and associated facilities would be provided. It was noted that the long-stay cycle parking provided for City Tower (220 spaces) would be well in excess of policy standards (77 spaces). A connection to Citigen was also proposed at this level. The existing lower ground floor plan depicted more space dedicated to car parking, with the proposal including more long stay cycle parking and associated facilities as well as short stay cycle parking for City Tower and an accessible car parking space. The existing ground floor plan showed that, together, City Place House and City Tower created quite a significant urban block. As part of the proposed layout, the public realm would be significantly increased and improved with the lower floors of the building set back when compared with the existing building line which would create wider footways. The reconfiguration of the City Tower podium would also enable the formation of a new pedestrian route between London Wall and Basinghall Street which would measure up to 6m in places. From this route, there would also be a new, accessible link (both a lift and a staircase) which would take pedestrians from ground floor level up to the City Tower terrace. It was noted that greening and landscaping was proposed around the ground floor of the building and that, in order to enable the construction of the new building, three trees on Basinghall Street would need to be removed and these would be replaced with three new trees in addition to six trees to be planted along the new pedestrian route. Short stay cycle parking would be provided around the perimeter of the building at a policy compliant level which would be a significant achievement. The new pedestrian route would be activated by new retail in the podium and on the ground floor of City Place House and new office entrances would also activate the area and enable the office space to be used flexibly. In terms of servicing, it was reported that the new office building would be serviced off Basinghall Street as City Place House was at present with servicing for City Tower remaining as existing. However, as part of the proposal, a consolidated arrangement was proposed which would result in a reduction of approximately 30 vehicle trips per day to and from the site.

In order to rationalise the boundary line, Officers highlighted that a small area of highway would need to be stopped-up. This would, however, be offset by the dedication of public highway of greater provision. Members were shown plans depicting this element of the proposal.

With regard to Brewer's Hall Garden, Officers commented that this was not a particularly inviting environment at present and an artistic impression depicting the type of improvements that could be achieved with the developer's Section 106 contributions were shared.

The existing first floor plan depicted the existing walkway route as well as the City Tower podium. It was highlighted that the first-floor walkway route was

currently quite dark and enclosed. As part of the proposal, the podium space would be consolidated, the existing roof lights removed and a new garden area with greening, seating and exercise equipment would be created. Members were informed that the details of this would be secured by condition. A dynamic new bridge link was also proposed. This would narrow between the podium and the new office building before splaying out to a joined portal with the listed building. Details of the junction with the listed building would also be required by condition.

An existing typical upper floor plan was shared with the Committee alongside a proposed typical floor plan for the office space. It was reported that high quality office space, arranged around a central core with terrace areas was proposed with a Wellness agenda embedded into the design of the building. As part of the commercial offer of the site, some affordable workspace would also be provided in City Tower which was very much welcomed as part of the post-COVID recovery and could be made available quite soon should consent be granted today. Members were also shown a proposed roof plan showing the green roof areas, the lower terrace and plant areas.

Officers shared images of the various elevations of the site (both existing and proposed). It was reported that the proposed office building would be approximately 11 metres higher than the existing roof plant level of City Place House and it was noted that some concerns had been expressed around this height increase, particularly with respect to daylight and sunlight impacts on neighbouring residential occupiers. Members were informed that the applicant had carried out the necessary daylight and sunlight tests to relevant rooms and windows in surrounding residential buildings, including Roman House, Andrewes House and Willoughby House. It was reported that the proposed building would be largely BRE compliant with the exception of two living rooms in Andrewes House which would experience a minor diminishment to their daylight distribution level. As set out in the Committee papers, it was the view of Officers that the daylight levels to these rooms would not be reduced to unacceptable levels as there would be no breach of BSE, with the breach only marginally below the 0.8 BRE guideline. It was also noted that, as part of the height increase, some wind mitigation would be required to some of the seating at Aldermanbury Square which would take the form of some additional landscaping to offer more shelter to those seated here. Also as a result of the height increase, there was a very slight breach of LVMF view 8A1 – an image of this was shared with Officers commenting that the breach was so minor that it would not affect the viewers ability to appreciate St Paul's Cathedral from Westminster Pier.

Officers then ran through various views of the building which showed that the proposed building would sit quite comfortably within the context of the scale of the surrounding commercial developments when looking west along London Wall. The proposed view from Aldermanbury Square depicted the proposed façade system made up of a curtain wall system of glazing and steel frame with shading elements. Officers reported that the sustainability credentials of the building were excellent and that it would achieve BREEAM 'excellent' with an aspiration to achieve 'outstanding', with notably a 50% reduction in carbon

emissions, putting the building at the forefront of City schemes considered by this Committee this year. The proposed view of London Wall looking east depicted the upper floors of the building overhanging the footways with Officers highlighting that the same would apply along Basinghall Street and that this would provide shelter with dynamic columns supporting the upper levels. In terms of wider views, Officers underlined that careful consideration had been given to the impact on the setting of the Grade I listed Guildhall and the Guildhall Conservation Area. It was reported that the building would be visible in the backdrop to the Guildhall in the view from Cheapside/Queen Street and from King Street but it was considered that this would result in less than substantial harm to the setting and to the Conservation Area. It was considered that this less than substantial harm would be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal, particularly the public realm improvements and new pedestrian route. It was noted that, as you moved nearer to the Guildhall along King Street, views of the building would diminish.

Officers went on to share some computer generated images of the proposal, depicting the entrance to City Place House from Basinghall Street which demonstrated that the bridge link would be similar in appearance to the link over London Wall Place, provided as part of the London Wall Place development and, from this view, the soffits of the building would be quite clearly visible. As part of the cultural plan for the site, the applicant had agreed to commission an artist to design the soffits and this would be secured through the Section 106 agreement. The proposed view along London Wall showed the new upper level route and new pedestrian link, the activation to the ground floor level via retail offerings, glazing and internal and external lighting, details of which would be required by the conditions to prevent excessive light spillage.

In summary, Officers stated that this site was in a key City location, in close proximity to Moorgate Crossrail station and on the periphery of the Culture Mile. It was felt that the proposal would transform the area through enhancements to the public realm, the provision of new, vibrant and accessible pedestrian routes and high-quality architecture. An uplift in office space of approximately 15,000 square meters would be delivered which would meet City needs as it could be used flexibly by a range of occupants. The provision of affordable workspace was also to be welcomed as part of the post-COVID recovery. The scheme had excellent sustainability credentials, most notably the 50% reduction in carbon emissions, putting it at the forefront of City schemes considered by this Committee to date this year. Policy compliant short stay cycle parking would be provided – something that was not always achievable with City schemes and the consolidated servicing arrangements proposed would significantly reduce vehicle trips to and from the site. Whilst there would be some less than substantial harm to the Guildhall and the Guildhall Conservation Area, this would be offset by the public benefits of the scheme. For these reasons, Officers recommended that planning permission and listed building consent were granted.

The Town Clerk introduced two speakers registered in objection to the applications – David Bass and Adam Hogg.

Mr Bass began by stating that he had the highest regard for the architects who had designed this scheme. Secondly, he recognised that the City did need to adapt and change to retain a pre-eminence. Thirdly, he recognised that the proposal made many improvements over the existing building, particularly in terms of street level links and public space. Mr Bass went on to refer to the proposed increase of 11m in height on the highest part of the existing building which was not currently visible at podium and highwalk level. He reported, however, that the north elevation, which would be visible to residents in Roman House in the Barbican, would actually witness a 17.64m increase in height on the existing building, with part of the elevation that was closest to residents being 18.6m higher, due to the proposed erection of a 4.7m high wall around the plant room at the north-west corner of the building. The Officer presentation depicted this jump in height with the design and access statements containing 368 images. However, just one of these 368 images showed the proposal from the viewpoint of the residential population – the image from the high walk in front of Roman House. Mr Bass, however, went on to suggest that this image was problematic and that the before and after (existing and proposed) shots were not comparable with the viewpoint seemingly dropped in the proposed view. Mr Bass stressed that views from this perspective had not been further investigated/generated for what was clearly a large proposal, with the NPPF recommending that developers should involve the local community with such proposals from an early stage. He reported that, at a webinar held in late November 2020, residents had been told that there had, quite rightly, been 18 months of consultation with the City of London and that the architect had already been involved in the proposal for four years. Residents were informed in late November that the application was due to be submitted in January 2021 which seemed to be very last minute and meant that any residential input in terms of design would need to be processed over the Christmas holiday period. Although the application submission was slightly delayed, Mr Bass remarked that there had been no changes made as a result of this consultation with residents, leading him to describe the process as more of a notification given that there were leading questions asked with multiple choice responses and no measurements provided (only storey heights). Mr Bass compared the lack of images of the proposed building from the north and its impact on residents with the large number of images depicting its impact on the Guildhall from various viewpoints. Mr Bass commented that the effect of the proposal on the sustainability of residential properties in terms of blocking light rendered it very objectionable. Mr Bass referred to the London Wall Place development which had been worked up regular meetings between the architects, the developer and residents and questioned why the same approach had not been taken here.

Adam Hogg clarified that he was speaking as Chair of the Barbican Association and on behalf of those residents directly affected by this application. In general, these residents were objecting on three particular counts - the first being the impact on the City's Climate Action Strategy with proposals to demolish a building which was approximately 30 years old. Mr Hogg stressed that this could not be environmentally sound and also questioned whether the proposed building could also be expected to last for just 30 years. Mr Hogg noted that the applicant also referred to the whole life carbon assessment but was not specific

as to how this fitted in with the City's Climate Action Strategy. He referred to the 50% reduction in carbon emissions but questioned how this was calculated and whether this was a total also including embedded carbon in the existing building as well as future refurbishments which were likely to occur in the lifetime of the new building. Secondly, objections were around the increase in height of the building. Residents had noted that this did not appear to be in line with what the Local Plan stated but that Officers were recommending the proposal for approval regardless of this. The Officer statement on this and 'cumulative impact' appeared to state that, if existing buildings were higher, then it was acceptable for proposed developments to 'catch up' which seemed to render the Local Plan meaningless. Finally, Mr Hogg commented on the loss of public amenity and referred to City residents being encircled by ever taller buildings. He stated that he did not believe that this should be permitted to continue, particularly in view of the uncertainty in terms of demand for office space that the City faced at present. Mr Hogg concluded by stating that, whilst this was not an unattractive building, it was a large development with a threatening presence when viewed from the perspective of residents from the north.

The Chair thanked both speakers for their contributions and invited any questions that members of the Committee may have of them.

A Member questioned Mr Bass further on what he believed was problematic with the image of the development from the north. The Member commented that he had reviewed this image and that it clearly showed the proposed change in height. Mr Bass explained that the proposed view from here depicted City Tower in the background and that, where it met the vertical of London Wall Place, appeared to be a whole floor lower than in the equivalent view depicting the existing situation. Mr Bass felt that if the true effect of the proposal were to be shown, the top of this building would not be visible as it would rise beyond the top of the image. Given that this was the only image of the building seen from the point of view of residents of Roman House, Mr Bass stated that this seemed to be an unreliable image on which to make a judgement. Mr Bass also remarked that there were no views of the proposal shown from the perspective of the Barbican from either a high or low flat.

Another Member commented that the hedge in the foreground of the image referred to by Mr Bass demonstrated that the proposed and existing views were taken from different spots. Mr Bass reiterated that the image of the proposed development depicted here was not correct or reliable and required scrutiny. He also expressed concern that residents were not able to see any of these images in the short consultation period offered.

A Member asked the speakers to elaborate further on what they considered to be a lack of consultation and engagement with residents and questioned when they were first informed about the application. She also questioned what comments and proposals had been put forward by residents that had not resulted in any amendments to the scheme. Mr Bass confirmed that the public consultation had begun on 25 November 2020 and ran until 14 December 2020, with the online consultation commencing on 30 November and a webinar held on 10 December 2020. Mr Bass stated that he understood that, due to a

delivery error, Roman House residents were not informed of this until 18 December 2020 and therefore missed the opportunity to attend the webinar. By contrast, on 5 April 2019, the first of ten pre-application meetings with the City of London Corporation was held. In summary, any meaningful consultation with residents effectively lasted for just two weeks at the end of last year. The application was originally scheduled to be submitted in January 2021 but was actually submitted in March 2021, with no changes made in response to the concerns of residents. Mr Bass acknowledged that some of these concerns were listed in the Statement of Community Involvement supplied by Concilio, however, there were other concerns that had not made it on to this statement – for instance, the concern that, in order to judge the effect of the building on people’s homes, some kind of long section which cut through the proposal would be required. It was recognised that the Design and Access Statement did state the misgivings about the consultation process but Concilio’s report did not refer to this. By contract, Mr Bass commented that London Wall Place had had extensive dialogue between a representative panel from the Barbican, the architects and the developers and the results were recognised as superb. With regard to this development, residents were of the view that the consultation process was simply a rubber stamp operation. The Member asked Mr Hogg if he had anything further to add in response to this. Mr Hogg stated that he had nothing further to add except to say that, on this occasion, residents felt that they had been told what would happen rather than being asked to genuinely feed into the plans.

The Town Clerk then introduced four speakers registered to speak in support of the applications – Mr Piers Blewitt of Great Portland Estates, Mr Matthew Mapp, Ms Janine Cole and Mr Artur Carulla.

Mr Blewitt introduced himself as Development Manager for this project with Great Portland Estates (GPE). Mr Blewitt provided some background on the company and highlighted that their most recent large-scale project in the City had been the development of 12 Fetter Lane at the junction of New Fetter Lane and Fetter Lane. He added that, in the West End, they had been responsible for Crossrail over station development and the creation of a new public square north of Oxford Street and therefore had both the experience and the resources to undertake this development. Mr Blewitt went on to state that it was somewhat depressing to have reached the conclusion that City Place House was now at the end of its useful life, however this did provide an opportunity to provide a much better building that would stand the test of time. It was reported that a huge range of refurbishment options had been considered, from minor, light-touch refurbishments to large-scale extensions but it had been concluded that the building could not viably be adapted and extended. It was confirmed that, since 2019, the developers had been working with City Planning Officers on the new scheme presented today. Working with the architect, GPE had a strong track record of delivering high-quality architecture and public realm throughout central London. In spite of the pandemic, Mr Blewitt reported that demand for office space was good, but that demand was for high quality space in terms of design, layout and flexibility with good local amenities and, of course, with the greatest and strongest sustainability credentials. In addition to viewing the building from an occupiers perspective, the public realm benefits

had already been outlined to Members with the design allowing for the widening of the pavements at London Hall and Basinghall Street and a new pedestrian route linking the two. New, flexible retail units which were much needed in this part of the City would also be introduced and a new staircase and lift would provide access up onto the City Walkway from that new pedestrian route. It was underlined that none of this would have been deliverable without the refurbishment. Mr Blewitt also referred to the contribution to Brewer's Hall Gardens and, perhaps most importantly, the provision of 12 affordable workspaces which the developer was proposing to offer at an earlier stage next year within City Tower, should consent be granted.

Ms Cole introduced herself as Sustainability and Social Impact Director for GPE and underlined that it was therefore her role to ensure that their Corporate Sustainability Strategy was embedded in all that they did. Members were informed that the four pillars of GPE's approach were to become carbon net zero by 2030, to design climate change resilient and adaptable spaces, to create a lasting positive social impact in communities and to put health and wellbeing front and centre. Ms Cole confirmed that, from the outset the sustainability question and GPE's corporate commitment had been at the heart of the design with a strong focus on carbon reduction, maximising the longevity and adaptability of the building and the public realm, creating social value and the consideration of health and wellbeing, not only for the building occupiers but also for its neighbours and the wider community. Ms Cole introduced Mr Mapp who would speak more on how this commitment to sustainability in its broader sense had translated into the building design.

Mr Mapp confirmed that it was these four pillars that had underwritten the sustainability strategy and helped to define the approach to this development, however, the need for the development to respond to the wider context was also recognised, in particular the City's Climate Action Strategy, the new City Plan and Environmental Policy. The approach to this development therefore placed this life cycle thinking at the very core. Mr Mapp confirmed that there was a particular way to design for low carbon development and this did not involve starting with a new development and trying to make the existing building fit with your narrative. It involved undertaking detailed and comprehensive studies to exhaust all of the options for re-use prior to deciding to progress a new build development. He stressed that there was no better example of this than today's proposal which had investigated numerous re-use and refurbishment options since 2013, worked its way down from full re-use to partial, elemental reuse, always considering the broadest range of factors related to viability. Mr Mapp stated that the decision to demolish and rebuild centred on when the carbon emissions would actually be paid for, enhancing future adaptability and enhancing longevity of the building. Any new build development therefore needed to express those sustainability credentials in the strongest possible terms and Mr Mapp reported that the developer's whole life carbon approach gave equal weight to operational and embodied emissions and setting targets in line with the most onerous industry benchmarks. It was also highlighted that the planting and water strategy showed strong alignment with policy and that all of this was underwritten by holistic sustainability certifications such as BREEAM and WELL. Mr Mapp shared information on

carbon targets with the Committee, showing how, even at baseline stage, the development would perform better than the industry typical benchmarks and showing how these targets would take it some way beyond this to deliver a future-proof development that was really fit for a low-carbon future for the City. It was reported that the proposal also showed excellent performance against the stages of the Mayor's energy hierarchy, exceeding the London Plan 'Lean' target through its approach to fabric first design, achieving 40% reduction at 'Clean' stage and 50% under 'Green'. Further voluntary commitments also showed how the proposal went beyond this to achieve operational net zero carbon for the development.

Mr Mapp went on to state that a significant part of the proposal was the Energy Strategy and that, after reducing demand in the first instance through a strong approach to fabric first, there would be 100% electric on-site HVAC which realised the long-term decarbonisation through a decarbonising grid. The development would connect to the E-On district heating network and would also provide a PV array to offset grid electricity consumption. It was reported that the holistic sustainability certification centred around BREEAM and WELL and this provided a framework for delivering holistic sustainability, with the development targeting a BREEAM 'excellent' rating with an aspiration to achieve 'outstanding', but also using the WELL process which allowed well-being considerations to be embedded into the design of this space and to promote initiatives to really support the well-being of people, occupiers and the supply chain partners. Finally, Mr Mapp commented that the significant enhancements and improvements to the public realm and the urban landscape would help support the developer's sustainability pillars by really enhancing that social value and connectivity of the site as a whole, providing those spaces and places that really support the development's well-being narrative.

Mr Carulla introduced himself as a partner of the architects involved in the project since 2013 and offered Members a succinct summary of the proposals. In summary, this was about a site at the centre of the City, situated between St Paul's, the Culture Mile and the City Cluster and surrounded by a very rich mix of building forms and characters with great connections to public transport and within site of the new Crossrail station. Mr Carulla reported that, sadly, the existing building was obsolete and stubbornly defied refurbishment, despite architects spending over two years looking at a wide range of upgrades. It had been concluded that it was neither economically viable nor environmentally sustainable in terms of resources and carbon emissions to deliver a compromised product with a limited life. This led to the production of a clear vision for redevelopment for a substantial, Grade A office building that was economically viable and offered exemplary environmental design achieving net zero operational carbon and a social contribution in the form of a comprehensive enhancement of public realm. At ground floor level, the footprint of the building would contract, delivering a new route between Basinghall Street and London Wall. This would be a natural line for pedestrians to follow in the morning, afternoon and evening. However, the development would not only deliver new public realm but would also improve existing public realm by widening pavements, improving landscaping and creating more pleasant microclimatic conditions. Mobilisation would also be increased, with the urban

greening factor increasing threefold. The project would completely transform its surrounding area with a double-height colonnade, active frontage and a wide range of ground floor uses. Above ground, the City walkway was also to be extended with a more intuitive and direct connection to the Guildhall, an improved relationship with the gardens of the City Tower podium and the provision of new stair and lift access.

Mr Carulla shared various images of the proposal with the Committee and commented on the generous, robust and flexible office space that would be provided around a central core to maintain light and views around the building's entire perimeter. It was reported that the resulting massing would be broken down into four quartiles by a series of recessed balconies which would also provide amenity space to each office floor above level three. Mr Carulla commented that this was an example of external form and internal logic working together. A larger amenity space would also be provided at roof level for informal social activity, corporate events and evening yoga classes. Members were informed that a lot of thought had also gone into the building envelope to provide an attractive appearance with minimum embodied energy and optimum solar performance. It was reported that the developer had reduced the amount of glass used to just 55% of the façade and had designed a delicate brise soleil punctuated by coloured petals that would open up towards the top of the building where more solar protection would be required. As had already been reported, the building would achieve top marks on a wide range of environmental accreditations and would exceed operational and embedded carbon benchmarks. Altogether, the proposal presented today was a thorough response to the developer's original vision.

The Chair thanked all of the speakers for their contributions and invited any questions that members of the Committee may have of them.

A Member asked what the expected life of the new building would be and questioned how flexible it would be should it require redevelopment in the future. He also sought further detail around why the existing building could not be refurbished and, on the re-use, and recycling of materials during construction of the new building. Mr Mapp responded to state that the life of the proposed development would be extended and that there was no reason why it could not have a 100-120 year life given that flexibility and the ability to adapt the spaces in the future was inherent to its overall design. Mr Mapp reminded Members that the building that was currently on this site could well have been built in the 1800s in terms of its sustainability and flexibility for the future. In terms of the re-cyclability of materials, it was reported that the demolition audit categorically listed and quantified all of the materials within the existing building and how these could be re-used in a hierarchical approach in terms of whether they could be re-used on site in situ or be retained on site and recycled in the location. If neither of these were possible, developers would look at where these materials could go in terms of processors, who would be dealing with it and how – looking at full traceability of recycling.

With regard to the potential to refurbish the existing building, it was reported that, in the 1980s when the existing building had been constructed, the

industry was unfortunately not thinking carefully about future flexibility. Members were told that this particular building was an unusually extreme example of the absence of forethought in terms of design as it was a very unique/bespoke structure. The existing building cantilevered over the London Wall walkway and then turned back into a sawtooth arrangement on the façade along London Wall. The upper levels stepped back twice again with all of these geometrical features of the building meaning that they had to be supported on transfer systems meaning that if the loading here were to be increased, even slightly, the systems would very quickly become overloaded. Small additions or amendments to the space which would normally be the typical approach to teasing new use out of an old building would quickly trigger disproportionate levels of strengthening requirements and mean tearing open very large concrete floorplates at the upper and mid-levels and increasing the steel strength and the stability system right down to the foundations of the building – and all of this in return for very little gain. After several years of studies, the developer had concluded that the building needed to be redeveloped, demolished and rebuilt. Next, consideration had been given to re-using the basement and foundations but, unfortunately, the existing building was peculiar at every level and the foundations which were enormous in terms of volumes of material were also not particularly strong. Strengthening these foundations would also involve an enormous amount of demolition. It was reported that there were hundreds of piles under this site, all of which were concealed beneath 2 metres of reinforced concrete. This proposal would involve new foundations which could be re-used and be flexible for future modifications to the building or indeed a future redevelopment. New, ‘raft’ foundations would also sit horizontally across the entire site. Members were informed that the developers could not demonstrate that reusing the foundations would be any more carbon efficient than demolishing them and putting in this new raft foundation. These new foundations would grant an extra 60 - 120 years design life as opposed to a strengthened foundation which would only offer an additional 30 years. A raft foundation would be inherently flexible for a number of configurations of a new building above it.

A Member returned to the issue of the images of the existing building and proposed development taken from the viewpoint of residents of Roman House, commenting that one seemed to have been taken at a further distance away than the other and asked for greater clarity on this as, at present, it looked as if the image of the proposed development was intended to make the building appear smaller. The Member went on to refer to the LVMF transgression and the effect on Guildhall, both of which could be addressed by building a slightly shorter building. He questioned whether this had been considered. Finally, he questioned whether the width of the proposed highwalk was at least equal to the width of the highwalk through London Wall Place. The developer responded to state that the LVMF issue raised was distinct to that of the Guildhall spire. It was highlighted that the building was in the shadow of 21 Moorfields and the conclusion reached and agreed with the City’s planning officers was that, because the proposed building would not be seen, the technical breach was an acceptable breach and one that the GLA had agreed with. In terms of the Guildhall spire, the approach taken here to provide the neutral backdrop was for a single architectural piece to be behind the spire. It was noted that one of

the concerns raised by officers had been around night-time light spill and the developer had therefore proposed a series of vertical louvres to overcome this. With regard to the highwalk, it was confirmed that sections of this would be a little narrower whilst others would be a little wider. The applicant went on to acknowledge how important the highwalk was to Barbican residents and emphasised that, by providing the new pedestrian link between London Hall and Basinghall Street, it was felt that the majority of pedestrians who might have used the highwalk would now use this new route. If the new highwalk was at all narrower in places it would therefore not be impactful on pedestrian comfort levels.

Another Member spoke to acknowledge that the intended design life of the proposed building was between 60-100 years. He noted that the developer had put a lot of emphasis on the new pedestrian route and questioned whether any pedestrian modelling had been undertaken and, if so, the result of this. The developer confirmed that pedestrian flow models had been produced and that these had been submitted alongside the application and showed where there were desire lines. The developer recognised that the existing building, in conjunction with City Tower was a very solid, unwelcoming structure on the south side of London Wall and also commented that, with the opening of the Elizabeth Line, forecasts suggested that there would be increased pedestrian flows coming from Moorgate Station. This and the need to provide space for people to disperse from the station had been one of the key points raised by officers at the early design stage. Members were informed that the application and design responded to the results of the pedestrian modelling.

A Member spoke further on concerns in the local area as to the proposed height of the building and questioned how this building would fit in with neighbouring buildings. The developer reported that buildings to the west at 5 Aldermanbury Square, to the north at London Wall Place and the north east at Moore House were all taller than the proposed development and that the building would remain lower than the building immediately to the east of it. To the south, buildings dropped down in scale as one approached the North Wing of the Guildhall and the Guildhall itself. The development would by no means be the tallest building in the area as it was managed by the very narrow LVMF such that it would not affect the surrounding buildings – a cap that other buildings in the vicinity did not necessarily have. It was confirmed that views depicting how the proposed development would sit in its broader context had been produced as part of the townscape assessment and the specialist report and Members were shown the relevant images.

Another Member thanked the applicant for their explanations as to why the building could not be refurbished but stressed that they had not articulated why it was necessary to extend its height to such a degree, particularly given that it was this which impacted upon residents, the conservation area and protected views. The Member also questioned the consultation process and why the applicant had not engaged with residents at an earlier stage in the same way that the developers for London Wall Place had done. In terms of health and wellbeing, the Member remarked that this was not relevant to occupiers of the building only but also to the surrounding community – something which Health

Impact Assessments were intended to address. With regard to proposals to extend the height of the building, the developer reported that this was necessary in order to provide a scheme that was financially viable and to be able to afford the package of benefits that the scheme proposed. To replace the building and then lose a certain amount of space with the provision of the new pedestrian route and make significant alterations to the tower (including the removal of all of the car parking spaces in the basement and the replacement of these with enhanced cycle parking and shower facilities) came at a cost. To counter this the building would need to be of a certain size. The scale and the articulation of the architecture was, however, intended to be appropriate for the area in which it sits.

In terms of consultation, the developer commented that this was an extraordinary period of time due to the pandemic but underlined that they had undertaken consultation and had contacted the residents of Roman House through Concilio once it was apparent that they had not received the intended flyers promoting the webinar. The residents were offered a further session. The developer did recognise that more consultation would have been advantageous but was of the view that the design worked up here and the package that the proposal comprised was suitable for the area and acknowledged that some favourable comments on the architecture had been received from Barbican residents, including those speaking today. Members were assured that the developer did take consultation seriously and would normally have held a public exhibition that would have ran for 2-3 days. However, this had not been possible due to factors beyond their control and they had therefore responded as best as they could in more challenging circumstances. In terms of the community offer, the developer responded to recognise that there would be an impact when redevelopment took place and to state that they were aware that the bridge link over London Wall would be temporarily closed and the need to get this reopened as quickly as possible. It was reported that the construction work would be undertaken by a tier one contractor to ensure the highest standards.

The Townscape Consultant for the development mentioned that the Officer presentation very reasonably drew on a range of documents including the design and access statement produced by the architects as well as the townscape and heritage assessment. The images called into question by the speaker today were from the design and access statement and were not therefore verified, accurate images but illustrative images which the architects had produced in house. The images that could be relied upon for accuracy and direct comparison with other building were those produced by Millerhare for the townscape document. In terms of the views that had been selected for the technical THVIA, it was reported that these were arrived at through a process where Millerhare created a 'viewship' that looked at the impact of the building in surrounding areas. Views that had an impact, particularly on heritage assets, were then selected and assessed accurately. It was noted that it was not unusual for a document to not record images from purely residential apartments or space but only from publicly accessible spaces where the majority of people could appreciate or experience the building.

Seeing no further questions of the applicant team, the Chair asked that Members now move to the debate and any outstanding questions they may have of officers.

A Member spoke to remark that he felt that this application was typical of the applications that this Committee received due to the number of planning policies it contravened. First, a substantial office building completed less than 30 years ago was to be demolished and replaced with an even more substantial office building when all indications were that less and not more office space would be needed in the City post COVID. Second, the increased height and massing of the proposed building would have an overbearing effect on the City's largest residential estate to the north, the office buildings and squares to the south and the Grade I listed Guildhall itself. Third, the building to be replaced had a postmodern design which was of its time but contributed to the architectural history of the City whilst the new building had a design that did not, by its architects own admission, reflect any style. It would therefore, in his view, be another functional and dull addition to the City's skyline. The Member went on to state that, unlike other authorities, the Corporation did not have a design panel. He also felt that the Officer's report that guides this Committee in making its decision was also typical because he felt that it attempted to excuse or distract from the application's shortcomings and stated that 'despite the short-term uncertainty about the pace and scale of future growth in the City following the immediate impact of COVID-19, the longer-term geographical, economic and social fundamentals underpinning demand remained in place'. The Member, however, felt that the evidence was to the contrary with the applicants stating that it was confident that it could fill this new, larger building as they believed that there would be a flight to quality. Whilst this may prove to be true, it was noted that those fleeing to quality would be leaving behind empty office space which could eventually lead to a City with a few, modern, oversized office blocks that were fully occupied and a lot of older ones that were empty – something that would be the responsibility of the City's Planning Committee. The Member felt that this Committee should be focusing on the refurbishment and repurposing of existing buildings and not approving new, larger ones. The Member went on to state that he felt that the Officers report grossly exaggerated the 'public benefit', especially by praising the increased 'permeability of the site' given that the site was already permeable at first-floor level and would remain so. Making it permeable at ground-floor level would simply save pedestrians wanting to cross the road at this point a little time in walking around the corner or up the stairs. The claim that this trivial benefit and some token greening would outweigh the serious shortcomings of this application was not, to his mind, rational.

The same Member went on to raise a point of order, stating that, when carrying out a land registry search on this property, he had discovered that the owner of the freehold was the City Of London Corporation meaning that, if this application were to be approved, the Corporation would benefit financially via an increase in the value of its freehold in a new and larger building. The Member remarked that the City's Planning Protocol required not only that Members took particular care in deciding an application in which the Corporation had an ownership interest, but also that they 'preserve public trust

in integrity and fairness of the planning system'. The Member noted that two Members present today also sat on the Corporation's Property Board and stated that he did not feel that public trust could be achieved if members who were responsible for maximising the value of the Corporation's property participated in granting planning permission which would increase said value. In addition, the applicant had undertaken to pay £200,000 to the Corporation's Open Spaces Department to improve the greening in Brewer's Hall Gardens if planning permission were granted. He added that, public trust could not be gained if the Deputy Chairman of this Committee, who was also Chair of the Corporation's Open Spaces Committee, participated in granting planning permission that would provide cash to the department supervised by the Committee which he chaired. The Member clarified that he was not suggesting that ownership was a material planning consideration but stressed that the Corporation's ownership of the freehold was relevant not to the application but to the process of dealing with it and particularly to the Protocol's requirement that Members achieve public trust. He added that he was also not suggesting that the affected Members had a pecuniary interest in the application, but he highlighted again the Protocol's requirement that Members achieve public trust. The Member concluded by proposing that the Chair now give each of the affected Members an opportunity to recuse themselves from further participation in this application. In response to this invitation, the Chair stated that it was his ruling that all matters of Protocol and procedure were above board and had been adhered to.

Another Member spoke to underline that residents did not have viewing rights and that, as a City resident himself, he had recently experienced a loss of the view of St Paul's colonnade following the construction of the hotel at Creed Street in Ludgate Square. The Member went on to speak on outside exercise equipment and conveyed his enthusiasm for this. He also touched upon the City highwalk which Members had been told was used by less than 100 people per hour. He felt that this needed to be addressed so that this space could be maximised. He suggested signage for the podium from Aldersgate Street as a minimum to help draw people up to this space and this large open space and that applications such as this should be seen as an opportunity to improve this.

Another Member spoke of the view of the Guildhall from Kings Street and referred to what he viewed as the cynicism of this application which suggested that this project would entirely transform the entire surrounding area. He underlined that he did not feel that this was true given that it left in place what he felt was one of the ugliest 1960s buildings in the City in the form of City Tower. He argued that City Tower required top to bottom refurbishment much more so than its neighbouring building. With regard to the view of the Guildhall from Kings Street, the Member stated that he was not at all comfortable with what he saw as the destruction of /harm caused here. He stressed that this was an historic view that greeted everyone arriving for a State Banquet or any other important occasion at the Guildhall. The Member questioned by how much and how it would be possible for the developer to conceivably lower the height of the proposed development in order to maintain the current view of the Guildhall from this vantage point and eliminate this degree of harm.

The Chief Planning Officer responded to this last point to explain that the scheme presented to Members today had already been quite significantly reduced in height as part of very early pre-application discussions to address this view. Whilst the proposed development would still result in a degree of harm here as set out within the report, this was considered to be offset by the wider public benefits of this scheme. The Chief Planning Officer went on to state that this was informally referred to a processional route and underlined that this was a dynamic view with an existing building already visible in the backdrop to the Guildhall from further south with this being concealed from view as one moved along Kings Street. He stressed that, at some point, any additional increase in height from this development would be visible in this kinetic view, hence the three viewpoints provided within the presentation. He added that he felt that the benefit of this scheme is that it would provide a one-dimensional backdrop to the flesh of the Guildhall as opposed to the rather busy backdrop which existed at present. He also underlined that the existing building was also already visible here.

A Member stated that, as an architect and City resident who knew this area well, she found this application disturbing and added that she felt that it was environmentally irresponsible to demolish a building that was completed less than 30 years ago. She felt that the need to do this seemed to be the wish to extend upwards which, according to the applicant's own admission, was due to financial viability. She stressed that financial viability was not a planning consideration. She went on to remark that City Tower was built in 1964 and that, nearly 50 years later, was creatively repurposed in 2013 with its structure retained and a fine example of what was possible in terms of the reuse of buildings. The Member noted that the application made much of the need for an active frontage to the new building and permeability but noted that its north face was on London Wall, a busy, four lane carriageway where there were no pedestrians because it was not on a desire line and was polluted by traffic fumes. The Member commented that, in her opinion, a marginally widened pavement here would serve little useful purpose and that the desire line created to justify the opening between the buildings was not there as she felt that there was no need or desire to cross the road at this point. She highlighted that the pedestrian footbridge had been narrowed because the footfall was so small. Non-office uses at ground-floor level would, she felt, have no anchor to attract anyone but the office staff to the area given that there was already a better retail offer available at Cheapside and Moorgate nearby. The Member highlighted that Aldermanbury Square was a pleasant place to sit, yet the report stated that it would require wind mitigation measures even in summer for it to continue to be so because of the height and form of the new building. The Member commented that whilst the post-modern design of the existing building was not to everyone's taste, it did have some fine detailing and respected its surrounding buildings with the use of setbacks. By contrast, the building proposed would, in her view, create a canyon block which would overhang the street and have a bland, flat look relieved only by the balconies. She also commented that if the trees proposed for these balconies were as prolific as they appeared then they would block any views from the interior of the building. The Member went on to state that it was also disappointing that, linking with the beautiful, sinuous planted highwalk from London Wall Place, the new proposed

bridge over Basinghall Street would be narrow and industrial looking with no elegance. In short, the Member described this application as containing a lot of features that looked good – but only if you did not interrogate them and served to cover the harm that this development would do to the City environmentally and architecturally and mar existing views of the Guildhall.

Another Member referred to the letter received from Heritage England dated 29 April and included within the supplementary agenda pack and noted that they suggested that the City Corporation should seek the views of its specialist conservation advisors. She therefore questioned whether this had happened, who these specialist advisors were and what their comments had been. The Chief Planning Officer responded to report that the Corporation was fortunate to have one of the most widely respected and highly qualified Conservation Officers, Conservation Team and Historic Environment Team in London, many of whom had over 30 years of experience in dealing with sensitive conservation matters. He stressed that this was widely discussed within this team and the result was that there was a level of harm identified to the Guildhall as set out within the report.

In response to an additional point raised by the Member, the Chief Planning Officer confirmed that he had also been a conservation and design officer previously and that the Conservation Officer was also present today to respond to any questions of detail. The Member questioned what was meant by 'less than substantial harm' in relation to Grade I listed buildings and how this was balanced against public benefits which, in this case, were presented as being the new pedestrian route, pavement widenings, some potential additional planting, funding for improvements to the garden at Brewers Hall and the new retail offerings. The Chief Planning Officer explained that the term 'less than substantial harm' came from the NPPF and was a means of being able to understand the proportional impact of a proposal on the significance of a building. Officers felt that the proportional impact of this development on the backdrop of the Guildhall was at the lower end of less than substantial harm. This triggered requirements under paragraph 196 of the NPPF which outlined the need to balance the wider public benefit of a scheme proportionally against the degree of harm. This assessment was set out within the report. He recognised that some may disagree with the weight afforded to the public benefits but underlined that 'less than substantial harm' to these heritage assets was considered to be outweighed by the major planning public benefits of the scheme.

A Member referred to the image of the proposed development also depicting the location of Roman House, Willoughby House and Andrewes House. He stated that he continued to find the daylight/sunlight analysis very difficult to follow and understand and stated that he felt that others also experienced similar difficulty here. He stressed that adding a further 11 metres to the height of the building would affect existing dwellings and open spaces. Officers had highlighted the benefits and robustness of using radiance studies to assess the impact of developments on daylight and sunlight where there was a genuine concern around this. He questioned why radiance studies had not therefore been used in this instance to assess the impact in terms of daylight and

sunlight loss on Andrewes House, Willoughby House and Roman House. He added that he felt that this was particularly relevant here given the proximity of the proposed development to the City's major residential area. Secondly, the Member stated that he did not see any reference to the impact of the proposed development on open space within the report. He felt that the increased height of this development to the south of Salters' Garden as well as the garden between the two London Wall Place buildings would have a serious impact and stressed that the City's Biodiversity Action Plan commented on the need to assess the overshadowing of green areas, private balconies and window boxes. The Chief Planning Officer responded to state that, as Members were aware, the Corporation were very much at the forefront of microclimatic modelling and had introduced a thermal comfort modelling which involved assessing a combination of wind, temperature, humidity and sunlight throughout the year to look at the holistic impact of a development on the public realm. He therefore stressed that this assessment could not have been carried out in a more thorough way. Finally, with regard to radiance studies, Members were informed that Officers were developing a more formal guidance on this and that they did ask developers to include radiance studies as an additional tool to enhance their assessments but only in instances where the impact was so major, adverse that Officers required a closer level of interrogation. On the basis of the daylight and Sunlight assessment undertaken for this project, this was not considered to be necessary.

The Member responded to express surprise that, given the importance of the residential area of the Barbican and Roman House and its proximity to this development that there had been no attempt to undertake radiance studies to understand the real impact of the increased height of this building to the properties concerned. Secondly, he asked again why there had been no assessment of the overshadowing effect of this new building on the green areas to the north of London Wall. The Chief Planning Officer stated that the Member was correct in the sense that the overshadowing of these spaces was not covered in a specific assessment but as stated, the overall microclimatic assessment of sun and wind had been very thorough.

Another Member spoke again to ask the Chair to give a reason for why he had stated that the Protocol had been complied with given that a test of the Protocol was public trust and it had been proven that the public, through the petition, did not have trust and that members of the Property and Investment Board voting on permissions. The Chair responded to say that he had already answered this question quite categorically and reiterated that all procedures and policies had been followed.

A Member spoke for a third time to note that the applicant had agreed the increased height of the development with Officers and questioned why these Officers had not pushed back on this given the resulting harm on the Guildhall, the overshadowing of various open spaces and the impact on residents in terms of daylight and sunlight. The Member emphasised that she did not believe that the public benefits were benefits which justified this impact. She added that she had concerns around the public consultation which, by the applicant's own admission, was lacking and suggested that this application

should therefore be sent back. She felt that this was a missed opportunity in terms of redeveloping the whole site and delivering genuine public benefits. She concluded by stating that it was chilling to think that even the Guildhall's own Great Hall was not sacrosanct and safe from over-development.

*At this point, the Chairman sought approval from the Committee to continue the meeting beyond two hours from the appointed time for the start of the meeting, in accordance with Standing Order 40, and this was agreed.*

The Committee then proceeded to vote on the recommendations before them within this report. The vote was conducted by rollcall led by the Town Clerk with those Members present and eligible to vote asked to also confirm that they had been present for and able to hear the entirety of this item.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 15 Votes  
OPPOSED – 4 Votes.  
There were two abstentions.

**RESOLVED – That:**

- (1) Planning permission be granted for the above proposal in accordance with the details set out in the attached schedule subject to:
  - (a) planning obligations and other agreements being entered into under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 278 of the Highway Act 1980 in respect of those matters set out in the report, the decision notice not to be issued until the Section 106 obligations have been received.
- (2) That, the Committee agree in principle that the land affected by the building which are currently public highway and land over which the public have right of access may be stopped up to enable the development to proceed and, upon receipt of the formal application, officers be instructed to proceed with arrangements for advertising and making of a Stopping-up Order for the various areas under the delegation arrangements approved by the Court of Common Council.
- (3) That Officers be instructed to negotiate and execute obligations in respect of those matters set out in "Planning Obligations" under Section 106 and any necessary agreements under Section 278 of the Highway Act 1980.
- (4) The Mayor of London be given 14 days to decide whether or not to direct the council to refuse planning permission (under Article 5 1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008).
- (5) Delegate authority to the Comptroller and City Solicitor and Planning and Development Director to negotiate a City walkway agreement for the proposed City walkway.

(6) That the accompanying application for listed building consent is granted (ref. 21/00201/LBC).

4a. **LBC - 65-65A BASINGHALL STREET LONDON EC2V 5DZ**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Planning Officer and Development Director concerning 65-65A Basinghall Street London EC2V 5DZ – specifically alteration of 65/65a Basinghall Street to allow for the removal of the existing walkway bridge over Basinghall Street and the installation of a new City Walkway bridge to be delivered as part of the redevelopment of 55 Basinghall/40 Basinghall Street (associated reference 21/00116/FULMAJ).

**RESOLVED** – That listed building consent be granted for the above proposal in accordance with the details set out in the attached schedule.

5. **PROTECT DUTY CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk and Chief Executive regarding the Protect Duty Consultation Response.

Officers highlighted that this report covered the Corporation's response to the Home Office consultation on the Protect Duty which was the potential to create or clarify the duty of public bodies and venue operators to protect the public in publicly accessible, crowded spaces. Officers stated that they believed the City Corporation was well placed to respond to this consultation, given the lessons that it had learned through various incidents over the past four years. Members were informed that, generally speaking, reports on security matters were considered in non-public session but this was a public consultation. The request outlined within the report was to delegate the final sign off to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of both this and the Policy and Resources Committee. It was highlighted that this had already been approved by Policy earlier this month.

**RESOLVED** – That Members:

- Note the consultation objectives and City Corporation responses outlined in this report;
- Delegate the detailed consultation response to the Comptroller and City Solicitor in consultation with the Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of the Policy & Resources and Planning & Transportation Committees.

6. **HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE NOTE**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of the Built Environment presenting for approval a guidance note advising developers how to carry out Health Impact Assessments on developments with planning applications.

Officers introduced the report by highlighting that an important step forward had been made by London Plan and also the latest version of the City Plan to introduce this requirement that developers should submit Health Impact Assessments when submitting planning applications. This item elaborated on this policy commitment and set out within a guidance note the detailed nature in which they ought to submit these. Officers went on to highlight that this was a

proportionate response and that, whilst developers were required to submit an assessment, the degree of detail required was proportionate to the complexity of the case. A table within the report set out how developers could either submit a desktop assessment, a more elaborate, rapid assessment or a yet more elaborate full assessment. Officers explained that the thresholds set out within this table were indicative and that it was likely that, if a case were small but complex, developers would still be required to submit a more complex Health Impact Assessment. Finally, Officers stated that the list on page 241 of the agenda pack referred to the Building Research Establishment methodology but it was recognised that there were other methodologies such as the WELL standard and it was therefore felt that these should not be excluded should developers wish to use these. Officers therefore undertook to add a row to this checklist to encourage developers to use other methodologies besides BREEAM if they so wished.

A Member noted that the checklist included a question as to whether the proposal improved indoor/outdoor sports facilities which he welcomed but he stated that he was of the view that he felt that the Health Impact Assessment should go further and specify that these sports facilities should be made public.

Another Member commented on the document's reference to canteen facilities with healthy food options but underlined that these could encourage staff to eat at their desks and not leave the office meaning that they got less exercise and also resulting in a loss of custom for local retailers and a loss of vibrancy at street level. In response to this, Officers suggested that they add a sentence to stress that the encouragement for canteen facilities which encourage healthy lifestyles. The Member went on to question the view on office developments not providing canteen facilities which would be a means of encouraging staff out of the office to use local sandwich bars and eat outdoors for example. Officers took this point and underlined that this process was all about encouraging healthy lifestyles and behaviours.

A Member reported that the Health and Wellbeing Board had already had the benefit of reviewing a draft of this document and questioned whether it would now return to this forum for final sign off. The Board had recommended that the London Borough of Hackney also be asked to comment on this, and the Members questioned whether this had happened to date. She went on to seek greater clarity on the need for 'HIA's to include a recommendation to carry out future monitoring of the health impacts that result from the development proposal, so that corrective action could be taken to address any unforeseen impacts'. She questioned how this would be enforced and monitored – whether a developer would be asked to reinvest if their health benefits did not come to fruition for example. She stated that this was a very open-ended statement at present. Officers reported that, at this stage, there was no enforcement or monitoring mechanism in place and that this was the first stage in a policy innovation process in encouraging developers to address this issue through the planning application process. If they did address it through the planning application process and then constructed the scheme as proposed, this would lead to health benefits. This was therefore felt to be a positive step forward which would lead to healthier lifestyles within the City. With regard to

consultation with Hackney, the Officer undertook to respond to the Member directly on this matter outside of the meeting. The Member responded to state that if the purpose of this was to deliver real change and health benefits then this monitoring and enforcement would really need to be cemented in going forward. The Chair agreed with this point and asked that Officers now give some further thought to this and how this sentence might be strengthened prior to finalising the document. The Member thanked Officers for this but underlined that additional resources would also need to be identified for this purpose.

Another Member questioned whether an outturn report of sorts could be considered as part of the monitoring process and the responsibilities of developers. He went on to speak on wider engagement and questioned whether there was a guidance note on how this should be undertaken given that this Committee were frequently hearing applicants criticised for failing to have done this sufficiently. He went on to state that he could see no reason why the City could not also develop its own guidance on this. The Chair recognised that the Member was making a wider point here and asked Officers to circulate a note to the Committee regarding the Statement of Community Involvement and other matters in terms of the Engagement Strategy.

**RESOLVED** – That Members approve the Health Impact Assessment Guidance Note (Appendix 1) subject to the inclusion of the points discussed above.

## **7. BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN CONSULTATION RESPONSE AND ADOPTION REPORT**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces setting out the response to the consultation carried out on the Draft City of London Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) 2021-2026.

Officers reported that the City of London's BAP aimed to ensure that the City met its obligations towards the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and provided a strategic focus to ensure that biodiversity was considered during decision-making processes. It also provided a framework to ensure that all legislative requirements were met at a local level. It was noted that, in March 2021, this Committee were presented with the then draft BAP for 2021-26 and that draft was then subject to a public consultation process. Appendix A of the report contained a consultation statement setting out the results of that consultation as well as the changes that had been made to the BAP as a result. Responses to the public on the individual points that they had raised were also detailed.

Members were informed that, should the BAP be approved, Officers would develop a final document with photographs and illustrations to accompany the agreed text which would then be launched later in the year.

Members requested that the Golden Lane Estate and the Barbican also be included within this plan given that both had valuable green assets. Officers confirmed that the Plan applied to the whole of the Square Mile.

**RESOLVED** – That Members of the Planning and Transportation Committee recommend for onward approval to the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee the text of the final draft Biodiversity Action Plan 2021/2026 for adoption.

8. **RIVERSIDE STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The Committee discussed a report of the Environmental Resilience Director concerning the Riverside Strategy for Public Consultation.

Officers introduced the report by stressing that whilst this was not part of the City's Climate Action Strategy it was intended to work alongside it to create a working, accessible riverside. It was underlined that the strategy was the first of its kind for any riverside local authority.

A Member remarked that the Thames Estuary Partnership (TEP), of which the City Corporation were partners, had developed a range of schemes to soften the edges of the estuary for the benefit of marine life, including methods of adding biodiversity to flood barriers. He commented that the simplest method to enliven a vertical wall was to fix large wood shelves at different elevations between high and low tide, with the shelves designed to catch river water with each tide and be rapidly colonised by marine growth. He underlined that it was essentially analogous to a terrestrial green wall, but with the absence of any maintenance or irrigation. The Member suggested that the Blackfriars Tideway riverside walls would, for example, benefit from ledge marine growth such as this. Officers confirmed that increasing biodiversity along the river was one of the City Corporation's key objectives. They stressed that this document was only draft at this point in time and that they would therefore be happy to work with the Member to ensure that the wording around this was correct and that an increase in biodiversity along the river was genuinely achieved.

A Member spoke to emphasise that this really needed to have wide consultation to ensure maximum input and a document that was fit for purpose. The Member suggested that details on who was to be consulted and how would be useful. Officers underlined that they intended to put the draft document on the City's website for consultation and that they would be happy to provide Members with a full list of consultees outside of the meeting. They underlined that the document would go out to the majority of river users that Officers had been liaising with.

**RESOLVED** – That Members:

- Agree that the Riverside Strategy continue to be progressed by the City Corporation and,
- Endorse the draft Riverside Strategy to be sent out for public consultation for 6 weeks, subject to following up on the points above.

9. **DEPARTMENT OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT RISK MANAGEMENT - QUARTERLY REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of the Built Environment considering the risks managed by the Department of the Built Environment that fall within the remit of the Planning and Transportation Committee.

A Member commented that risk DBE-02 seemed to have been at the same level for some time now although there was a desire to reduce the impact with a target date of December 2020. Officers undertook to respond directly to the Member on this point.

The Chair highlighted the importance of the CR-20 Road Safety Risk and the work being undertaken around mitigating this as set out within the report.

**RESOLVED** – That Members note the report and the actions taken in the Department of the Built Environment to monitor and manage effectively risks arising from the department's operations.

10. **STREETS AND WALKWAYS SUB-COMMITTEE - PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Committee received the draft public minutes of the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee meeting held virtually on 29 April 2021.

A Member sought clarity around the Museum of London gyratory project which seemed to have been renamed as the St Paul's gyratory project and questioned whether this was included in the brief for the London Wall/Bastion House Master Plan work. The Chair requested that Officers respond directly to the Member on this matter.

**RECEIVED.**

11. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk setting out their list of outstanding actions.

The Chief Planning Officer and Development Director reported that the Barbican and Golden Lane Conservation Area SPD would now be submitted to this Committee in September 2021 as the consultation period had now been extended from 9 July – 30 July 2021.

**RESOLVED** – That Members note the report.

12. **PUBLIC LIFT REPORT**

The Committee received a public lift report of the City Surveyor for the period 22/05/2021 – 10/06/2021.

A Member underlined with concern the number of hours that the various lifts had been out of action during this period.

**RESOLVED** - That Members note the report.

13. **DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

The Committee received a report of the Chief Planning Officer and Development Director providing Members with a list detailing development and advertisement applications determined by the Chief Planning Officer and Development Director or those authorised under their delegated powers since the report to the last meeting.

**RESOLVED** - That the report be noted.

14. **VALID PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY DEPARTMENT OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

The Committee received a report of the Chief Planning Officer and Development Director providing Members with a list detailing development applications received by the Department of the Built Environment since the report to the last meeting.

**RESOLVED** - That Members note the report.

15. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

**Taller Buildings and Efficient Use of Land**

A Member asked a question of the Chief Planning Officer and Development Director noting that, as a planning authority, this Committee naturally focused on the issue of natural resources and materials, particularly the re-use and recycling of building materials and whole-life carbon minimisation. He went on to question, however, use of land, noting that taller buildings such as those on the Barbican estate used scarce amounts of land more effectively and efficiently which was also a benefit. The Member questioned whether, as a Planning Committee, it was valid to consider this as a factor which could be balanced against the drawbacks of taller buildings.

The Chief Planning Officer and Development Director stated that he felt that this could be taken into consideration by Members and that locating high density development in one place which was well served by public transport was, for example, a very sustainable use of precious urban land.

**Riverside Walkway around Queenhithe**

A Member requested an update on the completion of the riverside walkway at Queenhithe either to him personally or to the next meeting of this Committee. Officers undertook to provide this.

16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

**Kay English – City of London Corporation Traffic Manager**

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, congratulated Kay English on her recent award of the British Empire medal in the Queen's birthday honours. He underlined that the richly deserved award was presented for services to transport management, including work done during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chair outlined that Kay had had a 44 year career in the public sector to date including spells with the City of Westminster, the Royal Borough of Kensington

& Chelsea, the London Borough of Lambeth and now almost 12 years with the City of London Corporation.

The Deputy Chair added that he was filled with admiration for Kay and other officers who, like her, had remained on the front line during this pandemic and continued to undertake their duties and underlined that she was a sterling example of dedication to public service.

**17. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** - That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

<u>Item No(s)</u>	<u>Paragraph No(s)</u>
18	3
19-20	-

**18. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the meeting held virtually on 8 June 2021 and approved them as a correct record.

**19. NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

A Member raised a question regarding suicide prevention.

**20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There were no additional, urgent items of business for consideration in the non-public session.

**The meeting closed at 1.25 pm**

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Chair

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