

Comments for Planning Application 22/01178/FULL

Application Summary

Application Number: 22/01178/FULL

Address: Barbican Estate London EC2Y 8EN

Proposal: (Revisions to proposed layout including reduction in amenity grass areas and play areas, and the installation of exercise equipment in two locations) Proposal for Barbican Podium Phase 2 for the installation of new waterproofing and drainage infrastructure. Works comprise the removal of existing tiled hard surfaces, membranes and soft landscaping, demolition of existing link building between Ben Jonson House and Frobisher Crescent, alterations to the existing entrance to Exhibition Hall including the construction of a new entrance portal, installation of a new waterproofing membrane across the site and the repair and replacement of drainage system and the reinstatement of a new tiled hard surface with a new soft landscaping layout (including raised planters, grassed areas, trees, community growing planters, new lighting, seating, wayfinding, informal play and exercise area and relocation of existing and installation of new public art).

Case Officer: Jessica Robinson

Customer Details

Name: Mr Keith Woodward

Address: 223 Lauderdale Tower London

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

- Other

Comment: I still object to the continued inclusion and addition of more exercise areas and play trails. This inclusion is a surprise and will be detrimental to the landscape of the Barbican podium for visitors and residents.

The exercise equipment was not detailed in the information that describes these proposed works on the side of the exhibition hall on the podium, that has been present over the past year. That talks about taking inspiration from the serenity of woodland and describes making this area more tranquil. Exercise equipment and play trail areas will do the opposite of this. They will act as focal points that encourage activities such as skateboarding, parkour and late night noisy gatherings where people play music and behave rowdily, that despite being banned are ever more prevalent around the podium. Clearly this would not be the designers intent but is inevitable. This is evidenced by the fact that Beech gardens is already a site of late night gatherings that disturbs the residents, which can happen most nights during the summer months.

The Barbican is a grade II listed complex visited by members of the public and lived in by

residents to be able to enjoy architecture, culture, art, music, film and the surrounding beauty of the fountains and wildlife. This means any works should be very carefully considered and aim to maintain and/or provide benefits in these ways. Exercise areas and a play trail will not benefit visitors in these ways and will instead only be detrimental to the residents surrounding it.

As part of a cultural hub, the Barbican podium does not have a place in the City Corporation's proposed physical activity strategy to encourage more exercise to improve health and well-being. This could be achieved in countless other ways, such as installing more exercise and play areas in the City's public parks or providing subsidised or free gym memberships - Not by destroying the atmosphere and distorting the purpose of a grade II listed area.

Adjei, William

From: PLN - Comments
Subject: FW: Objection to 22/01178/FULL

From: Jane Smith
Sent: Friday, June 16, 2023 2:56 PM
To: PLN - Comments <PLNComments@cityoflondon.gov.uk>
Subject: Objection to 22/01178/FULL

THIS IS AN EXTERNAL EMAIL

Dear Sirs

Revisions to **22/01178/FULL 22/01179/LBC**

The changes have resulted in a very slight reduction in planted areas and in biodiversity net gain. It seems to us that, given the harmful effects of hot summers in an existing heat island, any reduction is regrettable and that planting and biodiversity should be maximised.

Similarly the replacement of grassed areas by rubber mulch areas is not climate-friendly.

We object to the insertion of outdoor exercise equipment in a residential area. This is an indulgence in the City, where there are must be more gyms per square mile than anywhere else in Britain, and putting them in the middle of a residential estate will just lead to noise and aggravation.

Similarly, we object to the presence of the children's play areas. We are, of course, not opposed to children being on the podium and enjoying the greenery and grass with their families. But the hard surfaces of the concrete buildings and the "canyon effect" of the upper podium make noise echo round the area. We think that a densely populated area is not a suitable place for potentially noisy activities.

One of the benefits of the public space on the Barbican estate is that is relatively tranquil. It should be the aim of this design to maximise it as tranquil public space (there is plenty of noisy public space in the City, and the City's Noise Strategy identifies the Barbican Estate as one of the few quiet places in the City).

These objections are in accordance with Policy CS5 (4) in the current Local Plan "Ensuring the retention and improvement of pedestrian permeability and connectivity, at ground and high walk level through large sites such as Smithfield Market, Barbican, Golden Lane and Broadgate, whilst preserving privacy, security and *noise abatement* for residents and businesses."

Policy S23 in the emerging Local Plan:

*ensuring the retention and improvement of pedestrian permeability and connectivity through large sites such as Smithfield Market, Golden Lane and Barbican whilst seeking to preserve privacy, security and noise abatement for

residents and businesses;

* identifying and meeting residents' needs in the north of the City, including the protection and enhancement of residential amenity, community facilities and open space;

In the emerging Local Plan policy S1 (5) expects development to protect the City's quieter spaces and places.

Policy SB1 in the emerging Local Plan says

"The City Corporation will protect the amenity of residents, workers and occupiers and conserve and enhance the character of designated and non-designated heritage assets by:

- considering the impact of noise-generating uses, particularly night-time activities on residents and business occupiers when granting planning permissions;
- requiring the installation of noise mitigation measures in developments and spaces to minimise the potential for disruption and anti-social behaviour where appropriate; "

4.1.12 says "It is therefore important to protect the relative tranquillity of some of the City's open spaces to confer benefits to health and wellbeing by providing places of respite from the City's generally high ambient noise levels"

4.1.34 says "For noise sensitive developments, confirmation will be sought of appropriate acoustic standards at the design stage. The City Corporation will apply the 'agent of change' principle, meaning that the responsibility for mitigating the impact of noise will fall on the new development."

The health impact assessment simply has not even considered whether there might be an adverse effect from increased noise from activities on equipment – and the effect of that going on unrestricted throughout 24 hours – on residents' as noise receptors. Since it hasn't been considered there is no mitigation offered. The agent of change principle requires that the onus is on the developer to consider the adverse impacts on residents in this case.

If this plan is persisted with we would seek a condition that the play areas and outdoor exercise logs are to be fenced off with a regime of restricting the use of the equipment so that it is not used before 8am in the morning and 7pm in the evening. This is national practice in relation to play areas in housing estates, and for the City not to observe such practices suggests that it does not understand residential amenity.

We also note that some of the play equipment – eg the clatter bridge - will make a percussive sound: this noise will seriously distress some residents. Noise is to the detriment of the health and wellbeing of the people who live over the podium.

Finally, the Barbican – and in particular this long Highwalk - is a visually exciting enough place already. If you want it to be a place of dense planting and tranquillity – and want to protect residential amenity - then don't put noisy activities in the middle of it.

Yours faithfully
Jane Smith

Chair, BA planning subcommitteesue

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Case Officer: Jessica Robinson

Customer Details

Name: Mr Bruce Badger

Address: Flat 338, Ben Jonson House, Barbican, London

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

- Noise
- Other
- Residential Amenity
- Traffic or Highways

Comment: I strongly object to the plan as submitted as it fundamentally changes the use of the highwalk from a broad walkway to a gym with the inevitable noise, amenity and anti-social behaviour consequences.

The objections I previously raised to this application also stand. Specifically, fixing the drains should be a distinct and on-going maintenance priority and not lumped into a "project" like this. Overall the project remains a shocking misapplication of funds and resources. Please establish a proper, well funded, drain maintenance programme and then demolish the Yellow Shed (as you have long promised to do).

Also:

Loss of Public Space: The walkway in question serves as a valuable public space that is used by residents and visitors for quiet recreational activities, gentle exercise, and as a safe pedestrian route. The introduction of a gymnasium area would restrict access to this public space, resulting in the loss of a communal asset that is essential for the well-being of the community.

Noise and Disruption: A gymnasium area typically involves activities that generate increased noise levels, including exercise routines, music, and the use of fitness equipment. This change of use would introduce significant noise and disturbance to the surrounding area, thereby negatively impacting the quiet enjoyment of nearby residences.

Increased Traffic: Establishing a gymnasium area would likely attract a higher volume of loitering visitors, for example fitness coaches and clients and in the evening we would have the inevitable noisy youths and nighttime economy refugees "playing" on the equipment . This would result in an adverse impact on the surrounding residential areas.

Environmental Considerations: Disruption of the natural environment and local ecosystem.

Adverse Visual Impact: This change of use would add intrusive and incongruous structures and areas that compromise the aesthetics of the listed neighbourhood and diminish its overall appeal.

Personal Safety too!

Begum, Shupi

From: Stephen Chapman [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 June 2023 23:47
To: PLN - Comments
Cc: Robinson, Jessica
Subject: Barbican Podium Planning Application 22/01178/FULL and Listed Building Consent Application 22/01179/LBC with revisions

THIS IS AN EXTERNAL EMAIL

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE CASE OFFICER JESSICA ROBINSON
YOUR REF: 22/01179/LBC; 22/01178/FULL

This e mail is from the Ben Jonson House Group Committee

We OBJECTED to the proposals in the original Planning Application 22/01178/FULL and Listed Building Consent Application 22/01179/LBC on 16 February 2023.

While there have been some improvements (for example a reduction in amenity grass), we are sorry that so few of our objections seem to have been considered and continue to OBJECT to the Applications in their revised forms for the following reasons:

1. We repeat all the points in our original OBJECTIONS both dated 16 February 2023 (except point 2 where there has been a slight reduction in amenity grass) namely the benches to the north side of Ben Jonson House which are still there under bedroom windows, the play areas in front of Ben Jonson House at both ends and the nature of the planting.
2. As regards the bench seating to the north of the Building, all of it remains and is still concentrated at the west end of Ben Jonson House under bedroom windows; there is none anywhere else under the rear of the remainder of the House or under Breton House. The Applications state that they are there as a resting place for people coming up the ramp. But as two out of the three are out of the way from the ramp, they are very badly situated for that purpose. Their presence will also have the concomitant effect of creating a large out of the way area that can be used (especially at night which would be disastrous for residents) for Anti-Social Behaviour which has plagued Ben Jonson House for some years.
3. We are very concerned at the proposed exercise areas (which have been increased in the revisions). These, together with the play areas along the length of the Podium (as is expressed to be the intention of the Applications) will attract groups of often young people who can create a great deal of noise and possibly Anti-Social Behaviour –potentially 24 hours a day as there is no way for the Podium to be shut - unlike the local public parks. Fast electric bicycles are also becoming a hazard and will be so if used along the length of the Podium. Also, with the acoustic features of the Barbican making noise resonate very easily, the exercise areas and play areas could easily create a nightmare situation for residents so far as noise and disturbance are concerned –not to say an unpleasant (and even threatening) environment for those coming to appreciate the very significant cultural offerings of the Barbican and in particular the Podium which at its best is an extremely nice place to relax – and should continue to provide that facility. Surely the Podium is not intended to be a gymnasium? There are many places nearby which offer such amenities –and much more effectively.

4. Specifically, with the way the Applications have been drawn up, the west end of Ben Jonson House will have to contend with the water feature (which will inevitably attract noise as has the existing water feature), the double row seating round the water feature, the seating to the north of the Building, one of the two exercise areas and the children's play area –the full set. This does not feel to be a fair sharing of the obligations of the Applications.

For these reasons, we are OBJECTING to your proposals.

We hope very much that you and the Planners will continue to consider these points and make suitable amendments so as not to prevent the Podium from being the extremely nice place to be that it has been for the past many years.

All the above comments/objections relate to both the Planning Application 22/01178/FULL and Listed Building Consent Application 22/01179/LBC.

Ben Jonson House Group Committee

Sent on behalf of the Committee by:

Stephen Chapman

Treasurer

304 Ben Jonson House

Barbican

London

EC2Y 8NQ