

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE**  
**Tuesday, 11 June 2024**

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Applications Sub-Committee held at Livery  
Hall - Guildhall on Tuesday, 11 June 2024 at 10.30 am

**Present**

**Members:**

Deputy Shравan Joshi MBE (Chairman)  
Graham Packham (Deputy Chairman)  
Deputy Randall Anderson  
Michael Cassidy  
Mary Durcan  
Deputy John Edwards  
Anthony David Fitzpatrick  
Deputy Marianne Fredericks  
Jaspreet Hodgson  
Deputy Natasha Maria Cabrera Lloyd-Owen  
Deputy Charles Edward Lord  
Antony Manchester  
Eamonn Mullally  
Alderman Susan Pearson  
Judith Pleasance  
Deputy Henry Pollard  
Ian Seaton  
Hugh Selka  
Luis Felipe Tilleria  
Shailendra Kumar Kantilal Umrada  
Jacqui Webster

**Officers:**

Zoe Lewis	- Town Clerk's Department
Baljit Bhandal	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Michael Folayan	- Environment Department
David Horkan	- Environment Department
Kerstin Kane	- Environment Department
Rob McNicol	- Environment Department
Tom Nancollas	- Environment Department
Joanna Parker	- Environment Department
Taluana Patricio	- Environment Department
Gwyn Richards	- Environment Department
Anastasia Tampouridou	- Environment Department
Anna Tastsoglou	- Environment Department
Robin Whitehouse	- Environment Department
Peter Wilson	- Environment Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Ian Bishop-Laggett, Deputy John Fletcher, Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney, Deputy Brian Mooney, Deborah Oliver, Alderman Simon Pryke 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 Town Clerk informed Members that a Member had requested a number of amendments to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2017. The requested amendments were outlined. Members were informed that one of the amendments was to amend the wording in the second paragraph on page 21, from "within 15 minutes" to "within 50 metres". However, this did not reflect what was stated in the meeting so it was not proposed to make this amendment. Members agreed that the proposed changes be made, with the exception of the amendment to the second paragraph of page 21.

**RESOLVED** – That the public minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2024, 30 April 2024, 9 May 2024 be agreed as a correct record subject to the following amendments to 17 April 2024 minutes:

Page 15, last paragraph, 4 lines from the bottom, that after the words, 'independent heritage report' the words, 'by Alec Forshaw' be added.

Page 16 - first paragraph, the last sentence be amended to, 'They concluded that there would be a significant impact and major adverse impact to a number of rooms with a living element'.

Page 16 - last paragraph, last sentence be amended to 'Ms Dehon stated that Mr Sturgis had demonstrated clearly that Option 2 - Major Refurbishment performed far better than any other option in relative (per square metre) and overall terms and the next sentence start with 'It' rather than 'she stated'.

Page 19 - last paragraph, second sentence be amended to state that Deputy King asked why these were never seriously considered and stated 'that retrofitting could have saved significant disruption, carbon and money'.

Page 36, first paragraph be amended to read 'In response to a Member's question about the number of neighbour objections received, an Officer stated that the total number of objections received was not typical of many major applications in the City but it was not unprecedented'.

4. **1-8 LONG LANE, LONDON, EC1A 9HF**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Planning and Development Director concerning the demolition of existing buildings to basement level and construction of a nine storey plus basement level building for hotel use (Class C1) with retail (Class E(a) / E(b)) use at part ground and basement levels together with ancillary cycle parking, associated servicing, plant, amenity terraces, landscaping and other associated works.

The Town Clerk referred to those papers set out within the main agenda pack as well as the Officer presentation slides and an addendum that had been separately circulated and published.

Officers presented the application, highlighting the location of the site to the north of Long Lane, west of Aldersgate Street and the Barbican Estate, east of Smithfield Market and south of London Underground rail lines. An Officer stated that although it was not located within a conservation area, the Barbican Conservation Area was to the east, the Charterhouse Conservation Area to the north, and the Smithfield Conservation Area to the southwest.

Members were informed that the site comprised two office buildings, 1-5 and 6-8 Long Lane. They were 6 and 5 storeys in height respectively, and they dated from the 1960s and 1970s. Members were shown photographs of the buildings from Long Lane and Aldersgate Street, and a view from Long Lane looking towards the east.

They were also shown the front elevations of the two buildings and the open space on the eastern part of the site which had a hard surface and lacked seating and greening.

Members were shown a photograph taken from the Barbican podium, which showed the small cluster of commercial buildings to the north of Long Lane. Members were also shown a photograph of the view from the north elevation of the buildings alongside adjacent buildings with the Barbican towers to the back.

The Officer stated that the proposed development comprised the demolition of the existing office buildings at 128 Long Lane at basement level, the extension of the basement and construction of a 9-storey building for hotel use with retail use at part ground and basement levels, together with the provision of cycle parking, associated servicing, green terraces and a pocket garden to the east of the application. Members were informed that the site availability assessment and marketing information had been submitted with the application and had been reviewed by a third party. This demonstrated that all three options assessed - light refurbishment, full refurbishment and a new build, would be unviable for office use. The Officer stated that all the figures stated in paragraph 74 of the report, should be negative figures.

Members were shown the ground floor plan with the main entrance to the hotel as well as the entrances to the retail units and the access point to the servicing yard. The Officer stated that the development would generate five vehicle trips a day which was seven less than the existing. She added that the size of the servicing yard was large enough to allow access and egress of the site in

forward gear. Ten long stay and six short stay policy compliance cycle parking spaces were also proposed.

The Officer stated that the development would also include the provision of an open space to the east of the buildings which would provide seating, greening, landscaping and new surface materials, and would animate the public realm.

Members were shown a visual of the proposed development which showed other public realm improvements, including the removal of the existing crossover in front of 1-8 Long Lane and the reinstatement of the footway extension to the loading and unloading restrictions and cycle lane segregation along Long Lane.

Members were informed that the site, by reason of its location, design and position of the pocket park had a great potential for the display of high-quality public art. Members were shown examples of the public art that were proposed by the applicant e.g. a 2D glass panel or metal sculpture. The Officer stated that artistic metal work was also proposed to be installed on the entrance gate of the servicing yard.

The Officer showed some indicative floorplans of the ground floor, basement, first to eighth floor and the roof plan with the plant enclosures. Members were also shown cross sections of the south, north, east and west elevations and the existing and proposed street elevation. The overall height of the proposed building would be comparable to what was previously approved.

The Officer stated that in the view of the proposed building from Long Lane towards the northwest, the massing and height of the building would successfully mediate the changes in scale with its local context, and it would significantly enhance the wider street block. The high architectural design materials detailing and varied tones of colour and curved forms would introduce a well-considered refined development of higher architectural merit. At ground floor, active frontages would be provided along the south elevation of the proposal which would run around the east of the building.

The Officer stated that although the proposal had the highest whole life carbon emissions, the redevelopment option would have more efficient floor to floor heights, optimised structural grade and improved core layout, which would provide greater spatial and operational efficiency. It would provide a significant uplift in greening and biodiversity, support active travel and greater climate resilience, including by reduced risk of overheating and flood risk. The development would be fully electric with air source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels and it would achieve a BREAMM rating of excellent.

The Officer stated that an extensive daylight and sunlight assessment was carried out and was outlined in the report and updated in the addendum. Members were shown an image of the properties that would be mainly affected. These were 41 to 43 Charterhouse Square. The impact on these windows was greater due to the existing fire escapes and staircases and the depth of the rooms. Taking into account these factors, it was conceded that the retained

level of light was commensurate to those experienced in the dense urban environment.

Members were shown townscape views which illustrated that the development would sit comfortably within the massing and mix of architectural style of the buildings in the vicinity. Members were shown the existing and proposed view from Hayne Street. They were also shown the existing and proposed view from Long Lane. Members were informed the building would be comparable to the height of the Kaleidoscope building. Members were shown proposed and existing views from Cloth Street from the corner with Aldersgate, from the Barbican podium and Charterhouse Square. The Officer stated that from here, the building would be highly obscured by the existing buildings and the trees. Members were also shown the proposed and existing view from the northeast corner. The Officer stated that overall, it was considered that the proposal would preserve the significance of the heritage assets and it would enhance the setting of Smithfield Conservation Area.

To conclude, the Officer stated that it was considered the proposed hotel would contribute to the balance in a mix of uses in the area without compromising the primary business function of the City. The proposal would successfully mediate the changes in scale and its local townscape and architecturally would provide a high-quality hotel development. Together with the proposed retail uses, the hotel would provide an active frontage in an area which currently lacked animation and provide improved public realm and urban greening contributing to the Destination City objectives.

The Officer stated the proposal would assist in rejuvenating the north of the City enhancing the distinctive and mixed character of Smithfield area. The site was located between the future Museum of London and the Barbican, and it was therefore considered to be a nodal point to assist in providing visitor accommodation and also a meaningful cultural offer. Members were informed that the development would be acceptable in principle in terms of its transport, residential amenity, sustainability, townscape design and environmental impacts, and it would provide public benefits for those reasons. Officers recommended approval of the application.

The Town Clerk stated that there were two speakers registered to object to the application. Mr Peter Golob who was registered to speak, stated that it had been agreed that he would also speak for the other objector, Mr Richard Vitola-Jones. Mr Vitola-Jones confirmed this. The Chairman invited Mr Golob to speak.

Mr Golob stated that he was representing Charterhouse Square, Hayne Street and the Barbican Association objectors to the development. In relation to daylight and sunlight, Mr Golob stated that deprivation was the main issue. He raised concern about errors in the data. He stated that the developers had not been aware that the southside of Charterhouse was a school until objectors had informed them. Mr Golob stated that the remit of the independent assessment was restricted and assumed the technical calculations were accurate. He stated that in terms of local context, the modelling of cumulative

impact had been accepted by the Planning Officers. He stated that the description of balconies in the BRE guidelines differed substantially from that of the existing balconies, which were actually fire escapes and stated that in relation to the daylight and sunlight survey, the modelling of cumulative impact was inaccurate. Mr Golob stated this was not a solid overhanging structure, as dealt with in the BRE guidelines, but were the supports for a fire escape. He therefore questioned whether the calculations were accurate and stated that there had been no corroboration with residents which could have led to mistaken conclusions in the report. He stated that the applicants, in their submission noted that they had had access to many of the affected properties. Mr Golob proposed that a new, fully independent report be commissioned to look into the effect of daylight and sunlight deprivation from the perspective of the residents and the affected buildings, and that residents would cooperate. The base data could then be looked at and it could be seen if adjustments had been made according to BRE guidelines. Mr Golob stated the calculations would then either be corroborated or if there were errors in the base data or base calculations, the problem would be solved and the Sub-Committee would have fulfilled its duty to scrutinise the plans.

Mr Golob questioned whether the overhanging balconies caused the loss of daylight and sunlight or whether it was the superimposed effect of the new development causing daylight and sunlight deprivation. He stated it was unclear as the base data had not been examined.

Mr Golob stated the objectors disagreed with the report which stated that the proposed scheme was similar to the consented scheme in terms of height, mass and cumulative impact. He showed slides outlining the impact of increased massing and stated that from Charterhouse Square, the real impact could be seen when there were no leaves on the trees. He stated that increasing the height and mass to the upper levels, decreased the amount of daylight and sunlight and stated that this should be investigated further. He stated that the significant conditions attached to the consented scheme had reassured residents.

Members were informed that in 2021, Officers referred to local plan policies DM15.7 and DM 21.3 to restrict the use of terraces stating that there should be no use of terraces between 9pm and 8am on weekdays, and no use on weekends or bank holidays. He commented that the Officer report stated it would be unreasonable and unnecessary to impose any condition on some of the terraces. Mr Golob raised concern that there had been a move from being protecting against overlooking and noise to having no conditions on these.

Mr Golob raised concern about traffic and construction. He stated that Long Lane was a narrow street and there was a cycle path in front of the hotel. He stated that Officers had agreed there were no dropping off points and therefore had proposed that unidentified nearby locations should be used. He suggested there could be abuse of the policy and this was unworkable.

Mr Golob requested conditions controlling pollution and noise during construction to safeguard the well-being of the neighbouring residents and the

Charterhouse School. He stated that many residents had made representations to the Barbican Association concerning 150 Aldersgate and work on Saturdays and stated that noise levels had exceeded those permitted in the views of many of those residents. Mr Golob requested a condition that there should be no work on weekends, including Saturdays.

The Chairman asked if Members of the Sub-Committee had any questions of the objectors.

A Member asked if Mr Golob had objected to the last consented scheme. The objector stated he did not object as he was not a resident of the City of London at the time and therefore was not consulted.

A Member asked about consultation by the applicants with the local community and neighbouring properties. Mr Golob stated that there was usually low participation in consultations but 17 residents of the south side of Charterhouse Square participated as well as a resident from Hayne Street whose property was affected by the proposal.

The Chairman invited the applicant to speak.

Mr Adam Jones from EPR Architects stated that he was representing the applicant and client, McTaggart Family and Partners and was speaking in support of this application. He stated this was an exciting opportunity to develop a new hotel on the site of 1-8 Long Lane in Farringdon, bringing a new use to the site that would support the objectives of local businesses and initiatives such as Destination City and provide much needed hotel space.

Members were informed that the proposal would increase public realm in an area that was experiencing increased demand. The brand was called The Resident and as the name suggested, was a hotel centred around the guest enabling them to use it as a base from which to explore the location around them. He added the hotel would be a home from home.

Mr Jones stated the site was incredibly well located next to existing transport links, including the Barbican Underground and Farringdon Elizabeth Line stations, and was within a short distance of several key cultural institutions, which made it the ideal location for this type of hotel. Members were informed that the two existing buildings on the site, built in the 1960s and 1970s, were of very poor quality, they failed to meet modern EPC requirements and were not able to provide the type of modern office space required for their long-term success. Mr Jones stated that the objective of the design team, was to create a highly sustainable hotel building with carbon efficiency and the principles of responsible environmental design. At its heart, all design decisions had been made with these principles in mind. Sustainable drainage solutions had been proposed, opportunities had been explored to recycle elements of the existing buildings and the proposal had been designed with adaptability in mind. A whole life carbon assessment had been undertaken, as well as studies to review opportunities to retain the existing structures which had been third-party reviewed in line with the City of London Corporation's guidance.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the proposed scheme comprised 128 guest rooms over nine storeys, with separate retail on the ground floor, which would activate the street frontage onto Long Lane with opening windows and awnings.

Mr Jones stated that to the eastern end of the site a new pocket garden was proposed which would transform a currently unattractive paved area into one that was rich with planting beds and trees, offering a space for everyone to enjoy and providing significantly improved biodiversity. Mr Jones added that the building had been carefully designed based on analysis of the local built context and architectural vernacular and developed in dialogue with design Officers to create a building which was highly contextual and born from a collaborative approach.

Members were informed the facade design minimised solar gain, maximised thermal performance and had been designed with disassembly in mind. The proposals had considered an appropriate height that could not only accommodate the hotel but also took into consideration neighbours and the 2021 consented scheme. At the stepped back upper levels, the proposed footprint had extended beyond this massing to provide adequate space for the guest rooms and vertical circulation arrangements to comply with London Plan requirements.

The Sub-Committee was shown images of proposals for cultural offerings and public art opportunities within the site and on the building. These proposals would be developed with local artists and stakeholders.

In summary, Mr Jones stated that the scheme proposed a new, sustainable, high-quality hotel with active ground floor uses in an appropriate location on an otherwise underutilised site. The scheme would support and provide new cultural initiatives, improve biodiversity, provide aesthetic improvements to Long Lane and the conservation area, and create a new beautiful public garden for all to enjoy.

As such, and for the reasons set out in the committee report, the applicants endorsed the recommendation that planning permission be granted.

The Chairman asked Members if they had any questions of the applicants. He asked the applicant to explain more about the carbon optioneering and why retrofit was not suitable for the site. Mr Jones stated there were two existing buildings on the site. Opportunities had been explored to try and retain some or all of the existing structures on the site. However, the buildings were coming to the end of their natural lives. Consideration was given to adapting the structures to utilise them as part of the hotel. The option to retain both buildings was ruled out for the primary reason that the two buildings, because they were built at different times, had different floor levels. Making the building work holistically as one operation would be incredibly difficult and would probably have resulted in compromised accessibility for disabled users. Then, the opportunity to just retain one of the buildings was considered.

However the floor to floor heights were very low and not suitable for adaptation into a hotel considering all of the structural reinforcement that would need to be



done to the existing structures to make them fit for a 21st century hotel operation. The conclusion was that the difference between the carbon figures was minor between the partial retention option, and the retention of as much of the basement substructure as possible, as there was a significant amount of embodied carbon in that element of the of the existing buildings. As a result, when the holistic benefits that the new super structure would bring in terms of flexibility and adaptability and the future of being able to comply with new current building regulations, particularly around accessibility and energy use were considered, it became clear to the applicant that the new superstructure proposal was the right one.

The Chairman asked what consultation had taken place with local stakeholders and asked the applicant to address some of the light impact concerns raised by the objector. Mr Jones stated that two public consultations were held in the autumn of last year, which were well attended, and overall the majority of responders supported hotel use. Mr Jones stated that in addition, he and members of the design team and the client team met with various local stakeholders and local interest groups as part of that consultation.

Mr Andrew Cartmell the daylight sunlight consultant from Point 2, stated that with regards to the school, in the original report, not all of the windows were assessed as it was not known that they were technically connected with the school. Once made aware that there were further windows connected with the school, they were assessed. Mr Cartmell stated there was not a need to assess them because those windows served circulation space at the school, but were assessed in any case. They all continued to meet the BRE guidance because they were off to the side of the proposed development, so there was no further impact there.

In terms of whether something was a balcony or a fire escape, Mr Cartmell stated this was to some extent irrelevant when looking at the principles set out in the BRE guidance. They both blocked natural daylight and they had therefore been assessed and considered in the calculations. In the second set of assessments, they had been taken off as that was the principle following the BRE guidance. The original application was reviewed by the BRE guidance and they agreed with the methodology used. The current application's report had been reviewed by another independent daylight and sunlight surveyor, who had not raised concerns over the methodology used when assessing the impact of the fire escapes.

Mr Cartmell stated that one of the photographs showed the fire escapes were grills with small perforations. He added that in the modelling, they had been assessed as solid which overestimated the percentage reduction and understated the retained levels of daylight. Effectively the worst case scenario was presented.

In response to the objector's concern that the base data could be inaccurate, Mr Cartmell stated that the computer 3D modelling that had been produced and from which the calculations were based, was produced with accurate survey

information using a 3D laser scanner which picked up the position of the buildings and the windows to within one or two millimetres.

In response to a Member's question about the terraces and who would have access to them, Mr Cartmell stated that the proposed built form stepped back at Levels 7 and 8. From street level on Long Lane, Levels 7 and 8 would not be seen. The building being stepped back allowed opportunities to create guest terraces which would have a significant amount of greening which helped improve biodiversity and meet the urban greening factors set by the City. The terraces would be available for use by guests only. It was in the hotel's operational interest to be a quiet neighbour so the terraces were designed for quiet private use by those in guest rooms.

A Member asked the applicant to outline the meaningful engagement which would take place in relation to the cultural offer. Mr Jones stated that The Resident Hotel was designed to be a base from which guests could explore the City. It did not have its own destination, restaurant or bar in that sense and was about partnering with local stakeholders and community initiatives so that the guests could explore them. It would be within the operator's remit to engage with as many of those stakeholders as possible and to get information across to guests about places they could visit in the vicinity and there would be an ongoing process of engagement through the life of the hotel.

A Member asked if, whether in relation to whole life carbon, the assessment and discounting of the refurbishment and retention options took place before or after office use was discounted. Mr Jones stated that an office viability assessment was carried out on the existing buildings as well as for the massing of the proposed development. The optioneering was for hotel use only.

A Member asked for clarification on numbers of people expected to arrive by different modes of transport. Mr Daniel Birkin, from Caneparo, the applicant's transport consultant, stated the anticipated modes of travel were based on that of other similar hotels. It was anticipated that the majority of all activity would be arriving by public transport, a small amount by active travel and a similarly small amount by taxis arriving which showed an active and sustainable travel focus to arrive at the hotel. There was no on-site parking for any guests or visitors or staff, and the expectation would be that unless there was the arrival of a disabled person, there would be no private car activity at the hotel.

In response to a Member's question as to how the valet parking would work for blue badge holders, the Member was informed that the applicant was willing to purchase a private car parking opportunity locally and the intention would be that any disabled guest arriving by car would arrive and would make use of several on-street disabled bays with the hotel providing a valet offering where appropriate. He stated that there would be limitations e.g. if the car was adapted as staff would not be able to move it. Members were informed the closest disabled parking bay was on Cloth Street within 50m of the hotel.

A Member commented that rainwater harvesting was proposed and asked if there had been any consideration made for grey water. Ms Emma Jolly, energy

consultant, stated that a large space provision was required within the rooms and en-suites. Rainwater harvesting would be undertaken as a minimum.

A Member asked if the scheme had been amended following consultation with the residents and if so, how. Mr Jones stated that two half day consultation events had taken place. Responses had been collated from the local community and local residents. Following consultation, the planned drop-off outside the front of the hotel was removed. There was also a change to the proposal to extend the cycle lane and reinforce it as a direct response to some of the feedback received.

The Member asked the applicant to outline the uplift to the scheme compared with the consented scheme and whether the applicant considered the public benefits balanced the uplift in terms of the size of the building compared with the existing building. Mr Jones stated that bringing the hotel to the site was a significant advantage in an area of the City with increasing demand for hotels. Providing 128 guest rooms within this massing gave a significant boost. The space for the retail unit was to be determined in the future so that it could be tailored to the requirements of the local community, i.e. whether it be a retail offering or food and beverage offering.

The Member also asked if guests could drink alcohol on the terraces. Mr Jones stated that the guests would have the opportunity to drink alcohol on the terraces but parties would not be taking place on terraces. They were just for private use by the guests of the hotel.

The Member commented that Barbican was the nearest station but was not step-free and asked the applicant if the scheme should be addressing this as a public benefit, given the uplift. Mr Birkin stated that in the transport assessment there was a full trip assessment study comparing the existing office buildings with the proposed hotel use and during peak hours there was a significant reduction in anticipated public transport trips. There would therefore be a reduction based on the peak flow on the network during those periods. Mr Birkin stated that the Elizabeth Line provided lift access down to the westbound platform at Barbican Station. He added that there were limitations on what could be achieved from the hotel site and a complete redevelopment of Barbican Station would be needed to provide lift access to each platform.

A Member asked if the unisex accessible toilet provided at ground floor in close proximity to the hotel reception was intended to be a publicly available toilet, and raised concern that the pocket garden would become a public urinal.

Mr Jones stated that the retail unit on the ground floor would have an accessible toilet as part of its provision and the retail unit would have access to the pocket garden. He stated that the toilet would be accessible to the public insofar as it would be accessible through the retail unit, but that would be managed and operated by the retail unit for people using that facility. Mr Jones stated that the secluded space at the back would be overlooked by the retail unit, which would discourage loitering. A Member raised concern that the retail

unit would not be open late at night when the secluded space was more likely to be used as a public urinal.

A Member stated that the toilet would be available to the general public at all times of the operation of the unit. He stated the importance of signage and stated that lighting, particularly in the evening and during the night, would act as a deterrent to some of the antisocial activities that might occur. The applicant stated that there was a landscape design and lighting scheme for the pocket garden.

A Member commented that microclimate had been considered in the report. He raised concern that there were times along Long Lane when the wind created an issue. He questioned whether increasing the height of the building could exacerbate this. Ms Angela Crowder, from the applicant's sustainability and environmental team stated that a detailed wind analysis had been undertaken, comparing the present condition to the proposed, making sure that there were not worsening effects. It had been demonstrated there would be no worsening and therefore no mitigation was required.

A Member asked about retrofit and whether the proposal was maximising return on investment rather than being concerned about climate change. He asked whether under retrofit, a boutique hotel could be provided on the site. Mr Jones stated that in order to create a more boutique experience for a hotel on this site, average daily room rates would need to be significantly higher than would be projected for a hotel in this area to make the scheme viable. The number of guest rooms per square metre was considered for viability and for the two retention options, it was evident that the necessary room rates would not be achieved.

The Member also stated that now, when rebuilding took place, the buildings were expected to last for centuries rather than decades. He asked if that was the plan, why the BREEAM rating of excellent rather than outstanding was being targeted. Ms Crowder stated that the proposed use as a hotel, which had certain needs in terms of functionality e.g. water use, made it very difficult to achieve a BREEAM outstanding rating. The excellent aspiration pushed the boundaries of hotel design and included requirements on minimising water use and balancing other aspects in terms of minimising operational energy use. Excellent was seen as an aspirational target to achieve.

A Member asked if the toilet in the lobby could be made accessible to be used by the public when the retail unit was closed. Mr Jones stated there would be two accessible toilets on the ground floor, one of which related to the hotel which would be accessed off the lobby and reception on the ground floor that would be for use by the guests and patrons of the hotel. As part of the fit-out of the development, particularly if it was a food and beverage use, the retail unit on the ground floor would then be required under the building regulations to have a fully accessible toilet. The management of that would be controlled by that operation. Barnaby Collins, DP9 stated that it was not the intention to have that public toilet available outside the operational hours of the retail unit,

because independently operated public toilets tended to be abused and or not operating properly, particularly during the night. A Member commented that there was a urilift toilet close by which came up out of the ground at night and went back down in the early morning and there were plans to increase the number of those. A Member commented that they were only for men and whilst there was an option to have urilifts for women too, they were not accessible.

A Member queried the percentage figures for various modes of transport for guest arrival. The applicant stated that surveys throughout the day of an operating hotel had been used. The figures included people arriving at the start of their stay, and also the movements of those already staying at the hotel.

The Chairman suggested that the Sub-Committee now move to any questions that they might have of Officers at this stage.

The Chairman asked Officers to explain the specific demand that had been modelled for hotel use in the area and more widely in the square mile. An Officer stated that last year a study by consultants had been commissioned to look at demand for hotel rooms in the square mile. That study showed a need for about 350 additional hotel bedrooms every year, over the next five years. This reflected the Destination City initiative. This area was identified as being potentially suitable for hotel accommodation. Although the new City Plan did not specify locations for hotel accommodation, the area was very well connected by public transport and there would be a substantial number of visitors coming to the area in terms of Smithfield, the new Museum of London and to existing attractions such as the Barbican so there was strong demand for hotels within the City and a need to provide spaces to meet that demand.

A Member asked if there would be specific guidance given as to locations where pick-ups and drop-offs could safely be carried out or whether it was assumed that drivers would locate them themselves on arrival. An Officer stated that drivers were expected to pick-up and drop-off where it was safe to do so.

A Member asked Officers to comment on the objector's concern about the methodology used for the daylight and sunlight assessment. An Officer stated that the BRE allowed for assessors to consider alternative targets considering their urban environment in an area. The daylight and sunlight assessment was third-party reviewed and the reviewer did not raise an objection to the methodology used.

A Member asked if the hours of the terraces could be restricted. An Officer stated that the terraces were on the seventh and eighth floors and the rooftop was not accessible to the public. There would be two terraces in total that would be accessible by guests. The rest of the terraces were balconies to individual rooms. There was a condition for the terraces that were accessible to any guest, to be restricted in terms of hours of use between 9pm and 7am. The rest of the terraces were only accessible from individual rooms and were not dissimilar to any other residential balconies, so Officers did not consider that they would meet the tests for imposing a condition.

A Member asked if the pocket garden was included in the consented scheme. An Officer stated that the previous scheme included the landscaping of that same area, but it was smaller and it was largely hard paving, with not much soft landscaping. The current proposal included some seating and there were further public benefits which included public art, to that eastern elevation and that would be secured within the Section 106 public art strategy. A further benefit would be providing offers for reduced rates for those within creative industry which would be secured within a culture plan as part of the Section 106.

In response to a Member's question about signage so the public would know they could access the publicly accessible toilet in the retail unit without having to make a purchase, the Officer stated that there was a condition which required signs to be provided. To ensure this signage was visible, Officers would request the details so that these could be approved in writing by Officers.

In response to a question about the detail of the cycle lane demarcation and wands, an Officer stated that this would be developed as part of the Section 278 which would follow.

In response to a Member's question about construction noise and disturbance to residents and whether work could be suspended at weekends, an Officer stated that Officer staffing levels had increased meaning the team could be more proactive and make more visits to try and ensure disruption was minimised. He added that construction methodologies had improved which helped to reduce disruption. He stated that the City was dense and there were many transport and logistic issues. There was a balance to reach in trying to complete the works with the disruption ending sooner or extending he works to reduce working hours.

*At 12pm, the Chairman stated the meeting would be paused for 20 minutes. The meeting resumed at 12.20pm.*

A Member asked for clarification on the embodied carbon figures in the report. The Officer stated the embodied carbon accounted for the replacement and maintenance cycles related to the building.

A Member commented on the statement that air quality was neutral and asked if there would be an air quality impact from construction. An Officer stated that the air quality neutral assessment related to operation and did not cover the air quality impacts of construction.

A Member asked for clarification on whether the number of employees included those working in the retail units. The Officer confirmed that the figure of 50 employees did not include those working in the retail units.

In response to a Member's question about the calculations for cycle parking provision, the Officer stated this was based on floor space, rather than the number of employees.

A Member asked if the servicing hours could be restricted i.e. not between 10pm and 7am and not in peak hours. An Officer stated the servicing hours were usually limited to 7am-11pm and the servicing would be from the servicing bay. An Officer stated that Condition 43 required the details for the servicing management plan to be submitted and approved in writing, and also stated that the number of servicing vehicles per day would reduce from seven to five.

A Member asked about guests being dropped-off. An Officer stated that there would not be a dedicated drop-off space and there were limitations due to the location of the site. She stated there was space available in front of Numbers 9-12 where people could be dropped-off and picked-up subject to it being safe to do so. There were no loading or unloading restrictions and no segregated cycling there.

In response to a question, an Officer stated that there were no Sheffield stands.

*At this point, the Chairman sought approval from the Sub-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.*

Seeing no further questions, the Chairman asked that Members now move to debate the application.

A Member raised concern in relation to the number of elements to be conditioned, the drop-off arrangements, and how people would be arriving at the hotel. She raised concern that the number of tube users was unrealistic considering that most people would be travelling with luggage and stated that more people would use taxis. She also expressed concerns about servicing conditions not being followed at other hotels and stated this was difficult to enforce unless an Officer was present at the time of a breach. She stated that servicing should be off-peak to avoid congestion and regarding drop-offs, she stated that cycle safety was paramount. She commented that these issues should be considered to mitigate against them. The Member suggested that the applicant should put money towards an accessibility study at Barbican tube station or going towards fund accessibility improvements along with other developments. The Member raised concern about what would happen if surveys showed the plans for the pocket garden design were not possible and the public benefit was therefore reduced. She stated concrete public benefits should be included, rather than left to condition.

A Member raised concern about the terraces. She stated that the terraces would need to be licensed if alcohol was to be sold and consumed on the two large terraces and welcomed the terraces being closed from 9pm to 7am. She raised concern that the balconies would be used by people drinking in the evening and stated this should be part of the hotel's plan for the management of potential noise.

A Member welcomed the decision by the applicant not to put a restaurant in the hotel as this would help the food and beverage industry in the area.

A Member commented that significant applications were very complex and he did not consider it to be an issue that some elements were left to condition. He stated the Sub-Committee had to accept a level of ambiguity.

A Member stated that, due to the lack of detail, other local authorities would classify this as an outline planning application, rather than a full application. She stated a hotel use was the right use for the site but it was unfortunate that in terms of height, it exceeded what had been previously consented. She welcomed the number of accessible guest rooms. She also raised concern that the hotel would not use grey water, and raised concern about the impact of drop-offs on cyclists, concern that the hotel was too big and stated that some of the ground floor could be sacrificed to provide a drop-off space.

A Member raised concern about the height and massing, daylight and sunlight, sustainability and cycle safety impact as well as the grey water issue and the intensity of hotels which displaced office provision.

The Chairman stated that it was well recognised that the City of London Corporation had some of the top Planning Officers in the country and he was very confident they would manage the conditions and the business plan and take into consideration the issues raised around signage for public toilets and the terraces and the balconies. He stated that nearby amenities would benefit from having a hotel without its own bar and restaurant and this mitigated the potential for parties on terraces. He also stated that the pocket garden was an excellent public amenity and would enhance the area.

Having debated the application, the Sub-Committee proceeded to vote on the recommendations before them.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 11 votes  
OPPOSED – 5 votes  
There were no abstentions.

The recommendations were therefore carried.

*[Anthony Fitzpatrick, Deputy Edward Lord, Antony Manchester, Deputy Henry Pollard were not present for the whole item and did not vote.]*

## **RESOLVED -**

1. That, subject to the execution of a planning obligation or obligations in respect of the matters set out under the heading 'Planning Obligations' the Planning and Development Director be authorised to issue a decision notice granting planning permission for the above proposal in accordance with the details set out in the attached schedule as amended by the addendum; and
2. That Officers be instructed to negotiate and execute obligations in respect of those matters set out in "Planning Obligations" under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and any necessary



agreements under Sections 278 and 38 of the Highway Act 1980 in respect of those matters set out in the report.

5. **38 - 41 FURNIVAL STREET LONDON EC4A 1JQ (CITY SITE) & 31 - 33 HIGH HOLBORN WC1V 6AX (CAMDEN SITE)**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Planning and Development Director concerning the change of use of existing deep level tunnels (Sui Generis) to visitor and cultural attraction (Use Class F1(b)(c)), including bar (Sui Generis); demolition and reconstruction of existing building at 38-39 Furnival Street; redevelopment of 40-41 Furnival Street, for the principal visitor attraction pedestrian entrance at ground floor, with ancillary retail at first and second floor levels and ancillary offices at third and fourth levels, excavation of additional basement levels at 40-41 Furnival Street and 38-39 Furnival Street, and widening of lift shaft at 38-39 Furnival Street; creation of new pedestrian entrance at 31-33 High Holborn, to provide secondary visitor attraction entrance (including principal bar entrance), deepening of lift shaft at 31-33 High Holborn; provision of ancillary cycle parking, substation, servicing and plant, and other associated works. (Duplicate application submitted to the London Borough of Camden as the site area extends across the borough boundary).

The Town Clerk referred to those papers set out within the main agenda pack as well as the Officer presentation slides and an addendum that had been separately circulated and published.

Officers presented the application, stating that this was an application for the change of use of the existing tunnels, formerly known as the Kingsway tunnels, to a visitor and cultural attraction. Kingsway tunnels were located approximately 32 metres below ground, underneath the Central line. They ran beneath High Holborn and extended beyond the City of London's northwest boundary over to the London Borough of Camden. The tunnel network offered approximately 8,000 square metres of subterranean floor space and included two tunnels of 5.1m diameter known as the North and South Streets which ran beneath High Holborn, and four large tunnels of 7.2 metre diameter to the south, known as the avenues.

Members were shown a diagram which highlighted the portion of the tunnels that fell outside the City's boundary line and was within Camden and the portion which fell within the City's boundary and represented 65% of the overall tunnel network.

The Officer advised that a duplicate application had been submitted to Camden Council which would be considered by their Planning Applications Committee on the 11 July 2024. Officers had been in discussion with Camden Officers to ensure coordination of all planning matters in line with both local planning authority requirements. The planning application was assessed independently by each local planning authority, with each being entitled to reach its own decision on the application.

Members were informed that the streets were built during the Second World War as shelters. However, they were never used as intended. Instead, they

were converted to reserve government headquarters. Once the General Post Office took their possession in the early 1950s, the avenues were constructed. Subsequently, the tunnels became a telephone exchange and by 1990 their function came to an end. BT currently managed and maintained the infrastructure.

The Officer stated that today, there were only two remaining soft access points to the tunnels, one located at 31-33 High Holborn, in Camden and accessed by 1 Fulwood Place and one at 38-39 Furnival Street, located within the northwest side of the of the City. Members were shown an image of the above ground works including the existing access points in the City and Camden, and the building at 40-411 Furnival Street, which was adjoining to 38-39.

The Officer stated that the site in the City sat within the Chancery Lane Conservation Area. The Kingsway tunnels had been identified as a non-designated heritage asset due to its history and rarity.

Members were shown an image of the relationship between the bulk ground structures and the tunnels. Members were shown an image of the late 1990s, 6 storey office building with a basement level. Its architecture and setting were not considered to be a positive contributor to the conservation area. Members were shown an image of the building which formed part of Kingsway tunnels. It housed a round shaft which was built for a goods lift to serve the east side of the tunnels historically and was currently not in operation.

Members were shown views of the site facing south towards Furnival Street and north towards Holborn. For completeness, but not for consideration by the Sub-Committee, Members were shown an image of the site in Camden which was currently the only access point to the tunnels.

In order to enable the creation of a principal entrance and ancillary spaces to the proposed large underground cultural exhibition space, the existing buildings at Furnival Street would be demolished and reconstructed. The reason for demolition arose from the requirement to enlarge the existing shaft and provide escape routes and from the demand for plant space that needed to be accommodated in the basement levels. The loss of office space at 40-41 Furnival Street was considered to be acceptable in policy terms.

Members were informed that in line with City's guidelines, an optioneering study had been undertaken. It assessed the options of retention, the extension requirements for ventilation and cooling equipment in order to bring high number of visitors to the tunnels as well as the need to meet the fire safety requirements for the site. The conclusion was the new build option.

The Officer stated that at ground level, the building line was set back in alignment with the neighbouring building to activate the principal site entrance facing north towards Holborn. Members were shown how the building layouts had been combined to provide sufficient space for the main entrance of the proposed cultural use with the necessary facilities provided at ground level.

Members were shown a diagram of the visitor entrance sequence. The arrival experience had evolved to consider the need to ensure security alongside the constant flow of people to ensure there was no queueing on the street. Members were shown the arrival route down into the tunnels and the exit route by the gift shop as well as the fire escape routes. Toilets were provided across the site and a changing place toilet was provisioned within Camden.

Members were shown a CGI of the main entrance which visualised the presence of the site on the street.

Three basement levels would be provided with ancillary space for the operation of the site e.g. refuse storage areas. A gift shop would be provided at first floor level with a mezzanine level right above. These areas would be accessible to all visitors at the end of their experience.

The third floor would be the plant room and would only be accessible by staff. The fourth level would be staff accommodation, provide end of trip facilities and a roof terrace for the use of staff only. Conditions had been secured for the hours of operation of the roof terrace. Green roofs would also be provided.

The Sub-Committee was shown the main elevation of the site. The proposed massing and height of the new structures would largely recreate the existing building proportions, whilst maintaining the urban grain of the east side of Furnival Street.

The brick façade of 38-39 Furnival Street would be reinstated and would include the existing concrete ventilation panel. The original metal work, which had been lost, would be replicated and reinstated on the building with a methodology conditioned. The proposed buildings would be recessed.

Members were shown a map showing the residential premises to the west and south of the site.

Members were informed that loading would occur on Holborn between 8pm and 10pm. This location had changed over the course of the application and had been moved away from residential properties. Conditions had been recommended to restrict the hours of servicing.

Improvements to the public realm would be secured under the legal agreement. The plan showed the maximum extent of the Section 278 works, which aligned with the Healthy Streets Plan for this location and this was subject to further consultation.

A daylight sunlight assessment had been undertaken as part of this application. Overall, the impact on neighbouring properties was considered to be acceptable due to the high level of BRE guideline compliance.

Members were informed that in relation to vertical movements, there would be double decker, twin lifts, with maximum capacity of 60 people. These would provide access to the tunnels and the gift shop at the upper levels. In the case

of an emergency evacuation, firefighting lifts and evacuation stairs would be available at both ends, with fire protected lobbies at the entry points and the secondary entrance in Camden would act as an emergency escape. This arrangement had been reviewed by building control and considered to be acceptable in compliance with the relevant policies. Accessible evacuation routes had been designed at both exit points in the City and in Camden.

In terms of sustainability, the proposed development employed a highly efficient and full electric HVAC system, heat pumps, cooling towers and water-cooled chillers with heat recovery, which helped reduce carbon emissions. Greening would be provided wherever possible at roof levels. The application secured a carbon offset contribution alongside an obligation to explore possible options for beneficial rejection of waste heat.

Members were informed that it was proposed to provide a cultural exhibition space in the majority of the tunnels. This area would be accessed from the proposed buildings in Funnival Street, and fell within both local authorities, with the majority being within the City. Members were shown images of the space and the pre-existing bar known to be the deepest bar in London would be recreated at the very west side of the tunnels. The entirety of the bar floor space fell within Camden. Access and exit to the bar would be from Camden only. Members were informed that 71% of the total proposed area would sit within the City.

In terms of capacity, the exhibition areas had been designed to accommodate up to 750 people per hour, and the capacity for the bar would be 160. These figures were capped to ensure the site was safe.

The cultural use visitors would enter and exit from the City, whilst programmed school visits would enter and exit from Camden to allow for separate, safer and more efficient school tours. Members were advised that school visits would occur at least twice a week.

Members were shown images of the cultural exhibition space area which would be divided into areas of permanent and temporary nature. The permanent exhibition space would take place in the streets and Members were shown a diagram showing the circulation route. This area would make references to the historic timeline of the tunnels. A dedicated medium term exhibition would revolve around the character of James Bond deriving from the author's references to the tunnels in his books. It was intended to incorporate key elements of the heritage infrastructure within the exhibition space and Members were shown images of the equipment. It was intended that historic narratives would be brought to life through immersive use of large-scale audio-visual and digital interactivities to make the experience unique and stimulate interest.

In the three avenues it was proposed to create a temporary cultural exhibition space. Members were shown CGI images of the proposed immersive space for cultural exhibitions around art, science and nature. Opportunities for co-creation on the content of this area would be provided through partnership programmes. Up to 12 special events were expected to take place in the avenues over the

year. Members were shown images of examples of these. Members were informed that Officers had secured by obligation, a public access and events management plan. The head of exhibition space would curate the history of the site in a most interesting and interactive way.

The Officer stated that the development would secure free school visits and discounted entrance tickets to certain groups of people and create opportunities to engage with local communities on the cultural content.

Inclusive procurement exploration for waste heat transfer Section 278 works and improvements to the public cycle infrastructure were also secured by this development.

In conclusion, the Officer stated that the proposal would include the provision for permanent and temporary cultural exhibition spaces to bring a new dynamic to the City and facilitate a 7-day and evening City, increasing footfall in this area and helping to revitalise the local economy. The proposal would assist in achieving the City's aspirations for Destination City that focused on enhancing the leisure and culture offer and cultural enrichment in the square mile and to increase its appeal to different audiences. Officers therefore recommended that the application be approved, subject to conditions and obligations as stated in the report.

The Clerk stated that there were no speakers registered to object to the application.

The Chairman then invited the applicant to speak.

Mr Angus Murray stated he was the CEO and major shareholder of this project which was conceived four years ago. His background was in finance around Macquarie Bank in the United States, as a regulated fund manager.

Mr Murray informed Members the tunnels could be seen in the model in the committee room. He stated that the four avenues were each about 78-80 metres long. The majority of the project already existed, and was built by the British to defend Europe during the Second World War but it was not used for that purpose. There were seven other tunnels which were not as large. The project was the restoration of an existing asset and saving the asset was part of the inspiration four years ago. The project would bring the story alive which would add to London, and also the City of London.

Mr Murray stated the project fitted in with the City Plan and the Destination City programme. He stated the tunnels would tell the story of the London Blitz and the 43,000 British people, who died during that period of time. He added it also then had the Special Operations Executive and there would need to be a partnership with an official museum to bring that content alive and tell the story of the 13,000 people, 3000 women who fought through that time.

Mr Murray stated that Ian Fleming had been inspired to describe the tunnel as Q branch in James Bond. He commented that the tunnels were used as the reserve war room to the cabinet war rooms and then as a telecommunications

exchange after the war. After the war, they were expanded to the current size. There were enough construction shafts from the surface to the tunnels to ensure people could access and leave the site safely which was critical.

Mr Murray stated the tunnels would potentially add up to two million people into the City of London and Camden each year. It had been calculated that there were 60 to 80 million people annually into the Fleet Street retail area and also into Cheapside depending on the pathway that people walked. Three tunnels, 80 metres long each, would create a cultural experience within, that should have the backing of British artists.

The global media showed the tunnels would attract people and be a benefit to London as a whole and the City of London. Media coverage included CNN TV and the New York Times.

Mr Murray stated he was aware of the need to respect neighbours and minimise noise. He was also aware that this site was 30 metres below the ground, so it had a different set of safety measures. He added that the City had lots of tunnels, subways and tube stations so there were lots of qualified people to make the tunnels as safe as possible.

Mr Murray stated that the story being told was in part about military history. It had to be accessible for people of all ages and all abilities.

The Chairman asked Members if they had any questions of the applicants.

A Member asked how people would be evacuated if there was a power cut. Mr Michael Trousdell, WSP stated the building services had been designed to have two independent power supplies to provide a level of resilience into the scheme. In addition, there was the provision for generator backup for just for life safety systems, so that the steer pressurisation system, emergency lighting and equipment required to evacuate safely could be maintained in the very rare event of both power supplies failing.

A Member asked how the figure of two million visitors per year had been calculated. The applicant stated that this number was based upon the available square meterage inside the tunnel system. The number of people that could be accommodated on an hourly basis, was between 550 and 750 as a peak. That would not be all the time but gave an indication of a realistic number relative to the number of people per square.

In response to a Member's question about visits of school children, the applicant responded that the proposal was to allow school children to visit for free and they would attend in groups of up to 40 children. If the applicants were able to, in time, the number of children could be increased.

In response to a question about the management of people entering and leaving the tunnels to prevent noise nuisance, especially noise aggregation in the street and congestion, the applicant stated that after clearing security, the aim was to move people into the system as quickly as possible, and in the lifts

down to the tunnels. Afterwards people would leave into what was a busy area. The hours of operation were 9am-7pm so there should not be noise outside of these hours. The applicant stated that people would buy tickets online and would arrive in a certain block of time. Visitors would be brought inside as quickly as possible to give them the greatest amount of comfort. There would also be toilets inside.

In response to a Member's question as to whether there would be ambassadors in the street helping people disperse after their visit, the applicant stated that there would be staff helping visitors with their onward journeys.

A Member asked about the lift capacity and how long the security process would take as they were concerned about bottlenecks. Mr Robbie Arnold from WSP Transport stated that to gain access to the tunnels, there was a lift system, The lifts would accommodate 60 people so there would be staggered ticket times. On arrival visitors would enter the venue, go through security checks and into a lift. The lifts would take about five minutes to take people down and return. Using the staggered booking system, 750 people could be on site in an hour.

Visitors would visit the exhibitions in the tunnels and then exit through the gift shop. Overall, there could be 750 people on site. A dynamic legion model which was a pedestrian model, had tested 1,500 people per hour coming in and out, so 750 in and 750 people out and that demonstrated there would be no queues on the highway. Even a 20% uplift to 1800 people, demonstrated there would not be any queuing on the highway but that figure started to cause some internal queuing. Two million people per year was the maximum capacity. It was recognised that the busiest days would be weekends and bank holidays and during weekdays there might be slightly reduced numbers on site. To inform the assessment within the transport assessment, a dynamic legion model of Chancery Lane Station had been undertaken to look at the capacity of the gate lines, stairwells and the corridors in the station. This was undertaken for the 2023 date of the assessment and was informed by TfL data from 2023. It was also undertaken for 2041 and the uplift was taken into account. The same assessment was undertaken for pedestrian comfort level, which looked at the footways in the crossings of the local area to see what the uplift and the impact of all the assessments would be. It concluded that there would not be a significant impact. This was repeated with a 100% uplift to four million per year and the impacts on the local area were not shown to be significant. The detail was contained within the transport assessment and had been agreed with TfL and Officers.

A Member asked about the cultural offer including the immersive experience and partnerships with cultural providers. Mr Murray stated that there would be the story of the London Blitz with images of the history of London. This would be a digital, interactive experience. There would then be a section which would be a memorial to the people who perished during the London Blitz, 23,000 civilians in London itself, and 43,000 people in Britain who died during that period of time. There would then be the Special Operations Executive section and there would be a partnership with an official military museum, and the

interactivity with physical real objects. Mr Murray stated that the James Bond theme had been written about in the media and the story could be brought alive. He further stated that the telecommunications equipment in the tunnels would be reactivated, not in terms of communication but to show the lights. Mr Murray stated that projectors and mirrors would be used in the immersive experience and he used Atelier des Lumieres, Digital and Immersive Art Centre in Paris, Team Lab in Tokyo and Moco Museum in Amsterdam as examples of the type of cultural space that would be created.

The Chairman suggested that the Sub-Committee now move to any questions that they might have of Officers at this stage.

A Member asked a question in relation to fire safety. She asked for reassurance that the Fire Brigade's recommendation that a Qualitative Design Review process take place, would be undertaken. An Officer stated that there were several fire safety measures secured for the site e.g. people to be safety on the street within the required timeline. The London Fire Brigade had some concerns around several matters. The qualitative design review process was to be undertaken with the London Fire Brigade. It was expected that they would be consulted as a key stakeholder and this process would be undertaken post-planning and fell within the remit of Building Regulations. Members were advised that Officers had responded to the London Fire Brigade concerns and one of those concerns related to the firefighter access and the means of escape. Officers had recommended an access management plan to be secured by obligation and the emergency evacuation strategy and procedures would be requested to be reviewed by Officers. The developers would be required to go through the normal legal process of building control.

A Member asked what would happen if the City of London approved the planning application but it was not approved by Camden Council. The Chairman stated that the approved planning application would then fall. An Officer stated that Paragraph 3 of the recommendation explained that if a Section 106 agreement could not be entered into, which would be the case if Camden did not grant the planning permission, Officers would be instructed to refuse permission.

A Member asked for clarification on the servicing arrangements. An Officer stated that the expected number of deliveries on a daily basis would be about eight and these would be on Holborn as Furnival Street was smaller and not suitable. Refuse would be collected from Furnival Street. Deliveries would take place out of hours.

A Member asked if scenario planning had taken place for a flood caused by a Thames Water failure. An Officer stated that a flooding evacuation plan was submitted as part of the application and had been reviewed by building control and climate resilience Officers. The management plan requested details of the evacuation procedures. The Officer stated that the site was located in Flood Zone One which had a very low risk of flooding and added that the water table ran beneath the tunnels. A flood evacuation strategy had been secured that would be further reviewed by building control. The Officer added the Local



Flood Authority had raised no objections to the subject of the conditions that were attached to the recommendation and Thames Water had also made their comments, not objecting to the application subject to a groundwater risk permit being provided.

A Member asked if taxis would be restricted on Furnival Street and how this would work. An Officer stated that work had taken place with the applicant on this. One option to mitigate the impact of the proposal was to look at restricting vehicle access along Furnival Street, which would prevent taxis from pulling up on Furnival Street. The Officer stated that there would be a significant Section 278 contribution to look at improving the road to ensure the additional footways to accommodate pedestrians and look at preventing taxis from using Furnival Street whilst maintaining access for the existing premises. Refuse collection would be from there and there was a crossover opposite the site as well for a main delivery. There would be a further consultation with local businesses, residents and key stakeholders and a design phase and the fundamentals of mitigating the impact had been agreed with the applicant.

A Member raised concern for the occupiers along Furnival Street in relation to the impact on the servicing, the vehicles and the noise and the queuing outside. She also asked, if there was a problem which meant a delay getting inside the building or if there was an evacuation, where people would be contained. An Officer stated that an operational management plan had been secured and this would include how people were dispersed. Work had taken place to ensure that the evacuation from the tunnels was sufficient in terms of fire and flooding and where the people would go next would be part of the operational management plan which was also secured in the legal agreement.

A Member stated that people should be attracted to come to the exhibitions using public transport because there was less of an impact on the transport network and the streets but the nearest station was Chancery Lane and whilst there were escalators to get down to the platform, there was a flight of stairs to get out of the station. She stated that this was not accessible given the level of visitors the attraction hoped to bring into the area and stated that the developer should be required to help fund step-free access at Chancery Lane Station. An Officer stated that an assessment was undertaken with the applicant to look at the flow of pedestrians through the site and into and out of the site and also through Chancery Lane Station to ensure there was capacity there. There was a discussion with TfL to see if they were in agreement and step-free access was discussed. The Officer stated this was not something they wished to pursue as part of this application.

A Member stated that she considered the number of free school places for children to be insufficient and asked whether more could be conditioned in order to increase the public benefit. An Officer stated that there would be two school trips per week with a maximum capacity of 40 children each so there would be 80 free school places per week. There was a cultural implementation strategy secured by obligation, which would explore the educational programmes and the applicant had committed to a minimum of two school trips per week. An Officer confirmed that Officers considered the minimum of two

school trips per week was proportionate to the proposal. There was no identified heritage harm and therefore this was not a public benefit to outweigh that harm. This was a public offer that had been negotiated with the applicant. The applicant had indicated that on the appointment of the cultural operator, which would be confirmed through the cultural management plan, it would be intended to expand on the number of school trips and this would be through negotiation with Officers at that time.

A Member stated that the monument to commemorate people who lost their lives in the Second World War, outside St Paul's had disappeared from view. He asked if this could be incorporated into the scheme. Officers stated they could look into this.

Seeing no further questions, the Chairman asked that Members now move to debate the application.

A Member commented that she considered that with over 5,000 visitors per week, there could be more than two free school trips per week.

**MOTION** - A motion was put and seconded that the number of school visits be increased to one school trip per day each week.

The Chairman stated he would not support the motion as the Sub-Committee did not have the plans on the details of the safety requirements of schoolchildren or the safeguarding provisions made underground. He stated there had been negotiations between the applicant and Officers on reaching the proposed number.

A Member commented that the number of visits seemed small and one trip could be required as a minimum per day.

A Member raised concern about setting a precedent with a motion which had financial implications for the applicant and stated this was not a function of the Sub-Committee. A Member commented that the Sub-Committee had previously increased the number of school visits for a number of attractions to increase the public benefit e.g. the Tulip and the Sky Garden.

A Member suggested that motions should be case specific and stated that if the financial implications of increasing the number of school trips to five per week would result in the failure of the business, the business was not going to succeed.

A Member stated that the Sub-Committee should not be setting requirements on how the business should be run.

A Member stated that the Sky Garden was not the commercial part of the building. The commercial part of the building was leasing office floors so this was different. This would have a direct position on the profit and loss of the business which was not the case for the Sky Garden.

The Planning and Development Director stated that both the Sky Garden and the Tulip were policy, non-compliant and caused heritage harm. Therefore, the paragraph of the NPPF was activated in which public benefits were needed to outweigh the harm. In this instance, the application was policy compliant, with or without school groups.

A Member stated that Officers had previously negotiated more access to rooftop terraces and gardens and with the Tulip, the applicant was encouraged to increase the number of school visits per week. As part of Destination City, children should be encouraged to visit the City. The whole exhibition was about education, especially in relation to the Second World War and the only way to educate was to ensure that there were free spaces for children. She stated that she had concerns that not all of the issues above ground had been mitigated and therefore the free child spaces would be a public benefit.

A Member asked if the Sub-Committee could ask the applicant to agree to one free school trip of 40 children per day. The Chairman stated this was not protocol and the applicant would not be asked to enter into a negotiation during the meeting as this would not be fair.

Having debated the motion, the Sub-Committee proceeded to vote on the motion that the number of school visits be increased to one school trip per day each week.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 6 votes  
OPPOSED – 7 votes  
There was 1 abstention.

Following the vote, a Member queried the votes cast. To clarify, the Chairman asked for votes to be cast again.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 7 votes  
OPPOSED – 7 votes  
There was 1 abstention.

The Chairman using his casting vote, voted against the motion and it therefore fell.

*[Deputy Michael Cassidy, Anthony Fitzpatrick, Jaspreet Hodgson, Deputy Edward Lord, Deputy Henry Pollard and Shailendra Umradia, who had not been present for the item, did not vote.]*

Having fully debated the application, the Committee proceeded to vote on the recommendation before them.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 15 votes  
OPPOSED – None  
There were no abstentions.

The recommendations were therefore carried unanimously.

*[Deputy Michael Cassidy, Anthony Fitzpatrick, Jaspreet Hodgson, Deputy Edward Lord, Deputy Henry Pollard and Shailendra Umradia, who had not been present for the item, did not vote.]*

**RESOLVED -**

1. That, subject to the execution of a planning obligation or obligations in respect of the matters set out under the heading 'Planning Obligations' the Planning and Development Director be authorised to issue a decision notice granting planning permission for the above proposal in accordance with the details set out in the attached schedule;
2. That your officers be instructed to negotiate and execute obligations in respect of those matters set out in "Planning Obligations" under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and any necessary agreements under Sections 278 and 38 of the Highway Act 1980 in respect of those matters set out in the report;

Or;

3. In the event that a legal agreement satisfactorily securing cross boundary obligations is not completed within 12 months of the date of the resolution officers be instructed to REFUSE permission for the substantive reason that the scheme fails to mitigate the adverse impacts noted within the officer report and is therefore contrary to the policies contained within the Development Plan.

**6. \* VALID PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Chief Planning Officer and Development Director detailing development applications received by the Department of the Environment since the report to the last meeting.

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

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

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

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

**8. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

A Member stated that with two applications on the agenda, the meeting had taken over 3.5 hours and a number of Members had had to leave. She raised concern about there being two large applications scheduled for the next meeting and suggested that there be no more than one application considered

at each meeting. The Chairman stated as far as possible, the applications were scheduled with just one to be considered at each meeting but the pipeline of planning applications had to be managed too. He added that the City of London prided itself on prompt decision making to give confidence to the development industry and the investment community. The Director of Planning and Development stated that he considered that two items was achievable in one meeting if everyone worked towards this. He was concerned about the implications on the development pipeline and confidence in the City if the consideration of schemes was delayed. The Chairman stated that he would look at the development pipeline with the Director of Planning and Development and the Deputy Chairman and where there were opportunities to have just one application, where two had been planned, they would try to do so. In response to a Member's suggestion that two meetings could be held in one week, the Chairman stated there were resource implications for Officers.

A Member asked for a report to the Planning & Transportation Committee on the impact of the carbon optioneering guidance. The Director of Planning & Development stated that there had been more retrofits than redevelopments for several years running. He stated the impact of the guidance could be reviewed and he would take this away and discuss with colleagues. He raised concerns about Officer time with the City Plan and the Sustainability SPD being priorities. The Chairman stated that the time frame could be left to agree but Officers were requested to produce the report.

A Member asked for information on ceiling heights in relation to insulation and mechanical ventilation, heat recovery, air source heat pumps, and ducting used in a modern building to try and make the building climate friendly. He stated that by accepting a low floor to ceiling height, this would not be possible and there would be carbon implications. Officers stated they would take this away and try to incorporate it in the SPD or any potential review.

A Member asked if the planning and historic environment training session recorded on 17 May 2024 could be shared with Members. Officers agreed to circulate this.

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

The Chairman welcomed Eamonn Mullally, a new Member on the Planning & Transportation Committee and Planning Applications Sub-Committee.

**The meeting ended at 2.20 pm**

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Chairman

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