

PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE
Tuesday, 11 February 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Applications Sub-Committee held at Livery
Hall - Guildhall on Tuesday, 11 February 2025 at 9.00 am

Present

Members:

Deputy Shravan Joshi MBE (Chairman)
Graham Packham (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy Randall Anderson
Mary Durcan
Deputy John Edwards
Deputy John Fletcher
Deputy Marianne Fredericks
Jaspreet Hodgson
Alderswoman Elizabeth Anne King, BEM JP
Deputy Natasha Maria Cabrera Lloyd-Owen
Deputy Brian Mooney BEM
Eamonn Mullally
Deborah Oliver
Alderman Simon Pryke
Ian Seaton
Hugh Selka
William Upton KC
Jacqui Webster
Deputy Dawn Wright

Officers:

Fleur Francis	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Phil Carroll	- Environment Department
David Horkan	- Environment Department
Kieran McCallum	- Environment Department
Rob McNicol	- Environment Department
Tom Nancollas	- Environment Department
Gwyn Richards	- Environment Department
Kerstin Kane	- Environment Department
Anna Tastsoglou	- Environment Department
Amy Williams	- Environment Department
Peter Wilson	- Environment Department
Katie Stewart	- Executive Director, Environment
Polly Dunn	- Town Clerk's Department
Callum Southern	- Town Clerk's Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Ian Bishop-Laggett, Amy Horscroft, Charles Edward Lord OBE, JP, Alderwoman Jennette Newman, Deputy Henry Pollard, Tom Sleigh and Shailendra Kumar Kantilal Umradia.

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

Deputy Randall Anderson declared an interest in Item 5 as the Investment Committee was the proponent of the project and indicated he would not vote on that item.

Eamonn Mullally indicated he would not take part in the debate or vote on Item 4.

3. **BURY HOUSE 1 - 4, 31 - 34 BURY STREET LONDON EC3A 5AR**

The Committee received a report which recommended Reasons for Refusal to reflect the Committee's resolution of 13 December 2024.

The Chairman clarified that only those who were present during the consideration of Items 4 and 5 at the Planning Applications Sub-Committee on 13 December 2024 would be able to vote on this item.

A Member queried whether only those who voted against the application could consider the Reasons for Refusal. Officers confirmed it was a decision of the Sub-Committee and, therefore, those Members who had been in attendance for Items 4 and 5 at Planning Applications Sub-Committee on 13 December 2024 would be able to vote on the Reasons for Refusal.

Officers stated that the report related to two applications, an EIA application that proposed an office-led development through the demolition of Bury House and the erection of a new building which would comprise of four basement levels, ground floor plus 43 storeys, part demolition of Holland House and restoration of the existing Renown House. The application also included the erection of a four-storey extension at Holland House, a three-storey extension to Renown House and the interconnection of the three buildings. Officers added that the Listed Building Consent application related to restoration works to Holland House, including partial demolition to facilitate interconnection with the neighbouring proposed new buildings and construction of a four-storey roof extension. Officers indicated that Members took a different view to Officers at that meeting and resolved not to grant planning permission or listed building consent. Officers stated they had gone through a rigorous assessment of the debate at that meeting and, for that reason, recommended three reasons for refusal.

A Member expressed concerns that one or two Members had raised the issue of the impact on the Tower of London during the debate as it was part of their decision making around the application, but had not been taken into account in

the recommendations as a majority of the Committee had not raised it in their contributions and stated it was in direct conflict with the guidance given not to repeat points already made. The Member added that, in normal circumstances, the reasoning and rationale of those who made the decision to refuse was what the Committee was looking to understand and that was the basis of the decision. The Member further stated they hoped Members would think about what it was that those who decided to refuse considered to be material as that would properly reflect the decision that was made rather than whether they thought it was legitimate. She further added that, for those who voted in favour, they clearly did not think any of the reasons for refusal were legitimate and noted she did not see the three reasons as being the rationale for her refusal as one of the majority who voted against the scheme. The Member stated she understood that the reasons for refusal were important as they were a material consideration moving forwards and, therefore, if the reasons for refusal recommended did not reflect the actual decision making of the Committee, that would be wrong.

Another Member concurred with the previous comments and drew attention to Paragraph 5 which noted there were other matters raised as grounds for refusal. The Member stated that while not every Member may have echoed those grounds, there were also a number of Members who voted against the proposals who did not speak and, therefore, the Committee could not be aware what their views were and suggested that some may not have spoken as they felt their views had been covered. The Member added the grounds included those highlighted in Paragraph 3 and other points raised in Paragraph 5, which included the character of the Creechurch Conservation Area, the impact on the World Heritage Site, and the failure to protect the historic architectural interest of Holland House which, the Member felt, were all views voiced as grounds for refusal and should be included as grounds to refuse.

A Member suggested there was a danger of reopening the debate and, if the debate was to be reopened, those who supported the application would want to weigh in with additional points and asked the Chairman to provide a direction as, if it was the case that the debate was to be reopened, he was happy to weigh in with further arguments in favour of the application but, if not, suggested deciding on the basis of the three recommendations given.

The Chairman stated, from his understanding, that the minutes, which were approved at the last meeting of the Planning Applications Sub-Committee, were the reflection of the debate and the decision that was taken on that day, and the paper before Members was a translation of the minutes into valid planning grounds for refusal so there was a legal basis for refusing the scheme.

A Member stated it was not the done thing to repeat points already made, but to deduce that it meant there was no support for other points raised not included in the recommendation was inappropriate and queried how difficult it would have been for Officers to reach out to Members to ascertain the reasons for refusal. The Member added that he supported six of the areas and believed that other Members who had voted against did too. The Chairman stated that decisions were made in the room and needed to be abided by as coming back

with a survey following the meeting was not the way decisions were made. The Chairman further added that further items were raised and did not feel they were being ignored as they were on paper under Paragraph 5 and stated his understanding was Officers did not feel there was substantial agreement amongst the Committee or clarity that there was agreement for them being included as Reasons for Refusal.

A Member suggested a discussion of the three additional grounds highlighted in Paragraph 5 followed by a vote on each ground. The Chairman agreed and indicated his willingness to second the Motion.

MOTION: That the three additional grounds highlighted in Paragraph 5 of the Officer report be included in the recommendations, with all grounds being voted on individually.

The Chairman seconded the Motion.

Another Member suggested that given those who voted in favour of the proposal were seeking to reflect the decision making of those who voted against, it would be helpful if they were going to vote against a ground being included making clear they were someone who voted in favour of the application. The Chairman stated he did not see the relevance.

It was stated by a Member that the Sub-Committee needed to have faith in its fellow Members and what was being debated was not the substantive planning application, it was a reflection of what was said at the meeting. He added he trusted those who voted for against to reflect on what they heard was said and vote accordingly.

A Member indicated she would support the Motion and stated she understood the minutes constituted a correct record of the meeting if the application went to appeal and noted there was a video and transcript available that an appeal inspector could request to see. The Member added that the issue of the Conservation Area was reflected in the minutes as it had been highlighted in relation to the New National Planning Policy Framework by another Member. The Member further stated that the minutes reflected the grounds raised by Officers in Paragraph 5 and she did not hear anyone who spoke against the application indicate that they did not support any of the grounds that had been raised by Members who wanted to refuse the application.

The Chairman moved the meeting to a vote on the proposed Motion.

The Sub-Committee proceeded to vote on the Motion before them.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 13

OPPOSED – 0

There were no abstentions.

The Motion was therefore carried.

RESOLVED – That, Members agreed the three additional grounds highlighted in Paragraph 5 be included in the recommendations, with all grounds being voted on individually.

The Chairman moved the meeting to a vote on the reasons for refusal:

The Sub-Committee voted whether to include the overbearing and overshadowing impact of the development on the courtyard as a Reason for Refusal as outlined in Recommendation 1.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 16
OPPOSED – 1
There were no abstentions.

The vote was carried.

RESOLVED – That, Members agreed to include the overbearing and overshadowing impact of the development on the courtyard as a Reason for Refusal.

The Sub-Committee voted whether to include the loss of daylight and sunlight within the Bevis Marks Synagogue as a Reason for Refusal as outlined in Recommendation 2.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 15
OPPOSED – 2
There were no abstentions.

The vote was carried.

RESOLVED – That, Members agreed to include the loss of daylight and sunlight within the Bevis Marks Synagogue as a Reason for Refusal.

The Sub-Committee voted whether to include the reduced ability to view the moon in the night sky from the Bevis Marks Synagogue courtyard as a Reason for Refusal as outlined in Recommendation 3.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 13
OPPOSED – 4
There were no abstentions.

The vote was carried.

RESOLVED – That, Members agreed to include the reduced ability to view the moon in the night sky from the Bevis Marks Synagogue courtyard as a Reason for Refusal.

The Sub-Committee voted whether to include the failure to preserve the character and appearance of the Creechurch Conservation Area as a Reason for Refusal.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 10
OPPOSED – 7
There were no abstentions.

The vote was carried.

RESOLVED – That, Members agreed to include the failure to preserve the character and appearance of the Creechurch Conservation Area as a Reason for Refusal.

The Sub-Committee voted whether to include the adverse impact on the setting and Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Tower of London World Heritage Site as experienced in LVMF view 10A.1 from the North Bastion of Tower Bridge as a Reason for Refusal.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 11
OPPOSED – 6
There were no abstentions.

The vote was carried.

RESOLVED – That, Members agreed to include the adverse impact on the setting and Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Tower of London World Heritage Site as experienced in LVMF view 10A.1 from the North Bastion of Tower Bridge as a Reason for Refusal.

The Sub-Committee voted whether to include the failure to preserve the special architecture and historic interest of Holland House Grade II* listed building, by reason of the massing, height and bulk of the proposed extensions.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 7
OPPOSED – 7
There were three abstentions.

As there was a tie, the Chairman held the casting vote. The Chairman voted against the ground for refusal.

The vote, therefore, fell.

RESOLVED – That, Members of the Planning Applications Sub-Committee on 13 December 2024 decided to refuse the application for the following Reasons for Refusal (subject to notification to the Mayor of London and the Mayor of London being content for the City to determine the applications):

1. The development would, by reason its overbearing and overshadowing impact on the courtyard of the Synagogue, result in less than substantial harm to the setting and significance of the Grade I listed Bevis Marks Synagogue. The harm would not be outweighed by the public benefits. The development would be unacceptable and contrary to Local Plan

Policies CS 12, DM 12.1, DM 12.3; Emerging City Plan Policies S11 and DE7; London Plan Policy D9 C (1; d) and HC1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. The development would, by reason of the loss of daylight and sunlight within the Bevis Marks Synagogue, adversely affect the ability of worshippers to carry out religious traditions and practices and manifest their religion in worship, being as such unacceptable and contrary to Local Plan Policy CS10 (1); Emerging City Plan Policies DE7 and the National Planning Policy Framework.
3. The development would, by reason of its position, height and massing, reduce the ability to view the moon in the night sky from the Bevis Marks Synagogue courtyard to the detriment of the ability of the worshippers to carry out important religious traditions and practices and manifest their religion in worship, contrary to Local Plan Policy CS10 (1); Emerging City Plan Policy HL1; London Plan Policy GG1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.
4. That, Members agreed to include the failure to preserve the character and appearance of the Creechurch Conservation Area as a Reason for Refusal.
5. That, Members agreed to include the adverse impact on the setting and Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Tower of London World Heritage Site as experienced in LVMF view 10A.1 from the North Bastion of Tower Bridge as a Reason for Refusal.
6. The proposed development at Holland House, by reason of its inability to be carried out in the absence of an approved planning permission of the associated development as proposed under the terms of application 24/00021/FULEIA, would result in an incomplete and unsatisfactory appearance of the listed building, which would fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of and result in harm to the Grade II* listed building. The harm would not be outweighed by public benefits. The development would be unacceptable and contrary to Local Plan Policies CS 12, DM 12.1, DM12.3; Emerging City Plan Policies S11; London Plan Policy HC1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. XL HOUSE, 70 GRACECHURCH STREET, LONDON, EC3V 0HR

The Sub-Committee received a report which sought planning permission for the partial demolition of the existing building, partial infilling of the existing basements, refurbishment and extension of the building comprising basement levels and ground floor plus 32 storeys (149.67m AOD, 132.47m AGL) to provide a mixed use office (Class E(g)) and culture/public viewing gallery (Sui Generis), retail/food and beverage (Class E(a)-(b)) development, with soft and hard landscaping, pedestrian and vehicle access, cycle parking, flexible public

realm including street market with associated highway works and other works associated with the development.

Officers presented the report to the Sub-Committee and noted the application site was located toward the southern edge of the city cluster. They stated that Leadenhall Market, Swan Tavern pub and the Pedestrian Alley Ship Tavern passage sat directly to the North with Gracechurch Street, Fenchurch Street and Lime Street located around the site.

Officers presented an image of the existing site and stated that the site's immediate context was predominantly commercial office buildings with retail or ground floor level with 20 Fenchurch Street across the road to the southeast and the existing building was completed in 2001. Officers added that the existing building was ordinary in its appearance, had roughly 7,700m² of retail space, roughly 20,000² of office floor space.

Officers presented the planning context to Members and stated that the building was not listed, nor was it a non-designated heritage asset. They noted that the building was not in a Conservation Area, but the Leadenhall Market Conservation Area, which contained the Grade II listed Leadenhall Market, was located directly to the north and part of the application red line boundary extended into the Leadenhall Market Conservation Area. However, this was the result of some below ground works to the basement and no works have proposed at ground floor level within the Conservation Area. Officers added that the Eastcheap and Bank Conservation Areas were in close proximity and the areas defined in the City of London Local Plan 2015, and the emerging City Plan 2040 was suitable for tall buildings. They also told the Sub-Committee that the site was not protected by any LVMF protected viewing corridors, but was part of the City Cluster which was visible in a range of LVMF views, including from bridges over the river.

The Sub-Committee was presented with more images of the existing context by Officers who stated that the entrance to the retail space was on the southwest corner, with the rest of the retail frontage being blank while the entrance to the office accommodation faced northwest onto Gracechurch Street and Ship Tavern Passage. Officers added that the building had quite a large footprint and was relatively self-contained and defensive in appearance despite being publicly accessible.

An image of the Leadenhall Market Conservation Area and Ship Tavern Passage was shown to the Sub-Committee by Officers who stated that, in the surrounding area, there were more historic lower rise buildings at street level with commercial office building which raised above. Officers further noted that residential properties sat to the north of the site and objection had been received from residents relating to a number of points; including the need for office floor space, overshadowing impacts, and noise and pollution.

The Officers presented images of the previous consent that was granted in 2021 and noted that the permission would expire in 2026 for a scheme which was very similar. They told the Sub-Committee that the applicants had decided

to bring forward new proposals for a design which would make the building more attractive to potential tenants by improving the sustainability credentials and increasing the quality of office accommodation. Officers informed Members that the current proposals would deliver approximately a 9% increase in office floor space when compared to the previous application and the previous permission proposed the full demolition of the building.

A diagram and image of the development was shown to the Sub-Committee and Officers stated that the proposals before the Sub-Committee were more sustainable, had been adapted to the most up-to-date sustainability standards, and the proposals included the retention and re-use of the existing office building. Officers added that a new tall building of 32 storeys would be constructed, resting above the podium block, and it was predominantly to be office accommodation which would contribute 4% toward the City's projected office floor space. They further noted there were positive changes to the ground floor layout, the cultural spaces, the elevated public space and the proposed architecture. Historic England had objected to the previous application, but not the current application and, in their response, Officers stated that they had welcomed the changes to the proposed buildings design. Officers drew attention to a diagram that showed the disposition of uses and how they would be arranged at the site, with the active public facing uses at ground floor level with public access on the upper most floors of the building in the form of an external and internal viewing gallery with office accommodation in between.

Officers stated that 60% of the building would be retained and reused and the proposals would target a WELL gold rating and a NABERS 5-star rating. They added that the previous consented scheme was not developed to seek Well and NABERS accreditation and the current proposals targeted a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating, the same as the previously consented scheme and 120 tonnes of structural steel extracted from the existing building would be reused for the structural columns on the uppermost floors of the building and the Jura limestone on the existing façade would be reused on the base of the proposals

The Sub-Committee were shown a diagram of the proposed ground floor plan by Officers who stated the proposals have resulted in a loss of retail space similar to the previous permission which was a material consideration that the application accepted the principle of the loss of retail. Officers noted that the ground floor plan would also have a pedestrian route through the building to facilitate pedestrian movement from Gracechurch Street to Leadenhall Market, as well as active ground floor uses which included a retail use and a cultural space positioned toward the west of the site. They added that a digital curated art wall would be positioned towards the northern end of the pedestrian route and cycle access would be positioned to the east of the site in a sensitive and appropriate location to minimise conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists. The existing servicing bay would be replaced by a flexible market space and servicing bay similar to the previous proposals for the site and the office lobby would be positioned on the south elevation set back from the street line behind columns.

Officers presented a CGI of the proposed pedestrian route with the office lobby, art wall and cultural entrance to the Sub-Committee and informed Members

that the facades would be finished in dark metal with the route being safe and attractive. Appropriate lighting would be built into the software of the room and details of the proposed materials, lighting and management of the space would be agreed through condition and a Section 106 agreement.

Officers also presented the layout of publicly accessible uses of the lower ground floor, the ground floor and level 32 and informed the Sub-Committee that a substantial amount of cultural space would be provided and there would be an increase in the quality and quantity of the space in comparison to the previous permission. The cultural space would be neighboured by a food and beverage service which would provide additional amenity to visitors. Officers added that the lower ground floor level would be a curated cultural space designed as a sensory rich environment with interactive displays and details of it were to be established through the culture plan. Officers stated that the elevated public space at level 32 would benefit from having both an internal and external area.

The Sub-Committee was shown diagrams of the connected public levels and Officers stated that the uses were distributed vertically across the building.

An image of the ground floor plan and the arrival point in the western part of the building was shown by Officers to the Sub-Committee who stated that the centre of the space would be a spiral staircase and lifts to take visitors down to an exhibition area at the lower ground floor level. Officers noted there would be lifts at the lower ground floor level to take visitors up to level 32 in under a minute, with security and queuing accommodated comfortably in the area. Officers drew attention to an area highlighted in red with a blue arrow on the ground floor plan which they stated showed how visitors would exit the building onto Ship Tavern Passage at the ground floor level.

Officers presented a diagram of the viewing gallery at level 32 to Members and stated that the space would have the flexibility of an internal and external area, and both of the spaces benefitted from great views of London on arrival. They told Members that visitors would enter a large lobby with dramatic views northwards over the rest of the City Cluster. The internal space would be curated and programmed through the culture plan and the layout of the terrace had been designed to maximise the ability of views westward whilst creating spaces which were comfortable for dwelling and socialising. Officers added that both the external and internal space would have spectacular views and presented an example of the views to the Sub-Committee and a CGI of the proposed landscaping of the external terrace. The proposed ground floor was also presented to the Sub-Committee.

Officers stated that the proposed loading bay and the pop-up market location in the southeast corner of the building, the diagrams of which were presented to the Sub-Committee, were similar to the consented scheme, with servicing taking place overnight between the hours of 10:00pm and 6:00pm. They added that the area would be used as a market at the loading bay during the day and the details of the management and operation of the servicing and market space would be agreed through management plans in the Section 106 agreement.

Officers further added that the servicing was the key difference between the consented scheme and the current proposals as the previous scheme had included service lifts within the basement which took up a significant amount of area.

The cycle access was presented to the Sub-Committee by Officers who stated that it was located to the north of the loading bay and the route to the cycle parking facilities which complied with the City's policy.

The scope of the Section 278 works was shown to the Sub-Committee. Officers informed Members that there would be a separately highway works agreement with Transport for London (TfL) on Gracechurch Street and pedestrian comfort levels had been assessed to be compliant with standards. They added that the existing steps at Ship Tavern Passage would be removed to create an accessible route into Leadenhall Market which was a key benefit of the proposals. Officers also noted that the carriageway would be resurfaced on Lime Street, Fenchurch Street and Philpot Lane.

In relation to office floor space provision, Officers reported to the Sub-Committee that occupants would enter the space on its southern elevation and the proposals delivered an increase in quality and quantity of office space compared to both the previous consent and the existing site. The core would be positioned to the north of the building and would create a generous, flexible floorspace which would be attractive to a range of potential tenants.

Officers presented a representative view of the Grade A office floor space that they stated would be provided and the views that offices would benefit from. They added that level floor 7 would include amenity space for the tenants and floor level 1 would include affordable workspaces which would have a dedicated entrance at Ship Tavern Passage.

An image of the proposed southern elevation was shown to the Sub-Committee by Officers who informed Members that the building's form had been carefully shaped with its skyline presence and environmental impact in mind and the proposed tower was to be an elegant addition to the City skyline. They added that the scheme had been thoroughly tested for microclimate impact which were acceptable with on-site investigation measures in place and complied with the City of London's guidance as set out in the report.

The proposed massing was presented to the Sub-Committee by Officers who informed Members that it had been sculpted to be a simple but symmetrical form in response to its context and the proposed tower would appear well on the sky and the site was located in the location suitable for tall buildings. They further stated that it would accord with all design heritage and tall buildings policy and the north elevation would be set back on the upper most floors to ensure there was no intervisibility between St. Pauls Cathedral and the processional room. Officers reminded the Sub-Committee that Historic England had not objected to the application and stated they had praised the design in comparison to the previous consent.

The Sub-Committee were presented with the existing and proposed east and west elevations of the proposed development. Officers told the Sub-Committee that the proposals would result in some daylight and sunlight impacts and two objections had been received which cited the issue as a concern. Officers stated, however, that the application performed better than the consented scheme and the proposals complied with BRE guidelines.

Officers informed Members that the applicant had undertaken a rigorous exercise to ensure the proposed building would have no intervisibility with the Cathedral from Fleet Street.

An image of the proposed development viewed from Gracechurch Street south was shown to the Sub-Committee by Officers who stated that one could appreciate the proposed architecture and explained that the tower would be broken into three volumes with strong vertical breaks and a repeating horizontal order. They added that the horizontal branding across the tower would work well with the overarching massing approach and the tower was an attractive, yet distinct element disassociated from the more traditional townscape below. Officers further noted that the base would have a simple gridded rectilinear which would be finished with reused materials from the existing building and would have an appearance coherent with its neighbours at the uppermost floors of the building. The facades pinched inwards which Officers told the Sub-Committee it created an interesting and dynamic roofscape.

A view of the proposed development from Fenchurch Street down Lime Street from the Eastcheap Conservation Area was shown to the Sub-Committee by Officers who stated that architecture of the of the proposed tower could be readily appreciated and the tower would be set back from the Conservation Area and replicated an appearance similar to the existing context. Officers also presented the Sub-Committee with an image of the proposed development from the corner of Gracechurch Street and Fenchurch Street.

Officers presented images of the existing and cumulative view of the development from the north end of Tower Bridge and stated that the proposal would appear behind, and to the right, of 20 Fenchurch Street and it was the view where the proposals would be most visible in relation to the Tower of London. Officers added that in most views of the Tower of London, the proposal would be obscured by 20 Fenchurch Street.

Officers also presented images of the existing and cumulative view of the development from LVMF 10A.1 on Tower Bridge and from South Bank at the London Bridge City Pier. Officers stated that 70 Gracechurch Street would appear as a high-quality addition to the city cluster and, in the cumulative scenario, would be screened by 60 Gracechurch Street which had a resolution to grant permission.

The Sub-Committee were also presented with images of the existing and cumulative view from King William Street of the proposed development by Officers.

Images of the existing and proposed view of the development from Lime Street were shown to Members by Officers who stated that the view was from within the Leadenhall Market Conservation Area, but the proposed building sat outside the Conservation Area. They added that a key characteristic of the Conservation Area was the proximity of tall buildings beyond its extent.

Officers presented images of the existing and cumulative view of the proposed development from Leadenhall Street looking south toward Leadenhall Market, from Bishopsgate looking south from 1-3 Bishopsgate.

The Sub-Committee were shown images of the existing and cumulative views from Southwark Bridge looking northeast toward the proposed development by Officers who stated that the scheme would appear behind 60 Gracechurch Street.

Images of the view from Waterloo Bridge of the existing and cumulative view of the development were shown to the Sub-Committee by Officers who stated that the proposal would appear a significant distance behind and away from St Paul's Cathedral and caused no harm to it. Officers added that the scheme would play a key role in the City skyline and would help to unify the overall shape and silhouette of the City Cluster.

Officers explained to the Sub-Committee that the building was strategically sited in the city cluster which followed a plan-led approach to consolidating tall buildings and growth in a manner which would be the least impactful and stated that the proposals sought to deliver 4.2% of the required office floor space demand to meet the key strategic objectives of the adopted and emerging City Plan. Officers added that the development would make a significant contribution to maintaining the City's status of as the world-leading financial centre. Officers suggested it was worth bearing in mind the previous consent for the site and stated they believed that the proposals before the Sub-Committee were an improvement on the previous permission, specifically in terms of sustainability, design and the proposed cultural offer. Officers added that the retention and reuse strategy and the approach to minimising operational carbon were a step forward the proposals in comparison to the previous consent. Officers further stated that the architecture would be a welcome addition to the emerging cluster, and it was considered to be a convincing architectural response. Officers told the Sub-Committee that the development would base footfall in the surrounding area and would form a positive relationship with Leadenhall Market and contribute to its long-term success whilst it added a new visitor attraction and destination in the form of an elevated public space on its doorstep. Officers concluded that the development represented a major strategic contribution to the City's economic and cultural objectives and, for the reasons outlined, recommended planning permission as stated in the report.

The Chairman invited the Objector to address the meeting and asked the Town Clerk to outline the speaking procedure. The Town Clerk explained the speaking procedure as outlined in the Planning Protocol.

Mr. Vergan addressed the Sub-Committee and stated he was the owner of a property in Bullhead Passage and had been for the last ten years. He told the Sub-Committee that he was very worried about what was going to happen 60ft away from his property and expressed concern about the light impact, the dust from construction, the noise, the hours of construction, and the years of construction expected. He also added he was extremely concerned about the Leadenhall Market Conservation Area as the market was getting boxed in and one could see on the corner of Fenchurch Street and Gracechurch Street that there was going to be a new building with a skyscraper. The building at 85 Gracechurch Street was in the middle of the market and there was also another completed building at Leadenhall Street and Gracechurch Street. Mr. Vergan further added that one of the reasons he had moved to the area was for the old Conservation Area and felt it was being completely disregarded what was happening to that area of the City. He stated he believed that the skyscrapers were not what Leadenhall Market needed and was extremely worried that no one had approached him and felt it had been brushed off like it was not a big issue. Mr. Vergan noted that he lived at the property and had a family in his condo, and another resident worked from home, so the construction of the skyscrapers around the area was a big concern, especially the one proposed.

The Chairman invited Members to ask questions of the Objector.

The Objector was asked by a Member whether consideration had been given to regular contact, even meetings, between the developers and residents as he had found from experience that such processes went much more smoothly when that happened and acknowledged the Objector's concerns about noise, dust and all the issues that came with development. The Objector stated it had been considered and noted his concern was especially in relation to the hours of construction. The Objector added he had lived in the City of London for 10 years and loved construction and big skyscrapers, but suggested that sometimes the envelope was pushed a bit too far, especially when one looked at what had happened to Leadenhall Market as it had been swamped with skyscrapers around it. The Objector stated he felt that the historic character, and the whole point of being in the City of London, was being lost.

The Chairman invited Supporters to address the Sub-Committee.

The Town Clerk explained the speaking procedure to the Supporters.

Mr. Nick Jarman of Stanhope addressed the Sub-Committee and stated that the site had been acquired in Spring 2022 with Stanhope's joint venture partner, Ontario Teachers Pension Plan. Mr. Jarman told Members that the 70 Gracechurch Street site benefitted from the existing planning permission being granted in September 2021 and had been working hard in the last two years to design a new transformation scheme that responded to the long-term sustainability requirements of the modern day office occupier and accorded with the aspirations of Destination City and the emerging City Plan 2040. He added, since the previously consented scheme in Autumn 2021, there had been a quantum shift in how buildings were measured and responded to long-term sustainability requirements and a scheme was presented before the Sub-

Committee that was well positioned in retaining 60% of the existing structure by volume and reused as much of the existing fabric as possible. The objective that had guided the Stanhope team through the transformation was to create a market leading sustainable building for the long-term which optimised and balanced commercial and social value for the minimal environmental footprint. He further informed the Sub-Committee that the scheme represented at least a 30% improvement on the previous consent in whole life carbon terms under a much more stringent method of calculation that now needed to be abided to and the site and existing building typology represented a significant opportunity to leverage the previous structure and drive the embodied carbon to the most efficient reuse arrangement possible. Mr. Jarman stated Stanhope was focused on continuing to monitor opportunity through the delivery of the scheme to ensure it was exemplar in sustainable development and noted that the proposals would provide over 80,000m² of much needed best-in-class office space with both public and office access to amenity. Stanhope had collaborated with the City of London planning team, Leadenhall Market, Eastern City BID and the wider community to provide an application that sought to take full advantage of its outstanding location and what it could offer to the Square Mile in a rejuvenated form. Mr. Jarman further added that, like the consented scheme, the proposals would provide a high level public viewing experience at level 32 which comprised of an indoor gallery, as well as a new outdoor garden terrace and a public pedestrian route was also proposed to run through the site which would create a new southwest gateway through to Leadenhall Market and would act as a catalyst for its future prosperity. It would be complimented by a varied range of retail and cultural spaces at the base of the building with a new pop-up market space on the junction of Fenchurch Street and Lime Street. Mr. Jarman further noted that the scheme had been curated for the public and in accordance with public need, in partnership with consultants Hatch and KPF, who aimed to create a journey experience for the public offer that was created around the social calendar and a series of exhibition spaces, with the apex of the experience being a view over a protected and special part of the London skyline which ensured it would not just be another viewing gallery, but a public cultural experience with a view. Mr. Jarman stated he acknowledged and recognised the comments made by the Objector and had sought to minimise the impact of the scheme on local receptors. He added, from the outset, that the developer had sought to engage with neighbours in a collaborative manner and had undertaken a comprehensive consultation on the proposals by posting 2,000 newsletters, holding four public exhibitions which were attended by 48 people, had hosted a project website which had been viewed by 3,000 people, and had delivered a social media campaign which reached over 400,000 people. He told the Sub-Committee that the submitted environmental impact assessment demonstrated that the impacts of the scheme on neighbouring properties were similar to the consented scheme and, notwithstanding that, the transformed scheme would result in significantly less demolition and a quicker overall construction programme which he hoped would contribute toward the minimisation of any temporary disruption. Mr. Jarman concluded that if Members resolved to grant planning permission for the new scheme, the development team would continue to engage proactively with neighbours to ensure that any impacts on amenity were minimised.

Mr. John Bushell of Kohn Peterson Fox Architects (KPF) addressed the Sub-Committee and told Members that the existing consent established a successful vision for the site with a design responsive to a complex context and provided an open and active ground floor, created a southern anchor and gateway for Leadenhall Market. He added that in wanting to make a change in the environmental performance by investing and keeping the existing structure, it had also provided an opportunity to positively evolve the design on other fronts. Mr. Bushell noted that KPF welcomed the Officer conclusion that the revised scheme was of a high-quality design, Historic England's comment that the new scheme was a calmer design which helped to reduce its visual impact, and that Historic Royal Palaces and St. Paul's Cathedral had no objection to the scheme. He added that the design represented an improvement over the previously approved scheme in relation to sustainability, the proposed public amenity and relationship to Leadenhall Market, the architectural design and the office product itself and, in terms of sustainability, it was a big step change. He explained that the entire basement would be kept, as well as the slabs, including the superstructure slabs and the concrete structure and would make a huge reduction in the impact of construction over the consented scheme as the building of a new basement and superstructure was avoided in the podium which represented a highly significant reduction in the impact on neighbours. Mr. Bushell told Members that KPF had spent two years adding a tower that threaded through the retained space and the retrofit approach that had been taken was both carbon guardianship while allowing for vigorous growth which he believed was part of the future of the City. He further added that the stone would be reused, which he stated KPF had proved could be done elsewhere, and there were significant improvements in the performance of the scheme, especially in relation to operational carbon which would be entirely transformed in the revised proposal and the development team had committed to monitoring the carbon performance over 10 years via the NABERS Scheme. In relation to public realm, Mr. Bushell added that the development team's research of other cities had highlighted the critical importance of a very active ground floor and had responded to that with an increased intensity of public uses at the base of the building and created a more direct and visible public route through the site which presented a clear gateway to the market, an arcade that was animated by the frontage and a curated digital art wall. He reminded Members that the delivery area would be a pop-up market during the day and noted that the destination space at the top of the building was both internal and external which made a unique offer in the City at height with views to the north of the cluster and long views to the west, and great care had been taken to ensure that queues did not detract from retail activity on the ground floor of the building. The development team's urban green proposals consolidated the green roofs to large terraces that were accessible by the public and users of the office at the top of the podium and the top of the tower. Mr. Bushell stated that KPF had lots of success in accessible places, including tops of buildings, and had kept within all Fleet Street views while strengthening each element of the building composition which had been part of a good dialogue with the City's planning Officers. The base had been refined and incorporation of the reused stone would give it character and a patina with the top celebrated with a greater architectural articulation which was more clearly defined and seen very positively by KPF. He further stated that the three elements had been

reconfigured to emphasise the long views to the southwest, some approvals immediately to the south and to increase the visibility of the tripod design from a distance. The entire building interiors had been redesigned and over two years had been spent optimising the efficiency of the scheme to maximise the performance of the office. Mr. Bushell further stated to Members that ten tenants would benefit from an active and curated base proposed by Hatch, and KPF were very proud of the existing consent and the way in which it had been allowed to evolve in dialogue with the City and overall, a new owner and development manager had driven impressive improvements to the building to make sure it was fit as possible a contribution to the future of the City. He concluded that 70 Gracechurch Street aimed to be best-in-class on all counts and on completion of the building, not as it was designed, and would be a robust, relevant and refined place to work and enjoy.

The Chairman invited Members to ask questions of the Supporters.

A Member sought clarification from the Supporters as to whether they had engaged with the wider community as the Objector had cited that there had been no engagement or dialogue with them at all. Mr. Richard Ward, from DP9 Planning Consultants, stated that consultation was extremely comprehensive and there were multiple attempts to approach all neighbours, including residents of Bulls Head Passage and added that the position taken early on was that nothing could be done to change the position of those who lived on that street as they had expressed concerns over the previous scheme which was granted. While the development team had reached out on four or five separate occasions, the position from residents was that they did not see the point in meeting with the development team as their position would not change. Mr. Ward added that if planning permission was granted, there would definitely be an attempt at further consultation to ensure that any disruption was minimised and a key point with the transformation scheme was that the development team believed the construction programme could be reduced by up to two years.

Another Member asked the Supporters to provide further clarity in relation to docked and dockless bikes as she was concerned about the safety of pedestrians. A Supporter stated that the access was just off Lime Street and was confident that there would not be any conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians as it was a small distance and expected that cyclists would dismount their bikes before they entered the basement. The Supporter added that the new pedestrian route would be a managed space to ensure people did not make a decision to ride their bike through the space and believed it could be controlled through the relevant access management plan secured by the Section 106 agreement.

The issue of vacant buildings was raised by a Member as he stated they were a real problem and it was an issue that needed to be addressed. He added that the building, at least from the outside, had appeared to be vacant for some time and, if consent was to be granted, queried how quickly construction could be started and what consideration had been given to meanwhile uses between the meeting and the actual start of construction. A Supporter informed the Sub-

Committee that Marks & Spencers (M&S) had closed their stall on the southwest corner of the site as they had not seen the store as profitable within their operation model which had not been motivated by the owner of the development. He added they had been in dialogue with M&S about what they wished to do with the space as they were currently still in occupation and the development team had, as part of the application and consultation, looked at a number of meanwhile uses and as the opportunity to be able to take discussions further, the development team would look at the potential for reactivating the southwest corner of the site.

A question was raised by a Member as to whether the Applicants could confirm that there were toilets available to the public at both the round floor and the viewing area, and asked the Applicants to confirm the opening hours for the public. The Supporter confirmed that there would be public toilets available to the public at the base of the building, and at Level 32, and the public viewing space would be open to the public from dawn until dusk.

The Chairman questioned whether the applicants would be willing, if it were proposed, to set up a group to give residents impacted by the construction regular updates and coordinate with them to ensure there was cooperation and coordinate around the development. The Supporters they were.

The Chairman moved the meeting to questions of Officers.

A Member requested whether some appropriate signage could be provided at Ships Passage, as it was currently a blank wall, to direct pedestrians to Leadenhall Market. Officers confirmed there were wayfinding and signage conditions attached and would work with the applicants on that.

Another Member sought clarity and a comparison in relation to the impact of total whole life carbon emissions on the consented scheme against the proposed scheme. Officers explained that the consented scheme had 1,774kg CO₂/sqm of embodied carbon emissions in comparison to the proposed scheme which had 1,293kg CO₂/sqm of embodied carbon emissions. The Member asked for the total number. Officers explained that they could not compare the total numbers as the consented scheme was calculated by the previous applicants on significantly less floor space for an unknown reason. However, the total embodied carbon emissions of the proposed scheme were around 103,000,000kg CO₂ and the total embodied carbon emissions of the consented scheme based on the GIA of the proposed scheme (to make the 2 schemes comparable) would be 139,000,000kg CO₂ which was roughly an improvement of a third on total carbon emissions. Officers indicated that multiplying the per square meter carbon emissions of the consented scheme and the proposed scheme by the same amount of floorspace was the best way to compare the 2 schemes. The Member further queried whether the method to work out the total carbon emissions figure was to take the total of the previously consented scheme and multiply it by the square metres of the proposed floor space. Officers stated that the consented scheme figures were not quoted in the planning report relating to the consented scheme, and the consultants of that scheme had used a smaller total floor space figure for the consented

scheme as what was approved which Officers did not know as to why that had been done, but the square metre figure was what counted which indicated an improvement for the proposed scheme of a quarter on the consented scheme. The Member stated she had a very different view as to what the important figure was as the total carbon emissions was what impacted upon the environment and queried whether it was wrong that one could not say with accuracy what the previously consented scheme's total carbon emissions were and the assertion from the applicants that it had considerably improved was one that could not be established.

The Member also questioned whether the inclusion of a pop-up market could detract from Leadenhall Market and what would be done to mitigate that. Officers stated they were of the view that it would be a positive addition to the wider area and was relatively small in comparison to the market. They added it would contain a couple of food stores and suggested it was worth bearing in mind how much footfall the proposed office building would add to the wider area.

The Member also sought clarity on Historic England's position as she stated they had acknowledged it was a change for the better, but a limited one and that broadly the development was the same in terms of its height and scope when compared to the previously consented scheme and the Officer presentation and the Supporters had given the impression it was an endorsement from Historic England. Officers responded that Historic England had raised concerns about the consented scheme on heritage grounds, but also raised concerns specifically about the quality of the design and the effect of the designs on the setting of the World Heritage Site, so the comments on the last application were very design focused which was why Officers had taken the view of their response to the proposed scheme that the changes to the design and its quieter quality was welcomed and the knock-on impact on the heritage setting was a shift in position. However, Officers acknowledged that Historic England did still have some concerns as reflected in the report.

The Deputy Chairman enquired whether the proposed scheme was more environmentally friendly than the already consented scheme as the carbon burden per square metre was better and indicated he disagreed with previous comments that had been made as to the importance of the carbon burden per square metre. He added it was an important metric, and if a smaller building was consented on the site, it meant that another building needed to be built elsewhere to ensure the office floor space was provided. Officers suggested that while it could not be compared accurately at the moment as the previous applicants had used a different square metreage than was proposed for the consented scheme, in square metre terms it was a significant improvement for embodied carbon emissions, particularly in relation to the upfront carbon and the advantage of the scheme was that a significant amount of basement structure and superstructure would be retained which was so far unseen in such developments where a smaller development was replaced by a tower structure. Officers added that the way the applicant had designed the façade to be lightweight and the strengthening works to the existing structure were innovative and was an interesting attempt of a retrofit combined with a new

element and presented opportunities to improve the public realm, integrate a lot of urban greening and achieved a much healthier building than the previously consented scheme.

The Deputy Chairman questioned whether it would be a reasonable assumption to assume that, as a result of retention of much more substructure and superstructure, it was obvious that the proposed development was a more environmentally friendly building. Officers confirmed it was correct that it was more environmentally friendly and a lot of the façade materials and structural elements were not just retained, but would be reused in the new structure which was evident in the design of the building.

A Member stated she appreciated there would be space for pop-up stores, but there had been a significant loss of decent-sized retail units due to recent application consents and schemes that were being built which raised concern as she felt she could not see a plan in place to replace retail units and queried why retail units could not be put on the first and second floors of the proposed development if there was no space to accommodate them on the ground floor, and what plan was in place to ensure large retail units were being replaced. Officers responded that retail and office use were in the same use class and the developer could move freely between those uses without planning permission. Therefore, Officers had no control over whether the M&S was still open, or if it wanted to change to offices. Officers added they had already resolved to lose the retail in the space, but took the point made by the Member about the loss of large format retail. Officers stated they considered the pop-up market and the active frontage provided at ground floor, not only the public uses through the route, would provide an improved level of active frontage across the site and would draw visitors up to level 32 as well. Officers added it was important to remember that the City's primary function was office floor space as its business function which was why office floor space was being prioritised. Officers stated that the scheme offered major improvements to enhance the Leadenhall Market area, including the routes going through it, the food and beverage offer and their evidence showed that the Leadenhall Market area was one of the areas of lowest demand for increased growth in retail over the next 15 years which was much smaller than the area around Liverpool Street Station. They further noted that M&S could have retained their space in the building, but had decided to move away and, while they acknowledged that other retailers may have wanted the space, on the whole the option to support small retail food and beverage offers to enhance the routes through to Leadenhall Market would be key to delivering the scheme and key to the enhancement of the area. Officers further added they had also explored work with the Business Improvement District (BID) in the area to see what could be done to address issues around retail, but stated there was a judgement to be made on the appropriate retail to be delivered as part of the scheme.

The Member indicated she understood the concerns raised by the Objector and sought assurance that the recently approved developments in the area would not begin construction at the same time and residents would be protected as there had been issues with previous applications with not reaching out to residents. The Member also sought assurance that the applicants would reach

out to residents to reduce the disruption. Officers responded that construction would have to be coordinated across all the sites where consent had been granted or had received a resolution to grant across Gracechurch Street which would come through demolition plans, logistics plans, construction plans and scheme protective works. Officers added that scheme protective works conditions encouraged developers to liaise with and engage meaningfully with the residents throughout the construction period and there was a construction monitoring clause within the Section 106. The cumulative impact of the construction had also been assessed thoroughly within the report and took into account noise vibration, both from the proposed development and other cumulative schemes across the street.

Another Member indicated he agreed with a previous statement that the development was a substantially more environmentally friendly building, but sought clarification on a comment by Officers that the previous carbon study for the consented scheme was based on the wrong square footage and the actual square footage of the consented scheme was different as there seemed to be a suggestion that the proposed scheme was a much larger building despite seemingly being a similar sized building. The Member emphasised the need to understand what was previously approved in relation to the square footage of the previous building to establish whether the carbon study was based on incorrect figures. Officers responded that the per square metre figures for the proposed scheme were correct. However, Officers had only just discovered that the overall floor space of the consented scheme was smaller for the carbon calculations, but not for the overall scheme on the day of the meeting. They added that they were not clear as to why the consultant of the consented scheme had used a different square metre figure GIA, but it was important that the square metre figures for the proposed scheme were correct. Officers further noted that they had calculated the consented scheme's per square metre figure and multiplied it by the floor space for the proposed scheme to make it comparable, and the consented scheme had higher whole life cycle carbon emissions than the proposed scheme before the Sub-Committee.

The Chairman moved the meeting to a debate.

A Member stated he wished to compliment the Officers and structural engineers of the site for what they had done and noted there had been a move to reusing material, not just in basements but in above ground structures as well and added that it explained how 30% less carbon was able to be used.

Concern was expressed by a Member that the Officer presentation described a tall building as being a key characteristic of a Conservation Area and stated that it fundamentally misunderstood the meaning of a Conservation Area. The Member also raised the issue of retail and noted that while Officers were working with BIDs to improve the situation, they had also stated their analysis suggested it was not needed. She added that she hoped there would be opportunity at the grand committee meeting to raise questions that were more systemic in nature. The Member also stated that while she appreciated efforts made by Officers in relation to the environmental impact, she felt that the

details around carbon figures were not a sufficient priority given figures around office floor space had been provided.

Another Member indicated she did not support the previous consented scheme, but appreciated that the design had been refined and the height of the structure had been cut down somewhat. However, there was still an impact on the Conservation Area, Leadenhall Market itself and Historic England still had concerns about the impact upon St Paul's Cathedral and the Tower of London. She added she was surprised with a response from Officer in regard to retail not being required in the area given the tall buildings being constructed in the area and those working in those buildings would want access to retail facilities. The Member told the Sub-Committee that the City needed to be doing what it could to provide large usable retail space if it wanted to be a 24/7 city as pop-up and coffee shops were not sufficient, and was split on her decision as she was concerned about the impact on listed buildings and the Conservation Area. She further added that she felt for the residents and everything needed to be done to ensure the construction phase was carried out as smoothly as possible. The Member noted there was a five-year timespan on the application rather than three, and suggested she preferred three as it encouraged developers to begin development quickly and ran the risk of the scheme being returned in five years, or the scheme beginning development in five years with an out-of-date Section 106 agreement. She told Members that she hoped five-year consents were not going to become the norm.

The Chairman drew the debate to a close and stated he felt that the scheme had merit and was a definitely improvement on the previously approved scheme. He told the Sub-Committee that instinctively, the carbon story seemed to be a positive one and added that the development would make a huge improvement to the London skyline as there were gaps in the City frontage that the development would help smooth with building the eastern city cluster out and make it a much more beautiful vista from the various vantage points along the River Thames. The Chairman added that he believed the key retail site was the Leadenhall Market, and any development needed to work around the ecosystem of the Market as a retail offering. He noted he took on board the criticism in relation to retail in the unit, but felt that the flowthrough encouraged visitors to come through the building to the major sale anchors in Leadenhall Market which was critical and something that had been paid attention to by Officers.

The Chairman moved the item to a vote.

The Sub-Committee proceeded to vote on the recommendations as detailed in the Officer report.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 14

OPPOSED – 0

There were two abstentions.

Therefore, the recommendations were carried.

RESOLVED – That, Members agreed:

- 1) That 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 subject to:
 - a. The application be referred to the Mayor of London to decide whether to allow the Corporation to grant planning permission as recommended, or to direct refusal, or to determine the application himself (Article 5(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008);
- 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 agreement under Section 278 of the Highway Act 1980 in respect of those matters set out in the report, the decision notice not to be issued until the Section 106 obligations have been executed; and
- 3) That your Officers be authorised to provide the information required by regulation 29 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, and to inform the public and the Secretary of State as required by regulation 30 of those regulations

5. RIVER FORESHORE ADJACENT TO RIVERBANK HOUSE SWAN LANE EC4R 3BF

The Committee received a report which sought planning permission for the proposed removal/cutting down to bed level of the existing campshed timbers; removal of gabion baskets and steel tie rods between the existing campshed and anchor posts; installation of new sloped revetment formed from imported granular fill and rock mattresses; installation of Rock Bags in the gap that has formed between the two of the sheet pile campshed retaining walls at the western end of the site; and reinstatement of the bed level behind the installed rock bags to match the top level of the sheet piles.

Officers presented the existing plan to the Sub-Committee and informed Members that the foreshore had been covered by a flood defence for the flood wall itself which was known as a campshed. The existing plan showed the extent of the campshed which was subject to the application on the eastern side and the blue ingress showed the material that had been lost and the damage done to the flood defence as a result of failed timber piling and retaining walls which the repair and replacement of was subject to the proposal.

The existing section of the retaining wall was shown to the Sub-Committee by Officers who stated that the distance between the existing wall and the riverbed itself here showed the level of material that had been lost; the second diagram was taken from slightly further west and showed the different in area in the campshed across the site.

The demolition plan was presented to Members by Officers who informed the Sub-Committee that the proposed works concerned the failed gabion baskets

which were damaged and added that the main site of the material had been removed due to the failure of the retaining wall.

The Sub-Committee were presented with an image of the proposed plan by Officers who told Members that the image showed a rock mattress that would be installed to replace the campshed to bring it back up to line, a new existing wall, the dolphins would be retained and some localised repair would be carried out on the west area.

Officers presented the proposed section to the Sub-Committee and stated that the rock mattressing would be placed with low loose soil, or loose material on top of it, to more appropriately mirror a typical riverbed. While it was not possible across the entirety of the rock mattress, it could be done across most of it. Officers added that the image showed that there was no material on top of the western section.

Another image of the proposed section was presented to the Sub-Committee by Officers who stated which showed that the material laid underneath the rock mattress would not be lost.

Officers informed the Sub-Committee that a number of objections had been received, principally related to the archaeological value of the site, noise and disturbance and the impact on the natural habitat. Officers presented an image to the Sub-Committee and stated it showed the progression of the river since the Roman period and showed the area to the north of the river wall was relatively new, so the area of the riverbed was not immediately adjacent to Roman London. Officers added that a desk-based assessment had been undertaken and submitted with the application which had been considered appropriate, supported by the statutory consultees Historic England and GLAAS and, further to that, a written scheme of investigation was recommended via condition to further the archaeological understanding of the area. In relation to noise and disturbance, Officers stated that it was principally about the construction impact and, therefore, the impacts were temporary. Nevertheless, a scheme for protecting neighbouring residents was required by condition with a construction management plan. With regard to the impact on the natural environment, Officers noted that the campshed itself was a man-made structure so there had been interventions in the area already, and the proposal triggered the need for a biodiversity net gain (BNG), which was a national requirement, and, in this circumstance, there would be a 20% increase in BNG as secured by condition and was demonstrated as achievable in the application material.

Site photographs were shown to Members by Officers who stated they showed the scale of the material that had been lost in front of the dolphins and also showed the failure of the timber pilings and the sorry state of repair they were in. Officers added the proposals were considered appropriate in the context of development plan policies, the National Planning Policy Framework, the draft City Plan, and necessary and, given the conditions attached related to archaeology, disturbance to neighbours and the ecology of the site, the

proposals were also considered acceptable and Officers recommended approval.

The Chairman stated there were no Objectors speaking against the application.

The Chairman added there was one supporter who was present for questions.

A Member stated he understood the need to repair the defence, but could not understand the replacement of the tidal Thames which was currently wood, sediment and sand, with rock as it seemed out of keeping with what was in place at the Thames bank and sought an explanation as to why rock bags were to be used. Ms. Trina De Silva, of the City of London Corporation, stated that the designers had gone for rock bags in the area due to the London Underground tunnels being directly beneath the site which they wished to avoid doing any work near to avoid any piling or excavation on the foreshore. She added that the rock bags would not cover the entire area and was looking to install 0.4m of loose material on top of the rock bags where possible. However, in areas where the gradient was too steep, the material was likely to be washed away which meant those rock bags would be exposed.

The Deputy Chairman requested the use of gabion baskets or wire mesh be used on the rock bags to eliminate the use of plastic as he was concerned microplastics would get into the river as, while it was a small impact, it would be good to make a start on eliminating the use of plastics on the river. Ms. De Silva responded that the proposal sought to use plastic mesh with the rock mattress and indicated she would have to discuss with the designers to see if wire could be used instead.

A Member noted that the Thames Estuary Partnership, on such projects, advocated the activation of the river wall by the installation of horizontal ledges between high and low tide to allow for it to be colonised by shellfish and seaweed to create a marine wall which was self-irrigating and suggested it should be added to the proposal as it was a cheap way of beautifying the wall. Ms. De Silva stated it would be looked at and noted there was a proposal to install vertipools on the face of the wall in front of the campshed. She also added that she had suggested to the designers exploring the feasibility of installing timber.

Another Member expressed concerns about the use of plastic, especially as the City was the Port Health Authority, and expressed to the Sub-Committee that the use of plastic should be completely avoided. The Member added it would also create a more slippery surface for those who walked down the foreshore. She also stated she agreed with a previous comment in relation to allowing the river wall to be activated as rock pools allowed for small fish and microbes to survive tidal changes and suggested if the City was to carry out work, it should be exemplar to demonstrate to other developers that there was a tried and tested way of making repairs and was better for the environment. The Member also expressed concerns that the proposal could convince other developers

that the rock bags covered in plastic were a quicker and cheaper option and could make the foreshore inaccessible for mudlarks. She added it was a polluting environment and did not enhance the river ecology and suggested the Sub-Committee ensure that what was approved was environmentally friendly. Ms. De Silva responded that they were planning to install vertipools, which were rock pools, on the face of the river wall and, potentially, within the rock mattresses, and the use of horizontal timbers had been discussed with the designers to see if they could be incorporated. She added that there would be loose material as the surface for some of the campshed where the gradients allowed, so the rock mattresses for quite a lot of the area of the campshed would be covered by loose material.

The Chairman noted that one of the main concerns in the report was ecological impact and queried whether the materials had been assessed for their ecological impact. Ms. De Silva confirmed they had and, while the Environment Agency had indicated they would have preferred no metal or plastic in an ideal situation, they had accepted it as a solution on the site. She added, in relation to the ecological value of the site, that it had been considered under the BNG requirement which related to the installation of the rock pools to improve the biodiversity of the site.

A query was raised by a Member as to whether it was a point of dispute that Roman remains could be found in the location of the proposed development, or had accepted there would not be remains in the location. Ms. De Silva indicated she had not gone back to Objectors on the issue but, since the application was made, a walkover survey had been carried out on the foreshore and there had been no objection from Historic England who accepted the work that had been done so far and did not have any concern over the campshed being restored. The Member asked if most of the objection could be discounted as they were based on an inaccurate understanding of the likelihood of Roman remains being found in the location. Ms. De Silva responded that that material was constantly moving and could not say what was there at the moment, but Historic England did not have any concerns.

Another Member expressed approval that a desk-based exercise had been carried out and sought reassurance as to whether any other appropriate archaeological organisation would be invited onto the site to do a physical examination. Ms. De Silva responded that a walkover survey had been conducted by an archaeology consultant and Historic England had indicated that no further archaeological work was required. However, she added that in the event of something being discovered that seemed significant, there was a consultant on board with the scheme who would be contacted.

The Supporter was questioned by a Member as to how much thought had been given to materials that allowed for walking along the foreshore as it became an important site for walking during the pandemic and the sediment had been useful for that purpose. Ms. De Silva responded that the areas covered in loose material would be similar to the rest of the campshed and fairly easy to walk on, but the areas with rock mattresses would not be as easy to walk on and,

therefore, could be areas that were more difficult to walk on following completion of the work.

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.

A Member expressed concerns that plastic would be used and suggested, if the plastic did leech into the water, that another alternative needed to be explored. The Chairman suggested the question would be best answered by Officers.

The Chairman moved the meeting to questions of Officers.

The Chairman asked Officers to pick up the concerns raised about the leeching of plastic into the river. Officers highlighted there were other regulatory stages the development needed to go through that were more detailed than the planning stage and stated he was sure the ecological impact would be at the forefront of their mind. They added that the proposal would require to be signed off by the Environment Agency, the Marine and Maritime Organisation, and the Port of London's sign off. However, they had been consulted at the planning stage and had accepted the methodology of the scheme.

The Chairman queried whether the material used would be part of further assessment going forward. Officers stated they assumed that the Environment Agency would consider it.

A Member stated it was immaterial whether or not the plastic chemically leached into the water as there was no plastic that would not contaminate the water, regardless of how chemically stable it was as it would be abraded by material in the river flowing over it which would lead to microplastics being released into the river. He added that it was the clear view of the Sub-Committee that it was a problem and not something that should be considered acceptable. While there were technical considerations to the material used, it seemed that stainless steel, albeit a more expensive alternative, could be used which was potentially why it was not used in the first place. The Member questioned by what mechanism could the discussion be continued with the applicant to ensure that a technically feasible solution, that met the Sub-Committee's concerns, be reached. Officers indicated it could be addressed by condition, or by an informative, if the applicant shared the information that they submitted to the Environment Agency at the same time.

The Chairman stipulated that concerns about the material used be considered going forward and asked Officers to formulate wording for a Motion.

Another Member suggested whatever scheme that be agreed enhanced the river as part of the City's role as Port Health Authority and made it exemplar so other foreshore owners could see how they could repair foreshores to the benefit of the river. She also stated that she hoped departments would not work in silos and ensure work was joined-up to ensure something was not agreed which was detrimental to the environment.

The Deputy Chairman suggested that the Sub-Committee be more forceful in relation to horizontal ledges on the marine wall as there did not appear to be a lot of enthusiasm from the applicant when the issue was discussed and could be achieved inexpensively.

A Member queried whether the justification for the rock solution was due to the location of the site above a sensitive tunnel or was it desired to have the foreshore turn into a rock shore as he stated he was uncomfortable with existing materials not being used and the style not being sympathetic to the current surroundings.

Officers stated that the condition would be similar to other submission of materials conditions that would require the submission of materials, specifically related for the rock mattress, to be signed off for the discharge of that condition.

The Deputy Chairman advised that the plastic could be removed by using gabian baskets or wire mesh on the rock bags, especially as the material was a natural material that, while it would erode, was less environmentally harmful.

Officers recommended wording that read:

Prior to the commencement of any works, details of the materials for the rock mattress shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the reason for that condition would be to ensure that there was no adverse environmental or ecological impact on the River Thames or the Foreshore.

Officers added an informative could also be added to the supplement that captured the general comments from the Sub-Committee in relation to concerns about the use of plastics and the developer should be looking to use the most environmentally friendly solution.

The Chairman requested that the Motion included the marine wall enhancement with the horizontal slats. Officers responded that it could be added, although the proposal did provide the 20% BNG and expressed concern that such works might be over and above what was proposed by the application which potentially required the need for a separate planning application. However, Officers confirmed they could apply an informative to look into it, and other means of improvement. Officers added that such details would be fleshed out as part of the ecological management plan in the approval details.

The Chairman proposed a Motion to the Sub-Committee.

MOTION: Prior to the commencement of any works, details of the materials for the rock mattress shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the reason for that condition would be to ensure that there was no adverse environmental or ecological impact on the River Thames or the Foreshore.

The Deputy Chairman seconded the Motion.

The Chairman opened the floor to a debate on the Motion.

A Member suggested that the Motion seemed unnecessarily narrow and gave the applicant an easy route out through the limitation of the Sub-Committee's consideration of materials specifically to the rock mattress and asked whether it could be broadened to include all materials which would remain in the river at the end of the development as he was concerned that the plastic-covered rock mattress could be removed and replaced with another plastic material which would mean the condition had been complied with.

It was stated by a Member that she was concerned with the Motion being limited just to rock mattresses as there were potentially more environmentally friendly ideas and suggested her preference would be that the applicant explored the most environmentally friendly option, with the exclusion of plastics, to enhance the river ecology. The Member added that bags with metal would get ripped and could become dangerous and stated she felt it was bizarre that the Sub-Committee could approve an application that could be detrimental to the river that the City, as the Port Health Authority, was responsible for. Officers expressed concerns that rock mattresses were a fundamental element of the proposal and if it was conditioned to include any kind of foreshore protection, it would not meet the nature of the planning application scheme source. They added, however, that more words could be added to the condition.

Another Member queried as to what the consequences would be if the application was deemed not acceptable by the Sub-Committee as they stated many Members were concerned about the basis of the application. Officers responded that the applicant was keen for the application to come before the Sub-Committee before the Court of Common Council elections as the next Sub-Committee meeting was not until May. Officers added there was some urgency for a decision due to the damage that had been caused to the river wall, and the Environment Agency had served a note some years ago about damage that was being caused to the river wall as a result of the campshed failing.

The Chairman amended the Motion and suggested the Sub-Committee delegate authority to the Town Clerk representing the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, to approve, before the prior commencement of any works, details of the materials for the rock mattress in writing, with the reason for the condition being to ensure that there was no adverse environmental or ecological impact on the River Thames or the Foreshore. The Motion was seconded.

MOTION: Delegate Authority to the Town Clerk representing the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, to approve, before the prior commencement of any works, details of the materials to be used for the rock mattress in writing, with the reason for the condition being to ensure that there was no adverse environmental or ecological impact on the River Thames or the Foreshore.

The Sub-Committee agreed with the course of action suggested and, therefore, the Motion passed.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Delegated Authority to the Town Clerk representing the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, to approve, before the prior commencement of any works, details of the materials to be used for the rock mattress in writing, with the reason for the condition being to ensure that there was no adverse environmental or ecological impact on the River Thames or the Foreshore.

The Chairman moved the meeting back to the debate on the substantive item. A Member questioned whether the use of rock was an exceptional use or not given the location and asked what the justification was as he stated he would be concerned if such a trend was to expand. Officers responded that the use of loose material that matched the riverbed was a priority and, where the angle would allow the material to rest and not be washed away immediately, loose material would be placed on top of the rock mattress so it would not be seen. The exposed area of the rock mattress was simply due to the angle that was required on a section of the foreshore and there would be some sediment that sat on top of it naturally as the river washed it in, but it would be washed back out. Officers added that, where that did not happen, loose material would be placed and a majority of the campshed would be covered in the loose material. Officers further noted that the approach was site-specific, and the question asked at the beginning of the proposal was related to where loose soil could be placed to match the repairing environment that was natural for the area.

The Chairman moved the meeting to a vote.

The Sub-Committee voted on the recommendation, subject to the Delegated Authority.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 17
OPPOSED – 0
There were no abstentions.

RESOLVED – That, Members agreed:

- 1) That Planning Permission be granted in accordance with the details set out in the attached schedule.

6. * VALID PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

The Sub-Committee received a report which detailed a list of development applications received by the Department of the Built Environment since the report to the last meeting.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the report and its contents.

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

The Sub-Committee received a report which detailed a list of 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, Members:

- Noted the report and its contents.

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

There were no questions on matters relating to the work of the Sub-Committee.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business that the Chairman considered urgent.

The meeting ended at 11.12 am

Chairman

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