

PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 17 June 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Applications Sub-Committee held at Livery Hall - Guildhall on Tuesday, 17 June 2025 at 10.30 am

Present

Members:

Deputy Tom Sleigh (Chair)
Shravan Joshi MBE (Deputy Chairman)
Tana Adkin
Samapti Bagchi
Matthew Bell
Deputy John Edwards
Deputy Marianne Fredericks
Alderman Prem Goyal CBE
Josephine Hayes
Deputy Jaspreet Hodgson
Philip Kelvin
Alderswoman Elizabeth Anne King, BEM JP
Charles Edward Lord, OBE JP
Antony Manchester
Sophia Mooney
Deborah Oliver
Gaby Robertshaw
Hugh Selka
William Upton KC
Jacqui Webster

Members (in attendance observing):

Oliver Sells KC
Deputy Ann Holmes

Officers:

Polly Dunn	- Assistant Town Clerk and Executive Director of Governance and Member Services
Fleur Francis	- Environment Department
Rob McNicol	- Environment Department
Gwyn Richards	- Environment Department

Koon Wai Leong, Hoy Hup Reality
Mel Allwood, Arup
Dr Ken Shuttleworth, Make Architects

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from, Anthony Fitzpatrick, Alderman Alison Gowman, Deputy Henry Pollard, Alderman Simon Pryke and Deputy Nighat Qureishi.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 MAY 2025**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2025 be approved as a correct record.

4. **HIGH HOLBORN**

4a. **319-325 High Holborn (Heron House), 326-332 High Holborn And 26 Southampton Buildings (Holborn Gate), And 44 Southampton Buildings, WC1 And WC2 - 24/01262/FULMAJ**

The Sub-Committee considered a report which sought the approval of planning permission for the demolition of existing buildings at 326-332 High Holborn & 26 Southampton Buildings (Holborn Gate), 319-325 High Holborn (Heron House) and 44 Southampton Buildings and construction of a new building.

The Chairman invited Officers to make a presentation to the Sub-Committee.

Officers confirmed the intention to provide Members with a summary presentation of a more comprehensive presentation which had previously been circulated with the agenda pack, in addition to a further addendum that was circulated on Monday 16 June 2025 to address an additional representation and to include minor corrections. It was noted that this morning a letter had been received from the London Borough of Islington raising no comments to the application. Officers showed the Sub-Committee an image of an aerial view of the site, confirming that the application related to a site located to the northwest part of the City bordering with London Borough of Camden to the north and bounded by High Holborn to the north, Southampton Buildings to the southwest and Staple Inn Buildings to the east. The site partially lies and was surrounded by Chancery Lane conservation area. There were several listed buildings in the vicinity of the site including Staple Inn Buildings immediately adjacent to the east, 25 Southampton Buildings and 10 Fumival Street, the former Patent Office to the south. The application site comprises three buildings namely Holburn Gate, Heron House and 44 Southampton Buildings. Holborn Gate (for which the Sub-Committee were shown a photograph) was a ten-storey office building that was granted planning permission to be redeveloped in 1963. Heron House was also a ten-storey office building that was constructed in 1968. 44 Southampton Buildings which sits within Chancery Lane conservation area was constructed in 1913. The building has undergone numerous internal and external changes including refurbishment in 1965. Planning permission was being sought for an office led development consisting of the demolition of the existing buildings and construction of a new building comprising two basement levels, ground and nine upper storeys and an external plant enclosure. Retail uses, a flexible cultural exhibition,

performance and community space and creative affordable workspace were also proposed at ground and basement levels. A pocket park was proposed to the south of the proposed building. Seven residential units were currently located within the site, which the proposed office led development does not propose to contain on site. To secure the net loss of residential units, re-provision of them was secured via section 106 obligation to ensure that seven units of equivalent floor space were re-provided within the City.

The Sub-Committee were shown an image that set out an overlay of proposed and existing building lines for the development. It was explained how the proposed development follows a more cohesive building line with recess concaved corners. The building line in sections almost aligns with the overhang other than in a small section to the east. It was a contextual approach to an established building line along the southern part of High Holburn. A pedestrian comfort levels assessment was carried out and it showed that peak times the levels achieved were C plus which were considered acceptable for streets of this type. The Sub-Committee were shown images of the existing public realm surrounding the site and highlighting that it was of low quality. On the side there was an existing open space on a raised platform level; opposite the south office entrance there were several underused spaces. The Colonnade along High Holburn lacks natural light and was too narrow for pedestrian movement.

The proposed development was recessing the south façade to the north and would create a new pocket park measuring approximately 640 square metres. The pocket part would introduce new hard and soft landscaping, integrating furniture and seating in an organic form, high quality finishing materials and a water feature. Whilst the proposal would result in a reduction of public realm, it would form a dynamic and inclusive destination that prioritises safety, accessibility and user experience, attracting a diverse mix of visitors and workers. Access to short stay cycle parking would be off High Holburn and long stay off Southampton Buildings. There would be on site serving points into Southampton Buildings to serve the whole development with consolidated deliveries not exceeding 35 vehicles a day. Two bus parking bays were also proposed within the site to serve the development. 745 long stay and 71 short stay policy compliant cycle parking spaces were proposed within the ground and basement levels along with policy compliant end of trip facilities. The Sub-Committee were shown an axonometric plan of the ground floor arrangements and proposed uses including retail floor space along High Holburn and to the southwest corner of the application site. The entrance to the office unit was on the northeast corner of the site whilst the entrance to the cultural offer was onto northwest.

The Sub-Committee were shown a proposed plan of basement levels one and two, ground floor and mezzanine. Alongside the office space, the proposal would deliver a compelling new cultural, exhibition, performance, learning, community offer for the City that would align with the Destination City agenda. The offer extends at basement, lower ground and ground levels measuring over 900 square metres being available to the public. The Sub-Committee were shown a visual of the main venue space that was inspired by the former

Knights Templar Church, which once stood at this space. The space would be able to accommodate 300 people and would be flexible to be used from cultural events to physical and immersive art exhibitions. Supplementing to the auditorium space was a flexible space within the basement level which has the potential to be used for exhibitions, cultural and community workshops or an area for reading and research. At ground floor, accessible from High Holburn, a welcoming space was proposed contingent to any future cultural occupier which its use could span from hosting small exhibitions, operate as a small-scale performance space. The site has multiple historic layers dating back to the 12th century where the first Knights Templar Church was located onto the northwest corner of the application site as shown on the map.

An excavation in 2000 found that some of the original old temple and 1 metre stretch of the church was believed to be present at the basement of the site. The Sub-Committee were shown a CGI image showing this section of the foundation wall, where it was proposed it be exposed within the basement for the flexible cultural offer. This was considered to be an exceptional opportunity to tangibly connect the proposed cultural offer with the history of the site. To uncover the rich history of the site, public art was also proposed to be incorporated in several internal and external places to maximise the identity of the site. The Sub-Committee were shown indicative floor plans for each level, with terraces starting to be introduced on the seventh floor and a plant enclosure on the tenth floor, being shown an image of existing and proposed elevation of the building within this context. Overall, the proposed development would be less than nine metres higher than the existing building.

The Sub-Committee were shown a 3d visual of the proposed building showing the contextual design of the building, the articulation of the facades and reduce massing towards the upper floors. A civic clock would be introduced on the circular northern corner of the building at the ninth floor, being visible from long views and acting as a landmark when approaching from the east. The proposed architectural treatment of the façade takes references from the surrounding buildings being predominantly solid, with deeply recessed windows. There would be a great mixture of high-quality finishing materials including terracotta and brick adding texture and detailing to the façade. The setback facades were clad in reflective black terracotta. The soffits to the balconies would be finished in gold metal referencing the current gold tiles soffits of the existing building. The south elevation would be set back from the listed former patent office to provide a new wider square to the south of the site. The base would be defined by arts openings that would reflect the character of the surrounding inns providing great townscape. The proposed creative affordable workspace and retail unit with spill-out space uses along this section of the building would provide a new active and animated frontage onto the new square. At the crown of the building, the top three floors were set back to ensure subordination to the main building. Along with the soft landscaping with the new pocket park, the development would retain two of the existing trees along Southampton Buildings passageway. The development would achieve a UGF of 0.3 that meets the policy requirements and bio-diversity value from pre-development to post-development exceeding 900% inhabited units.

Carbon optioneering has been carried out to establish carbon impacts opportunities and constraints to inform the development of the proposal, which was independently reviewed. The proposed development would optimise the quality of floor space for offices and for a mix of cultural and retail uses along with a range of amenity and urban greening measures, thus contributing to the future proofing of the City against a range of environmental, social, economic and sustainability challenges. Circular economy measures have been incorporated, such as by identifying a large proportion of deconstruction material for reuse and designing a new building for longevity, adaptability and low maintenance. The energy strategy has been optimised for the site resulting in an estimated low energy use intensity and BREEAM excellent. In terms of environmental impact, four scenarios have been tested for wind and there would be no safety exceedance. The Sub-Committee were shown a wind assessment slide for the windiest season, with the proposed on-site and off-site conditions being suitable for their intended use or consistent with the baseline scenario without the need of landscaping. In terms of thermal comfort, the existing scenario conditions ranged between all seasons, seasonal and short-term use. The proposed scenario on-site and off-site conditions were all suitable for their intended use without landscaping. Landscaping was only required on levels seven, eight and nine in the new roof terraces to make them able to be used as mixed amenity terraces.

The site was located near residential properties, 7 High Holburn to the north was a residential let building with residential units from the first to upper floors. The application was supported by daylight, sunlight and overshadowing reports using the BRE methodology. Whilst it was acknowledged that there were some residential properties at 7 High Holburn that would experience impacts, these impacts were less than the BRE guidance levels. The impacts were similar or comparable to comparable properties in the vicinity located in a dense urban environment. In terms of sunlight as shown on the windows, the majority of the windows would be BRE compliant. For the small number of windows that would experience some reductions, the results would be very close to BRE compliance. A median daylight factor analysis was also conducted as a supplement to the BRE recommended metrics. The impacts for most properties would be imperceptible with the exception of the two upper floors. However, the impacts were mainly caused due to the existing overhangs of the building. Seven open spaces have been assessed regarding overshadowing and the results demonstrate that no neighbouring amenity space would be affected by the proposed development and they would be fully BRE compliant.

The application was also supported by an overshadowing assessment of the proposed pocket park. When considering the sunlight levels to the pocket park, the results show 35% of the area would receive two hours of sunlight, which was a slight improvement from the existing space due to the setback of the façade. Moving to the townscape view, the Sub-Committee were shown the existing and proposed view from Gray's Inn Gardens, central path, the view from Gray's Inn Square northwest corner existing and proposed view. They were also shown the view from Lincoln's Inn Fields northeast corner existing and proposed, with the building being visible behind the roof line of Stone

Buildings. Members were shown the existing view from southwest corner of New Square and proposed from which the building would be visible behind 12 and 13 Old Buildings that were located in Camden. The Sub-Committee were shown the view from the northeast corner of New Square existing and proposed where the development can be seen behind the roofs and chimneys of 8 to 15 Old Square. A low level of less than substantial harm was identified to those listed buildings that were located within Camden.

The Sub-Committee were shown a view from High Holburn towards the west existing and proposed, in which one can see the prominence of the proposed civic clock acting as a landmark. A closer view of the application site was shown from the same viewpoint existing and proposed. The existing view to east and proposed was shown, with a nighttime view as existing and proposed. Overall the proposed scheme would minimise light pollution respecting the context of the area. The Sub-Committee were shown the existing and proposed view from Chancery Lane, which one can see that by setting back the building line, the proposal would unveil longer views towards Staple Inn Gardens. The Sub-Committee were shown the view from Southampton Buildings existing and proposed. Also, the view from the southwest corner of Southampton Buildings existing and proposed and showing the high quality of the proposed pocket park. The view from Staple Inn Gardens was shown existing and proposed.

An application for listed building consent has also been submitted alongside this planning application for minor alterations to the set of railings and gates located along the eastern and southern side boundary of Holburn Gate adjoining Staple Inn north gate and 25 Southampton Buildings. As shown on an image presented, some parts of the modern sections of the railings would be removed. The historic railings would be retained and replaced to the development.

In conclusion, it was confirmed that the proposed development would secure a strategic office-led development that would provide land uses which support the diversification, variety, viability, vitality and growth of the City as a 24/7 world class business destination. The provision of over 52 and a half thousand square metres of grade A office floor space and c3000 jobs would significantly contribute to the City of London economic base. The generous and unique cultural offer along with a high-quality retail offer and creative affordable workspace would create a compelling and inclusive public offer to the City in line with the Destination City agenda. The development would result in a slight heritage enhancement to the Chancery Lane conservation area through heritage interpretations and better revealing of the Knights Templar. At a local level, the proposal would result in a significant enhancement to the public realm at ground level by the creation of the proposed pocket park and supporting the well-being of users, the vitality, character and distinctiveness of the area. The proposed contextual building would result in a significant aesthetic to the High Holburn locality. When carrying out the balancing exercise, it was considered that the public benefits would outweigh the identified low level of less than substantial harm to the heritage assets. The environmental impacts of the

development have been assessed in detail in the report and were considered acceptable.

For these reasons, officers were recommending approval of the application, subject to conditions and subject to the execution of planning obligations.

The Chairman conveyed his thanks to the officer for a comprehensive presentation and for explaining why officers have come to their recommendation of approval, having weighed up the various impacts versus the various gains. The Chairman confirmed that there would be an opportunity to go through various speakers, with there being no objectors having asked to speak today. The Chairman confirmed the meeting would now move to applicants and supporters.

The first speaker was Mr Koon Wai Leon, General Manager of Hoi Hup Reality Ltd

Mr Koon Wai Leon addressed the Sub-Committee confirming he was speaking on behalf of the applicant. Mr Koon Wai Leon informed the Sub-Committee that Hoy Hub Reality was a family own business based in Singapore. As a family owned business, the Holburn Gate was deeply personal to the founding family as it represents their very first development outside of Singapore and a gateway to future investment. Hoi Hup Reality was established in 1983 and owns more than £1.2bn of assets across residential, commercial and hospitality sectors. With over 40 years in the industry, they have delivered commercial projects and over 10,000 homes, priding itself on the fact it has grown into one of the top developers in Singapore. Hoi Hup Reality continue to manage most of the hotels and commercial buildings that they have either developed or acquired. Through their sister company, Straits Construction, which was a tier 1 award winning contractor in Singapore also owned by the company. They bring a unique insight into what it takes to construct and complete exciting projects.

To support the company, they have assembled a London-based industry leading team with an exemplary track record of delivering high quality landmark developments that also provide lasting public and social benefits. The proposals presented were transformational, creating a new western gateway to the City of London and driving the continuing renaissance of the wider city. With construction costs of around £370m and an expected gross development value of over £800m, the development would serve as a catalyst for future investment and development in the area. As outlined in the presentation, the proposals would also deliver on the City's key and adopted emerging policies. This includes providing c 53,000 square metres of high-quality grade A office space, contributing significantly to the expected requirement of an additional 1.2 million square metres of office space in the emerging City Plan 2040.

Designed by the world class architect, Make Architects, these elegant new buildings would support approximately 3200 new jobs once it was completed. Plans also include providing affordable workspace and flexible retail space on the ground floor, establishing a new commercial ecosystem around the site. A cornerstone of the approach has been to align to the City's Destination City

ambitions of creating a new seven day a week attraction. A contribution to this would be the Holburn Dome cultural space which would have a prominent location on the northwest corner of the site visible along High Holburn and designed to reflect the site's historical association the Knights Templar. The Dome would include an immersive auditorium that can accommodate up to 300 people, flexible exhibition spaces, as well as areas for community events. To complement the cultural and office use, the public realms surrounding the building would also be transformed into a more welcoming and activated space for the City's businesses, visitors and residents.

To the south of the site, a new pocket park was being introduced with a generous amount of greenery, new sitting space and a water feature, creating a relaxing space that can be enjoyed anytime by the public. This would be completed by new food and beverage options adjacent to it.

Mr Koon Wai Leon thanked the City of London for their collaboration over the past two and a half years. As a new developer to the City, they have found that the process was both welcoming and constructively challenging, pushing them to deliver a best-in-class transformational scheme that would benefit this special city. It was hoped the Sub-Committee would support officers' positive recommendation and approve the proposal before Members today.

The Chair asked the second speaker to address the Sub-Committee and speak to the application.

Dr Ken Shuttleworth, founder of Make Architects, introduced himself and addressed the Sub-Committee. Reference was made to Make Architects being an international architecture practice established in 2024, headquartered in London. Designed and delivered over 150 buildings around the world, including 20 award winning buildings in central London and in the Square Mile. Dr Shuttleworth confirmed that Make Architects were very enthusiastic to present Holburn Gate to Members today. It was believed to be a very exciting proposal, an opportunity to re-imagine a significant site within the City with an exceptional piece of architecture. It was crafted to respond contextually to the sensitivities of the surrounding area whilst providing a high-quality workplace of the future with a bespoke cultural venue at its heart. This reflects the ambition of the City to reposition the area as a world leading commercial and cultural destination as set out in the draft City Plan 2040. It was explained that the design process was started through a retrofit first approach which interrogated and extensive range of options from minor improvements through to full refurbishment. They went way beyond the framework of the City of London's planning advice notes for carbon guidance identifying an exhaustive list of options and undertaking detailed audits of existing buildings. The process benefited by close and viable collaboration with the City of London officers, resulting in a short list of four final options.

The outcome of this process highlighted the challenges of refitting the existing buildings, which posed considerable constraints. The tight floor to ceiling geometry and adequate cores. It was concluded that the current buildings offer very poor-quality office accommodation and were not harmonious with a

sensitive location. Also, existing public realm was highly compromised. Existing buildings were considered unfit for purpose and do not meet the needs of the expectations of city occupiers. As a result, it was agreed with City officers that a new build development was the preferred option to deliver a sustainable, flexible and healthy office building. Having been working together to conceive developments as a stepped masonry buildings divided into five distinct blocks, to together read as a family each tailored to the surrounding context. The architectural language and sensitive material pallet of brick and terracotta draws on the rich history of the site and the unique qualities of the surrounding buildings and conservation areas. It also proposed further enhancing the density of the building with public art and other civic features including a large corner clock, a landscape pocket park to benefit all which delivers a high quality sustainable urban space that enhances the local context and contributes positively to the broader environmental, social and economic aspirations of the City of London.

The office floor space was designed to maximise natural light and to suit a range of layouts for a variety of occupiers needed over time, with the upper-level set back to provide a series of terraces and green roofs providing valuable garden space and enhancing biodiversity. On the ground floor, retail units, as with the office and culture spaces were designed to be as flexible as possible to accommodate a wide range of potential occupiers and help to create a vibrant destination appealing to residents, city workers and visitors alike. One of the fascinating yet forgotten features that in the 12th century, the Knights Templar Church stood on this site, and it was proposed to enhance this feature as a unique cultural venue supporting the Destination City programme. Drawing on their outstanding sustainability credentials, Make Architects have designed an energy efficient all-electric scheme with passive design strategies to achieve ambitious environmental targets including BREEAM Outstanding and WELL Core Platinum EPC rating of A and neighbours five-star.

In conclusion, it was stressed that Make Architects have worked very hard over the last two and a half years hand in hand with officers and the wider team and extensively consulted with stakeholders to evolve what they passionately believe was an exceptional piece of architecture. It would be an incredible addition to the City and they were very proud of the outcome, and it was very much hoped that Members agreed.

The Chair invited Members to ask questions of the applicant and architect.

A Member referred to one of the features of the current site being a car park which was available to the public and was advertised as such. Why was it that there was no proposal to retain existing car parking? It was understood why the development was car free as that was encouraged, but with it being questioned what the thinking was behind having no car parking and continuing an existing public provision.

Jeremy Randall, from Newark Planning and Development, responded and confirmed that they looked at the car park early on. The car park was not currently particularly well used. There was strong policy resistance against car

parking in this location both at a regional level, as part of the London Plan and as City policy. As such, a decision was taken to omit a car park. It was proposed retaining two blue badge parking spaces. If car parking had been re-provided, there would have been a strong objection from Transport for London.

A Member questioned the reasons why it was decided to increase the height by less than nine metres, bearing in mind that the CGI show that it appears to loom over the skyline behind heritage assets.

James Goodfellow, from Make Architects, responded and referred to the massing on the site having evolved over multiple pre-applications and through lots of analysis around the site. They worked closely with Taverner's, their townscape consultant, and the island site offers an opportunity for a certain mass on this site and bearing in mind some of the key views and the sensitivities around it, the massing was positioned and adjusted through that process. The height was reduced during pre-application, and the position of the mass was adjusted, with most of it being towards the centre of the site, but with it also being towards the northeast part of the site which was facing High Holborn. It was by the Chancery Lane Underground tube station, so it partly signifies the entry and exit and then the massing falls away to the south and towards the west towards the conservation area. It was a process of reviewing all those views and then looking at the architecture and the way in which they can minimise those impacts on the way they break down the mass in the materials that they selected, the colours, the tones and also looking at the extensive greening around the roofscape.

A Member referred to the original buildings refurbishment gross internal area was 36,000 square metres, with this proposal being 54,671 square metres gross internal area. It was questioned whether consideration was given to lowering the building, so it was not interfering with the heritage sites of grade one listed buildings neighbouring and whether it was necessary for it to be so high.

James Goodfellow responded and referred to an uplift of commercial office space on the site. The massing has been set back from some particularly key sensitive views, particularly bearing in mind New Square. The way in which the roofscape has been crafted to minimise this. The height of the building was adjusted multiple times through the pre-application process. They particularly refined the uppermost storey in collaboration with their consultants to reduce the height. Post submission it was reduced and also the finishes and the way the massing up there was articulated was modified to help minimise those impacts. Working with Taverner's, they looked to see where they found the key sensitivities and to really minimise the impact on those.

In response, the Member further questioned whether there was any thought in planning for it to be within the height of the previous building. It was confirmed that there was a bigger opportunity on the site than the existing buildings offered. They have a big courtyard in the centre with no mass. There was an opportunity to infill that and to extend to some extent to the sides. So lateral extensions and then the rooftop levels they do set back. It was 8.3 metres

taller at the highest point but it was also at a similar number of storeys, but the existing building was a very low floor to ceiling height, and so they also need to adjust the floor-to-floor heights.

The Member responded and confirmed that was what they wanted the answer to, with it being the same number of floors. It was ten floors, but because of the low ceilings which obviously undermines the office space as it were, that may be the explanation of why extra space was needed on top. Mr Goodfellow confirmed that the Member was correct, and that given they had the opportunity to infill in the middle, which was where they get the extra area but otherwise it was the same number of storeys.

A Member thanked officers for their comprehensive reference to suicide prevention. The Member referred to the numerous terraces and accessible balustrade rail heights between 1.4 and going up to 1.75 metres and concerns raised by the Suicide Prevention Officer with regards to accessibility and using planters as steps. The suggestion was to change the planting to make it thorny. Given the amount of time, energy and money that has been put into this development to improve the health and wellbeing of the people who would actually be working in there, why would you not increase the balustrade to 2 metres using flush glass panel rather than thorny plants and different heights because that would be a way to guarantee safety on those terraces, rooftops and for the people on the pavement below. It was questioned whether they would consider bearing in mind final details of suicide preventions and balustrade heights being secured by a condition. Could a guarantee be given to ensure that the true health and wellbeing of the occupants of the building and those people on the ground floor and the pavement, that they would raise the balustrade heights to 2 metres, perhaps a glass flush balustrade rather than elaborate thorny bushes and different heights.

Mr Randall responded and referred to it being a balance, with private terraces that would be occupied by either one tenant or a variety of tenants across those upper floors. They have had regard to the suicide prevention guidance, with the balustrade heights proposed being of a generous height. Typically, the 2-metre height was looked at in respect of public terraces. There was a planning condition, and this would be reviewed with officers. It was a balance, obviously wanting to create those generous spaces with those outward looking views. Clearly a 2-metre balustrade height does have an impact on views and the opportunity to provide something a little bit lower in tandem with other measures, whether planting or other measures agreed in tandem with the tenant should provide sufficient mitigation.

A Member referred to it being gratifying to hear the applicant's perception of the City Corporation being welcoming and constructively challenging. The Member asked for more information relating to carbon optioneering, in particular the benefits that have been identified for redevelopment over refurbishment.

Mel Alwood, of Arup, responded confirming that she was delighted to have an opportunity to talk about this as it was something that exercised the team from

the very outset of the design process. The challenge given to them by their client was to identify the best opportunity to deliver a sustainable grade A office development on this site. The carbon optioneering process provided an opportunity to really interrogate a full range of answers to that question, ranging all the way at the outset from light refurbishment all the way to full redevelopment. Early engagement with this was very much supported by the existence of PAN Guidance developed by officers.

This gave them an opportunity to set a framework for that exploration but also and opportunity to articulate and document the journey they went on during the process of establishing the best answer for the project. During the early stages they looked at a very extensive range of opportunities, not just the opportunities set out in the guidance but a range of families of options. Within each of the broad categories that they were given as optioneering, they broke those down and really interrogated the detail of each of those opportunities, particularly bearing in mind the fact that the existing buildings were not a single building but a cluster of related but not connected buildings.

Early surveys and site visits by the team allowed them in particular to interrogate each building individually and the opportunities of each building together. Those allowed them to identify in particular for each site, not just as a whole, what the constraints were to be developing a project that would respond to that initial client carbon brief of a sustainable grade A office building. The constraints that Dr Shuttleworth had identified in his address were consistent across all three buildings. In particular, the restraints around the core of each building that were largely developed in the 60s when fire requirements were very much less stringent than now would have required rebuilding in every refurbishment case that they looked at, requiring significant structural intervention, which turned the dial on the carbon impact of each of the opportunities they reviewed. Additional constraints around the potential wellbeing, floor to ceiling heights, non-uniform grid and differences in slab heights between the three buildings meant that the constraints really precluded the delivery of grade A with the refurbishment option and precluded the delivery of the sustainable outcomes they were hoping for with any of the refurbishment options they looked at. In collaboration with City of London Officers, they identified and incorporated an additional carbon optioneering opportunity and interrogated this for the retention of just the buildings along Southampton Street, but again owing to the requirements of temporary works during the retention of this option, the carbon savings for this retention did not justify the degradation in the health and wellbeing opportunities for the final outcome that had been established. The process was third party reviewed by Waterman's and again it was a very collaborative process and a very valuable process, the results of which were summarised in the circular economy statement that has been submitted with the application.

A Member referred to Knights Templar Church having been founded in 1144 in London, with a retained wall and piece of archaeology having been flagged in the heritage report. The retained wall was in the dome, and it was unclear whether there would be any public access to this unique piece of history to the Chancery / Holborn area. There were mentions to public art that referenced the

history of the Knights Templar in this area. There was the dome exhibition space that would be run by a potential operator, of which the retained archaeology was within that part of the venue. It was questioned whether it would be a private venue and where there was public art if there would be public access to a key piece of archaeology, as has been done in the City in relation to Roman remains etc as part of new commercial buildings.

Mr Randall responded and confirmed that the archaeology would be made available to the public as part of the overall cultural offering. In response to a further question, it was confirmed that with respect to the archaeology, there would be no cost to the public

The Chair invited Members of the Sub-Committee to ask questions of officers in attendance.

A Member remarked on now understanding the need to increase ceiling heights and having the same number of floors. Reference was made to attending a site visit and considering the existing ceilings were low. It was questioned why it was necessary to raise the height of the building when there were going to be two basement levels. It was further questioned whether it was considered to have some office space below ground level instead of raising the height by just under 9 metres, which troubled the Member given the impact on the heritage assets.

The Chair remarked on now starting to retread the same ground on questions. It was also not within the Sub-Committees remit to redesign the building today in the meeting. The application was the one that was before Members today and so he was not going to ask for a response to the question as the answer would be they cannot remodel the building today in time for it to be changed. It was stressed that the Member would need to bear this in mind in their deliberations when deciding how to vote on the application.

A Member raised a question relating to the footway and Holburn Street. An explanation was requested from officers on what effort was made and why they could not get the building line set back a little on Holburn Street. It was understood that the building line was entirely within the ownership of the developer, but with the Member wanting to understand what effort was made and for the future whether it was possible. Even though the pedestrian analysis shows that there was no issue, it does seem a missed opportunity to widen that footway.

In response, it was explained that they had been through a long journey to develop this site. What was accepted on this site was that it was a contextual response to the area. When they considered the existing overhangs, the depth of them were very narrow and would not allow for pedestrians to have a free flow of movement. PCL assessments were part of the transport assessment, and these had come out as acceptable for these types of streets. As such, there was not considered to be a need to widen the footway in this instance.

The Chair referred to pedestrian modelling around the Chancery Lane exit having been completed and having come back as satisfactory, with this being a point that came up from several Members during a site visit.

A Member commented on being concerned about cycle access in the area. There had been a lot of analysis of cycle spaces in the building but the actual routes around it, could it be explained how that gets dealt with in terms of any travel plan or improvements to the highway because it was not clear that any allowance had been made for this. The Member referred to having seen extremely dangerous cycling on Chancery Lane and people going straight through traffic lights owing to the set up at the moment being inadequate. This site was encouraging an enormous amount of new cycling, and it was not showing at the moment any current analysis of this. How was this going to be dealt with?

In response, it was clarified that any cycle related activity would be controlled by the Travel Plan. Members were assured that City Operations have liaised with the London Borough of Camden to improve the contraflow operation. This was currently being assessed as a study, but with this being a more strategic matter outside the remit of this application. The Member responded and referred to cycling being encouraged but at the moment no further funding being put forward for a situation that was clearly not being controlled. With cycling being added to an area where people were cycling against red traffic lights and with Chancery Lane's arrangements needing looking at it would surely be exacerbated and made worse by this development.

It was confirmed that plans were being developed by the City Corporation in co-ordination with the London Borough of Camden. They were aware of the issue and were looking to address it. It was further clarified that there was a cycle hire contribution of £120k that the Greater London Authority had requested.

The Member responded and remarked on it appearing very unsatisfactory that there was a problem that as Ward Councillor he was extremely aware of. This was a development looking to radically change how people get to this building with eight hundred spaces for cycles, surely this can be made part of their travel plan but also any necessary adjustment. It was suggested that this should be something covered by condition. In response, it was further clarified that there would be travel plans secured through section 106 agreement. There would be sufficient cycling education and various measure that would always be secured through the travel plans that would be approved by the City Corporation in due course in that submission. In terms of the impact on the road, it was a matter of law and order and enforcement and cyclists behaving in accordance with the Highway Code. It was proposed liaising with operations colleagues and coming back to Members relating to enforcement action to be taken with colleagues in Camden, and how they can improve the situation in that vicinity. The onus would not be on this development to solve a traffic problem in that area.

The Chairman confirmed the matter would be brought to Planning and Transportation Committee, referring to his recent meeting with the operator

Lime and them providing funding for additional training and enforcement in the Square Mile for their riders. These might be conversations that can be expanded upon.

The Chair moved the meeting to debate of the Members.

A Member echoed the concerns raised relating to cycling, whilst stressing their view that this was a project that Members should be strongly welcoming. The existing buildings on that site were no longer fit for purpose. The proposal Members were presented with today was a very good application, with a building that seems attractive and was in keeping with its surroundings and was seeking to match the buildings that were nearby. It was slightly higher than might have been hoped for, but it was considered to be the right kind of building that was needed in this area. The Member added how they were proud to represent the ward of Farringdon Without, it was the legal district of the City of London. A major international law firm may well want to become the tenant in a building of this type, whereas they would not in the current buildings which were no longer fit for purpose. The Member added that they would be voting in favour of the application.

A Member added that they remained concerned regarding the height and them not having had an answer as to whether the office space could be taken below ground. They were also concerned about the effect on local retail provision. There was an objection from a resident at 7 Holburn who made this point. At the moment, the prioritisation of the business and tourism concerns over the local residents was quite harsh and the Member was very much in two minds.

A Member confirmed that having attended on site and also having completed a pre-app online, that they would support the application. What had been proposed had been very carefully worked through by the applicants and the officers and was way and above better than the existing mesh of three buildings with different floor levels and low office space.

A Member commented on the building being in dire need of regeneration and renewal. A concern was raised relating to suicide prevention. Whilst it might not be classed as a high building, the terrace space was similar to heights at 120 Fenchurch Street, although this was a public terrace. The Member added that if it was possible to do something that was inexpensive but would have a really positive benefit on prevention, why would it not be done at this stage as retrofitting after an incident would be far more expensive, with this having been seen across the City with terraces having been closed to the public for a couple of years whilst works have had to go onto retrofit the problem. The Member noted the British standard was 1.1 metre minimum, with reference being made to Health UK advisory being a minimum of 2.5 metres. The Member urged planners and developers, whilst building new office space, for the health and wellbeing of the occupants to be considered and suicide prevention measures being implemented during the design and build stage. This would not only save lives but would be more cost effective than retrofitting once the coroner issued a note that something has to be done. The Member questioned why we would not be doing this and urged every developer and planning officer in the room to

really listen to the City Corporation's Suicide Prevention Officer when raising concerns that can sometimes get watered down. The Member urged a rethink and to look at how to improve not just the height of the balustrades but also the visual image of the building as well.

The Chair thanked the Member for their comments, adding how he was sure these have been heard by officers and applicants alike.

The Chair concluded the debate and provided brief summary of discussion and consideration of the item. The Chair confirmed the intention to move to two votes. The first vote on planning permission, with a second vote on listed buildings consent.

The Sub-Committee proceeded to vote on the planning application and recommendation before them.

Votes were cast as follows:

FOR – 18
AGAINST – 1
ABSTENTION – 0

Therefore, the recommendation was carried and planning permission granted.

RESOLVED: That Members:

1. Agreed 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 determine the application himself (Article 5(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008);
 - b) Planning obligations and other agreements being entered into under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 278 of the Highway Act 1980 in respect of those matters set out in the report, the decision notice not to be issued until the Section 106 obligations have been executed.
2. Agreed 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 Highways Act 1980.
3. Noted that land affected by the building which is currently public highway and land over which the public have right of access may need to be stopped up to enable the development to proceed and, upon receipt of the formal

application, officers may proceed with arrangements for advertising and (subject to consideration of consultation responses) making of a Stopping-up Order for the area shown marked on the Stopping-up plan annexed to this report under the delegated arrangements approved by the Court of Common Council.

4b. 319-Staple Inn Buildings North and South & the Hall, Staple Inn, 335 & 336 High Holborn, London WC1V 7PZ - 24/01247/LBC

The Sub-Committee considered a report regarding an application for Listed Building Consent that had been submitted alongside planning application 24/01262/FULMAJ for minor alterations to two sets of railings and gates which were located along the eastern and southern site boundary of the Holborn Gate application site.

The Sub-Committee proceeded to vote on the application for Listed Building Consent.

The Sub Committee proceeded to vote on the recommendation before them.

Votes were cast as follows:

FOR – 18
AGAINST – 0
ABSTENTION – 1

Therefore, the recommendation was carried and Listed Building Consent granted.

RESOLVED: That Members:

- Agreed that Listed Building Consent be granted for the above proposal in accordance with the details set out in the attached schedule.

5. VALID PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY ENVIRONMENT

The Sub-Committee received a report which detailed 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.

6. DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

The Sub-Committee received a report which detailed 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.

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

There were no questions

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

The Chair confirmed that there was one item of business of which he was aware. That was to inform the Sub-Committee that the City's Planning Team had once again won a number of awards, this time at the National Planning Awards. These awards being as follows;

- Promoting economic growth
- Best use of heritage in placemaking
- For fostering a healthy town centre
- Planning permission of the year in London, with this being the second year in a row and for the 65 Fleet Street Development

The Chair took the opportunity on behalf of the Sub-Committee to congratulate officers on these well-deserved awards.

The meeting ended at 11.35am

Chairman

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