

MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 13 July 2021 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors John Paschoud (Chair), Kevin Bonavia, Suzannah Clarke, Rachel Onikosi, Stephen Penfold and James-J Walsh

ALSO PRESENT: Olurotimi Ogunbadewa

Apologies for absence were received from Leo Gibbons, Councillor Andre Bourne and Aisling Gallagher

1. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting will be reviewed at the next meeting

2. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

3. Industrial Estate, Juno Way, SE14 5RW

The Planning Case Officer presented this report, outlining the details of the application.

The application proposed for the demolition of the buildings and the construction of a multi-level industrial/commercial building, lower level car park and a café. Permission was sought for quantum of uses and the scale of the building. The applicant proposed to split the building into 3 parts, relating to the use of the building.

Access, appearance, landscaping and layout will all be reserved within the approved scale. Following the review of the application, officers were satisfied that the proposed building would be of appropriate scale to the surrounding and would not result in harm to the urban design. The proposal would provide 320% increase in industrial floorspace. Officers were also satisfied that the proposal would provide good use of the industrial floorspace and the land designation that it sits in, that there would be no impact on neighbour amenity and would be acceptable in terms of highways impact. Officers agreed that the proposal would make efficient use of the land and that it was in line with the Council's aspirations for the area. The officer recommendation was to approve the application subject to the conditions outlined in the officer report.

Councillor Bonavia asked if there will be the inclusion of affordable work spaces. None of the existing tenants are on affordable rent. The development is policy compliant and there is no requirement to provide such space.

Is there a planning condition to ensure the use of the building will be prevented from being used for anything else, i.e. a nightclub. The conditions set out do not permit for such.

Councillor Walsh asked what modelling will be done on the proposal to ensure there will be no impact on the highway. He also asked that despite the 320% increase, is the plan for the space working hard enough. The officer responded that the proposed site is appropriately designed and the design ensures that entering and exiting the site without causing harm to any of the surrounding roads and areas is assured for the vehicles that will service the needs of the building. Officers were satisfied that it is an efficient use of land and that the proposal will be able to support the industrial strategic land allocation as appropriated to the size and scale of the building.

Councillor Penfold raised the issue of objectors who have made claims they were currently paying affordable rent. He asked for confirmation that the local business is paying affordable rent. The Planning Officer confirmed that they had been informed by the applicant that none of the tenants are paying affordable rent.

Councillor Onikosi asked how many objections were received, which was a total of two. She also asked that in regards to nightclubs and raves, if a future applicant wanted to change the use of the space, would they be prevented from doing so, to which the officer confirmed that they would be able to propose an application changing the use.

The applicant then presented on behalf of this item. He stated that the family-owned business had been the owners of the Elizabeth and Juno industrial estate for 21 and 16 years and are experienced developers in commercial property and student accommodation. The industrial property on Juno Way is dated and not fit for developing industrial purposes in London to meet the demands of modern business, the applicant stated. He also said that upgrading the existing building is disproportionately expensive and the quality of the lease terms will continue- all of the current leases within the building are on relatively flexible terms but there are no affordable workspaces in there. Tenants pay fair rent commensurate of the stock that they occupy and there is nothing in their lease agreements that imply affordable rent is paid by tenants. He furthered that tenants are entitled to occupy through to the end of their leases, and are not evicted prior to the end of their leases. In order to maximise the potential of the estate and to maximise the number of jobs in the borough, the proposals are for a multi-level scheme comprising of 4 floors of multi-let commercial and industrial space and café.

The agent also stated that Affordable Rent is a definition in the London Plan and is to do with planning policy, as opposed to a broader, subjective sense as to what is affordable to each individual tenant.

The Senior Planning Officer said that the London Plan does contain affordable workspace policy, however, it is subject to specific criteria, not relevant to the application. Officers were satisfied in this instance, in consultation with policy colleagues, that considering the age of the building, cheaper rent is likely.

Councillor Clarke moved in favour of the application as per the report. This was seconded.

Members voted unanimously in favour of approving the application.

The meeting finished at 8:45pm