

119 Farringdon Road, Islington

in the London Borough of Islington

planning application no. P2015/4143/FUL

Strategic planning application stage 1 referral

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended); Greater London Authority Acts 1999 and 2007; Town & Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008.

The proposal

Demolition and redevelopment of the existing office building (Class B1) to provide an 8 storey (plus lower ground floor) building with office use (Class B1) at part lower ground, part ground and upper floors and flexible commercial uses (Class A1, A3, B1, D1) at part lower ground and part ground floor level along with associated landscaping and a new area of public realm.

The applicant

The applicant is **Viridis Properties 5 Ltd.** and the architect is **AHMM**.

Strategic issues

The principle of commercial redevelopment is acceptable in land use terms. The proposed development is generally supported in strategic planning terms, however issues in regard to the **principle of development, strategic views, urban design, trees, transport, energy, flooding and drainage** should be addressed to ensure that the scheme fully accords with the London Plan, before the application is referred back to the Mayor at his decision making stage.

Recommendation

That Islington Council be advised that while the application is generally acceptable in strategic planning terms the application does not comply with the London Plan, for the reasons set out in paragraph 73 of this report; but that the possible remedies set out in that paragraph of this report could address these deficiencies.

Context

1 On 8 October 2015 the Mayor of London received documents from Islington Council notifying him of a planning application of potential strategic importance to develop the above site for the above uses. Under the provisions of The Town & Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008 the Mayor has until 18 November 2015 to provide the Council with a

statement setting out whether he considers that the application complies with the London Plan, and his reasons for taking that view. The Mayor may also provide other comments. This report sets out information for the Mayor's use in deciding what decision to make.

2 The application is referable under Category 1C of the Schedule to the Order 2008: "Development which comprises or includes the erection of a building ... more than 30 metres high and is outside the City of London".

3 Once Islington Council has resolved to determine the application, it is required to refer it back to the Mayor for his decision as to whether to direct refusal; take it over for his own determination; or allow the Council to determine it itself.

4 The Mayor of London's statement on this case will be made available on the GLA website www.london.gov.uk.

Site description

5 The application site is currently occupied by a 7 storey office building. Constructed in the mid-1970s and containing 10,596 sq.m. of gross internal floorspace, this building was the Guardian newspapers headquarters until 2008, and was subsequently let to multiple office tenants between 2008 and 2014. From 2014 until now, the building has been used for a temporary pop up theatre. Along the Farringdon Road frontage the building is set back from the edge of the pavement by approximately 5 metres, and has a large open yard to the rear. The existing building features a fairly inactive frontage to both Farringdon Road and Ray Street.

6 It is noted that the current building is outdated and not fit for purpose as an office (Class B1) use, of limited architectural merit and does not enhance the character and appearance of the Clerkenwell Green Conservation Area (CA1) in which the site is located.

7 Whilst the existing building is not listed, there are a number of listed buildings and structures nearby. These include the Grade II listed 113-1167 Farringdon Road (including 1-7 Ray Street) and also Grade II listed 11 Ray Street, to the south of the site. The site is located within the strategic viewing corridor of St Paul's Cathedral from Parliament Hill and Kenwood House. The site is also located within Islington Local Views LV1 with views to St Paul's Cathedral.

8 The site is also located within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ), a local (General) Employment Priority Area, and the Farringdon/Smithfield Intensification Area and Site Allocation BC43.

9 The site, measuring 0.24ha, is bounded by the A201 Farringdon Road to the east, Ray Street to the south, Crawford Passage to the west and Dabb's Lane to the north. Farringdon Road forms part of the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN) and the Strategic Road Network (SRN) is approximately 100m away (Rosebury Street). Ten bus routes serve stops in the nearby vicinity. Farringdon (London Underground and National Rail services and in the future Crossrail) and Chancery Lane (London Underground) stations, are both within walking distance. Measured on a scale of 1a – 6b the site has a PTAL of 6b, which is the highest possible.

10 The nearest cycle hire docking station is directly opposite the site at Farringdon Lane. The station is heavily used and under significant strain at peak times. Indeed it falls into the upper twenty fifth percentile for cycle hire docking station demand in London.

11 The North South Cycle Superhighway (NSCS), which terminates at Stonecutter Street 0.5km to the south of the site, will open next year. TfL, in conjunction with the London Boroughs of Camden and Islington, is investigating extending the route to the north along Farringdon Road and across Ray Street. The works are likely to commence in 2017 and will be completed by Camden Council. This would include public realm improvements along the frontage of the application site to Ray Street.

Details of the proposal

12 The proposal involves:

- Demolition of the existing office (Class B1) building;
- Redevelopment to provide office (Class B1) floorspace at part lower ground, part ground and 7 upper storeys;
- Provision of SME space at ground floor level;
- Provision of flexible A1/A3/D1 uses at part lower ground and part ground floor creating actives frontages to the building;
- Removal of 7 London plane trees along Farringdon Road and 4 trees on Crawford passage;
- Provision of 8 new companion trees along Farringdon Road, 6 trees to the rear on Crawford Passage and 11 trees in off-site locations; and
- Provision of improved public realm on Farringdon Road and new public realm to the rear of the building on Crawford Passage.

Case history

13 Planning permission was granted in March 2007 for refurbishment and extension of the existing building to provide 1,867 sq.m. of B1 (business) space at lower ground and ground floor levels, an A3/A4 (restaurant/bar) unit at ground floor level at the corner of Ray Street and Farringdon Road, 118 residential units and 27 car parking spaces at lower ground floor level accessed via a new vehicular access from Ray Street.

14 In 2005 the former Mayor responded to consultation on the above scheme only to confirm that the proposal did not constitute a Mayoral referral and that the development would not impact on the strategic viewing corridor of St Paul's Cathedral.

15 In August 2012, a planning application which sought to extend the time for implementation of the 2007 permission was withdrawn. The proposed renewal was withdrawn as

it was advised by Islington Council that policy would no longer support the loss of office floorspace at this location.

16 In June 2008 a planning application was submitted for the demolition of the existing building and felling of the trees, erection of a 9 storey building plus basement level for retail (Class A1) use at ground floor level and office (Class B1) use at part basement and ground, and wholly upper floors together with associated onsite servicing, plant rooms and cycle storage.

17 This application that was a Mayoral referral and was considered by the Deputy Mayor, Government Relations on 3 September 2008. The Council was informed that the application did not comply with the London Plan for reasons including:

- Mix of uses: lack of information or justification for the limited mix of uses on site.
- Housing: lack of information relating to the contribution to affordable housing.
- Historic environment and urban design: impact of the proposal on the conservation area including height, scale and loss of trees.
- Climate change: failure to consider connection into nearby district heating and cooling system, incorporate on-site CCHP, or demonstrate that CO2 reduction from renewable energy technologies would be maximised.
- Air quality: inaccurate modelling of air quality impact and lack of mitigation measures.
- Transport: insufficient information relating to cycle parking, and walking and cycling environment surrounding the site, and lack of logistics, delivery and servicing and travel plans.

18 The application was withdrawn by the applicant following receipt of representations from the GLA.

19 In December 2008 a planning and conservation area application was submitted for the demolition of the existing building and felling of trees and erection of an 8 storey building plus basement level for retail (Class A1) use at ground floor level and office (Class B1) use at part basement and ground, and wholly upper floors other with associated onsite servicing, plant rooms and cycle storage. Again this application was withdrawn. This planning application was almost identical to the June 2008 application aside from a reduction in height of the proposed building by 1 storey.

20 Whilst the 2007 application was granted permission, by the time it was implementable, planning policy had been updated to protect against the loss of office floorspace in this location. The June 2008 application was withdrawn as it did not comply with GLA policy and it provided a limited mix of uses, limited information relating to the affordable housing contribution and there were detailed issues relating to urban design, climate change, air quality and transportation that needed to be resolved. Similarly, the December 2008 application was withdrawn due to issues relating to scale, urban design, historic conservation, loss of trees, impact on climate change,

and lack of information regarding energy and transport, as well as financial contribution requirement in order for the scheme to comply with the mixed-use policy.

21 On 22 January 2015, a pre-application meeting was held at City Hall for full planning permission for the demolition and redevelopment of the existing office building to provide an 8 storey plus lower ground building with office use (Class B1) at part lower ground, part ground and upper floors and flexible commercial uses (Classes A1/A3/B1/D1) at part lower ground and part ground floor level along with associated landscaping and a new area of public realm. No pre-application report was provided following this meeting.

Strategic planning issues and relevant policies and guidance

22 The relevant issues and corresponding policies are as follows:

- Land use principles *London Plan;*
- Economic development *London Plan; the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy; Employment Action Plan;*
- Urban design *London Plan;*
- Mix of uses *London Plan;*
- Regeneration *London Plan; the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy;*
- Transport *London Plan; the Mayor's Transport Strategy;*
- Crossrail *London Plan; Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy;*
- Parking *London Plan; the Mayor's Transport Strategy;*
- Employment *London Plan;*
- Access *London Plan; Accessible London: achieving an inclusive environment SPG;*
- Tall buildings/views *London Plan, London View Management Framework SPG;*
- Sustainable development *London Plan; Sustainable Design and Construction SPG; Mayor's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.*

23 For the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the development plan in force for the area is the 2011 Islington Core Strategy, Development Management Policies DPD (2013), Finsbury Local Plan (2013) and the London Plan (consolidated with alterations since 2011). The National Planning Policy Framework and Technical Guide to the National Planning Policy Framework and the draft Further Alterations to the London Plan (2015) are also relevant material considerations.

Principle of development

24 The current building on the site contains approximately 9,934 sq.m. GEA of employment related (B1 class) uses. The proposed scheme includes a total of 12,285 sq.m. of flexible B1 uses, and 1,1413 sq.m. of flexible A1, A3 and D1 uses, equating to a total of 13,698 sq.m. This results in a net increase of 3,764 sq.m. GEA in office floorspace. The demolition and redevelopment of the site is considered essential to providing new office space in the CAZ, a (General) Employment Priority Area and Farringdon/Smithfield Intensification Area.

25 The proposal does not incorporate any housing on site. London Plan Policy 4.3 Mixed Use Development states “within the Central Activities Zone...increases in office floorspace, or those above a justified local threshold, should provide for a mix of uses including housing, unless such a mix would demonstrably conflict with other policies in this plan”. However being located within the CAZ, a (General) Employment Priority Area and the Farringdon/Smithfield Intensification Area business intensification, renewal and modernisation is also encouraged.

26 Given the constraints of the site, any required residential units (including affordable housing) on site, and associated plant, ancillary space, circulation, entrance and core facilities would comprise and limit the net increase in office space. Therefore the applicant suggests that it would not be considered feasible/viable to provide any residential accommodation on site and doing so would compromise the office development, which provides some mix of commercial uses. The applicant proposes that instead of providing residential floorspace, a payment in lieu of the required residential floorspace would be appropriate. The applicant also states that it has been agreed with the Council’s planning officers that in calculating the financial payment in lieu of residential floorspace on-site or off-site, the SME floorspace should be subtracted from the total employment floorspace provision.

27 The provision of office space on-site and a payment in lieu of the required residential floorspace is supported in principle given the proximity of the development to Crossrail and its location within the CAZ, a (General) Employment Priority Area and the Farringdon/Smithfield Intensification Area. Confirmation of the amount to be secured and further information on the housing to be provided and whether this is in line with local needs should be provided to the GLA. Furthermore, the Council should seek to secure a payment in lieu and the applicant should be made to address the residential shortfall through a s106 agreement. Details of this should be provided before the application is referred back to the Mayor at Stage II.

Urban design and historic environment

Strategic views

28 The site is also within two designated viewing corridors as set out in the Mayor’s London View Management Framework, which protects London Panorama views of Central London and St Paul’s Cathedral from Parliament Hill (2A.1) and Kenwood House (3A.1). Whilst a TVIA has been submitted, it does not provide an assessment of the impact of the scheme upon this strategic view. The applicant should confirm the height of the proposed building and whether it falls below the threshold plane as set out in the LVMF SPG, and if it does exceed the threshold plane, should produce a visual impact assessment, including a verified view of the proposal from this position. This should be provided before the application is referred back to the Mayor at Stage II.

Inclusive design

29 The applicant has provided an access strategy within its design and access statement, GLA officers support the intention to deliver a high quality workplace environment with an emphasis on occupier well-being. Despite the changing levels around the site, the entrances onto the public realm from Farringdon Road and Crawford Passage would ensure that level access can be provided to the building. Care will be needed at tenant fit out in relation the unit on the corner of

Farringdon Road and Ray Street, to ensure that the sloped pavement and internal arrangements provide an inclusive solution. The main building entrances are legible and uncluttered, power-assisted swing doors would ensure an accessible solution for wheelchair users and other disabled people. The internal floorplans are spacious and well laid out, and it is clear that the proposed office would enhance the accessibility of employment space at this site in line with London Plan Policy 4.12. The opportunity to enhance the public realm adjacent to the site is also a key benefit of the scheme in accessibility terms, and the stated commitment to contribute towards upgrades to Farringdon Road, Ray Street and Crawford Passage is welcomed.

Urban design

30 Good design is central to all objectives of the London Plan. The overall urban design approach of the scheme is generally supported. Its materials have been carefully considered in relation to the adjacent listed buildings and the scheme fits in well with the surrounding area. The architecture, comprising a mix of brick colour and bond types (including Header, Flemish, English and Stretcher Bond (including glazed Stretcher Bond) brick), makes reference to the surrounding context, material precedents and typical brick bonds, facade colours and patterns of the area. The facade of the building is further enhanced by the inclusion of brown and green terrace and roof planting, that may create a habitat for wildlife enhancing biodiversity and improve the visual amenity of the site.

31 The street frontages of the building at changing ground and lower ground level are generally well activated, with retail/cafe, SME space and office entrances surrounding much of the site. As mentioned above, the proposed enhancement to the public realm, particularly the provision of public open space and cafe seating at the junction of Ray Street and Crawford Passage is also a key benefit of the scheme in terms of urban design.

32 Whilst the overall design approach of the scheme is generally supported, some urban design issues are to be addressed. Currently there is no access provided along the Ray Street frontage, aside from at the corners of the building. This should be amended, and additional entrances should be added to the retail/cafe space along Ray Street to further activate this frontage. Further information should also be submitted to the GLA clarifying the length and details of the facade of the building at the location of the plant facilities and how this is being addressed in terms of active frontages at street level. This information should be provided before the application is referred back to the Mayor at Stage II.

33 There is also a loss of open space along the Farringdon Road frontage of the site, proposed as part of the redevelopment. The applicant's justification for this, partially being a reinstatement of the historic building line to create a more continuous streetscape. However, the reinstatement of the historic building line will require the removal of existing London plane trees, which are considered a significant townscape feature, covered by a tree preservation order (TPO). This is discussed in further detail below.

Trees and Woodland

34 Whilst the introduction of terrace and roof planting is a welcomed addition, as highlighted above removal of trees is also proposed as part of the redevelopment of the site. The proposal

involves the retention of 3 and removal of 7 'middle-aged' plane trees and their replacement with American sweetgum and Rowan or Mountain Ash along Farringdon Road, and the removal of three cherry trees of low landscape contribution and one maple tree of moderate landscape value to the rear of the site along Crawford Passage, to be replaced with Common Alder and Downy Birch trees.

35 A root survey, assessing the extent of the roots of the London plane trees, combined with the distance of the trees from the existing building and their arboricultural quality, has informed the tree retention and removal strategy. An arboricultural survey carried out by arboriculturalists, ACS Consulting, has informed the tree strategy and ensured the retention of the existing canopy cover through existing and purposed tree planting.

36 Three of the existing London plane trees will be retained along Farringdon Road with new companion planting. Some of the trees to be retained will be the most likely to survive the adjacent building work and are some of the furthest from the proposed building line, which is being brought forward from the existing building line given the constraints of the site. The companion planting will provide seasonal fruit and more interest (flower, fruit and foliage) at the pedestrian scale, and will also let more natural light into the building whilst providing shelter at ground level.

37 Wetland trees are also proposed along Crawford Passage. The new Common Alder and Downy Birch trees proposed are expected to provide protective shelter in the new public realm seating area and a row of Alder trees are also proposed along Crawford Passage.

38 As mentioned above the scheme includes off-site planting to enable a like for like tree canopy cover replacement. The additional tree canopy by street tree planting is to be on 3 sites, as agreed with the Council's tree and highway officers. The sites are located at Warner Street, St John Street, and Britton Street. The proposed locations have been scanned to ensure that the tree positions are viable in terms of underground services.

39 The Stage I GLA report of 11 February 2009 relating to the previously submitted scheme from 2008, highlighted that removal of the London plane trees and their replacement with alternative trees (i.e. compact English Oak trees) was not compliant with London Plan policy or the London Tree and Woodland Framework.

40 Although there has been a significant improvement to the design of the current scheme since the 2008 proposal, London Plan Policy 7.21 Trees and woodland is still relevant to this scheme stating "Trees and woodlands should be protected, maintained and enhanced, following the guidance of the London Tree and Woodland Framework". Furthermore, as the trees on site, specifically the London plane trees, are protected by a TPO, the Council's Development Management Policy 6.5 is particularly relevant:

- Trees, shrubs and other vegetation of landscape and/or environmental significance must be considered holistically as part of the landscape plan. The following requirements shall be adhered to:
- The council will refuse permission or consent for the removal of protected trees (TPO trees, and trees within a conservation area) and for proposals that would have a detrimental impact on the health of protected trees.

41 However, the Council acknowledge that the applicant's scheme goes a long way to contribute and enhance the landscape, biodiversity value and growing conditions of the development site and surrounding area and to re-provide the canopy that is proposed to be lost. The Council welcome that large sized planting pits, accommodating large sized trees both on-site and off-site, are being proposed. Furthermore they argue that the retention of 3 of the plane trees along the Farringdon Road frontage is welcomed and the proposed replanting would provide increased species diversity, whilst also delivering sustainable and successional planting. However, they draw attention to the retention of T3, which is in a poorer condition having been assessed as having a useful life expectancy of only 20-40 years, and state consideration should be given to retaining T2 instead, which from the submitted drawings appears to have a similar relationship to the proposed building.

42 The Council also state that the proposed planting sites off-site in St John Street, Warner Street and Britton Street, are all locations which would accommodate and benefit from new trees. The St John Street scheme in particular has the potential to provide a planting scheme that would make a significant improvement to the area and would allow for very large canopy trees to be planted in advanced designed tree pits. As with any new planting in highway sites, caution needs to be applied as to the feasibility of these planting locations, however short of actually constructing the actual pits, a reasonable approach to feasibility has been applied.

43 While GLA officers concur with the Council's assessment, the applicant should clearly set out the development constraints to justify the removal of the 7 London plane trees. A detailed assessment of whether T2 can be retained instead of T3, as recommended by the Council, should also be provided before the application is referred back to the Mayor at Stage II.

Transport for London's comments

Network impact

44 While TfL is satisfied that the development proposals are unlikely to have a negative impact on the capacity of either public transport or the TLRN, there are a few issues which need to be addressed, as further detailed below.

Road network

45 All servicing will be on site with access via Crawford Passage which is acceptable to TfL, subject to Camden Council's consideration as highway authority. TfL would expect a Delivery and Service Plan (DSP) and a Construction Logistics Plan (CLP) to be secured by condition to appropriately manage any potential adverse effects on the local road network and the TLRN, which should include cyclists' safety. Construction access is proposed to the site from Farringdon Road, which is acceptable subject to the developer entering into a s278 agreement with TfL for the construction of a vehicle access on the TLRN.

Urban realm improvement scheme

46 TfL notes that the developer is proposing to repave the frontage to the site which would comprise both public highway and private urban realm. Whilst TfL welcomes this 'in kind' contribution to Farringdon Road, materials and other details for the whole area should be in

compliance TfL's Streetscape guidance and agreed with TfL. The works on Farringdon Road should be delivered through a section 278 (s278) agreement with TfL. In terms of the proposed repaving along Ray Street, the Council should consider requesting a financial contribution or an 'in kind' contribution from the developer for re-paving as part of the NSCS.

Tree removal

47 As highlighted above 7 London plane trees along the TLRN frontage to the site are proposed for removal. Whilst this vegetation is to outside TfL's highway boundary, TfL would not support its removal on the basis of their significant contribution to the streetscape and environment and that the design of the development should be capable of being revised to accommodate retention. However in the event that it is agreed that any of the trees can be removed then TfL would encourage the loss to be mitigated in the form of new tree planting. If any of the proposed replanting is within TfL's highway boundary then the details should be agreed with TfL via the s278 agreement.

Walking and cycling

48 Given the likely demand from this development especially in the context of existing pressures; TfL considers that a site specific s106 contribution of £100,000 to double the capacity of the existing docking station opposite the site to 32 points is justified. Overall 168 long and short stay cycle spaces are proposed, which falls below London Plan (2015) minimum requirements. At least five more spaces should be provided.

49 Furthermore additional cycle parking may be required for the proposed D1 use when the nature of the activity is determined. It is noted that cyclist facilities are proposed and these and the cycle parking itself should be secured by condition.

London Underground Infrastructure protection

50 TfL London Underground infrastructure lies beneath the site. Any excavations, for the installation of any foundations, would require the separate approval of London Underground.

Car parking

51 The proposed development is car free with the exception of two blue badge parks proposed on Ray Street. This parking may impact upon the safety and operation of the potential extension of the NSCS which should be considered by Islington and Camden Councils.

Travel planning

52 The travel plan should contain ambitious targets particularly relating to the uptake of cycling and should be secured, enforced, monitored and reviewed as part of the s106 agreement.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

53 The site is also in the central London area where s106 contributions for Crossrail will be sought, in accordance with London Plan Policy 6.5 and the associated SPG, Use of planning obligations in the funding of Crossrail (April 2013). In these situations, the Mayoral CIL will be

treated as a credit towards the s106 Crossrail liability, and this should be reflected in the wording of the s106 agreement.

Energy and climate change, and sustainability

Energy strategy

54 In relation to energy efficiency measures, a range of passive design features and demand reduction measures are proposed to reduce the carbon emissions of the proposed development, with an estimated reduction of 89 tonnes per annum (28%) in regulated carbon dioxide emissions compared to a 2013 Building Regulations compliant development.

55 A range of passive design features and demand reduction measures are proposed to reduce the carbon emissions of the proposed development. Both air permeability and heat loss parameters will be improved beyond the minimum backstop values required by building regulations. Other features include low energy lighting and mechanical ventilation with heat recovery and a Building Energy Management System (BMS).

56 The demand for cooling will be minimised through solar control glazing, reduced glazing area for south facing facade, exposed thermal mass and energy efficient lighting and equipment. The applicant has undertaken dynamic thermal modelling in order to optimise the glazing for balancing of cooling loads and day lighting. The applicant has also used CIBSE Guide A methodology with the London Design Summer Year, to assess the occupant comfort level and the proposed design is predicted to meet the comfort criteria.

57 The applicant has identified that the Citigen district heating network is the closest network to the development. The applicant has been in contact with the network operator who has confirmed that due to the distances involved connection is not currently commercially viable. Evidence of correspondence has been provided. The applicant has, however, provided a commitment to ensuring that the development is designed to allow future connection to a district heating network should one become available.

58 The applicant is proposing to install a communal heat network. However, the applicant should confirm that all building uses will be connected to the site heat network.

59 The communal heat network will be supplied from a single energy centre location in the basement.

60 The applicant is proposing to install a 19 kW_e gas fired CHP unit as the lead heat source for the site heat network. The CHP is sized to provide the domestic hot water load, as well as a proportion of the space heating. A reduction in regulated CO₂ emissions of 16 tonnes per annum (5%) will be achieved through this second part of the energy hierarchy.

61 The applicant should provide information on the management arrangements proposed for the system, including anticipated costs and electricity sale arrangement, given that the management and operation of small CHP systems can significantly impact their long term financial viability.

62 The applicant has investigated the feasibility of a range of renewable energy technologies and is proposing to install Photovoltaic (PV) panels on the roof of the development. The applicant should confirm the size of the PV array in kWp and sq.m. A roof layout drawing detailing the location of the PV array should be provided to demonstrate that there is sufficient space to accommodate the proposed system free from significant shading.

63 A reduction in regulated CO₂ emissions of 8 tonnes per annum (3%) will be achieved through this third element of the energy hierarchy.

64 In summary, based on the energy assessment submitted, a reduction of 112 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year in regulated emissions is expected compared to a 2013 Building Regulations compliant development, equivalent to an overall saving of 35%. The carbon dioxide savings meet the target set within Policy 5.2 of the London Plan. However, the comments above should be addressed before compliance with London Plan energy policy can be verified.

Flood risk

65 The site is within Flood Zone 1, however the EA mapping indicates a significant surface water flood risk for the site and its immediate surroundings. Given that the proposed development includes a lower ground floor area such a risk should be taken into account in the siting and design of the proposals.

66 The applicant should consider this and supply information on the nature of the risk and to what extent it requires mitigation measures.

Drainage

67 There are surface water flooding risks affecting the site and its immediate surroundings, therefore the application of London Plan Policy 5.13 will be important at this site. However, there do not appear to be any details submitted at this stage.

68 Given the nature and location of the site and the proposals, there may be limited opportunities but following techniques are considered likely to prove viable:

- Green roofs;
- Landscaping designed to maximise rainwater storage/absorption;
- Permeable pavements;
- Design for exceedance (i.e. low impact areas of public realm that could be flooded during low return period storms – say 1 in 10 years or less often).

69 The applicant should supply information about the proposed approach to sustainable drainage for this development.

Local planning authority's position

70 The Islington Council tree officer report suggests that the Council is generally supportive of the development at this stage.

Legal considerations

71 Under the arrangements set out in Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008 the Mayor is required to provide the local planning authority with a statement setting out whether he considers that the application complies with the London Plan, and his reasons for taking that view. Unless notified otherwise by the Mayor, the Council must consult the Mayor again under Article 5 of the Order if it subsequently resolves to make a draft decision on the application, in order that the Mayor may decide whether to allow the draft decision to proceed unchanged, or direct the Council under Article 6 of the Order to refuse the application, or issue a direction under Article 7 of the Order that he is to act as the local planning authority for the purpose of determining the application and any connected application. There is no obligation at this present stage for the Mayor to indicate his intentions regarding a possible direction, and no such decision should be inferred from the Mayor's statement and comments.

Financial considerations

72 There are no financial considerations at this stage.

Conclusion

73 London Plan policies on climate change and transport are relevant to this application. The application broadly complies with the London Plan however further information and/or confirmation, as detailed below is required to comply fully:

- **Land use principles:** The principle of a commercial development with commercial and retail and cafe uses and SME space at lower ground and/or ground floor and office use above is acceptable in strategic planning terms. However, confirmation of the amount to be secured and further information on the housing to be provided and whether this is in line with local needs should be provided to the GLA. Furthermore, the Council should seek to secure a payment in lieu and the applicant should be made to address the residential shortfall through a s106 agreement.
- **Strategic views:** Whilst a TVIA has been submitted, it does not provide an assessment of the impact of the scheme upon this strategic view. The applicant should confirm the height of the proposed building and whether it falls below the threshold plane as set out in the LVMF SPG, and if it does exceed the threshold plan, should produce a visual impact assessment, including a verified view of the proposal from this position. This should be provided before the application is referred back to the Mayor at Stage II.
- **Inclusive design:** The inclusive design provisions are welcomed.
- **Urban design:** The overall design approach of the scheme is generally supported, however some urban design issues are to be addressed. Additional entrances should be added to the retail/cafe space along Ray Street to further activate this frontage. Further detail of the facade treatment at the location of the plant facilities should also be provided before the application is referred back to the Mayor at Stage II.

- **Trees and woodlands:** Although the loss of trees, particularly the London plane trees does not comply with policy, overall the scheme contributes and enhances the landscape, biodiversity value and growing conditions of the site and surrounding area, and re-provides the canopy that is proposed to be lost. The applicant should articulate the development constraints to justify the removal of the 7 London plane trees. A detailed assessment of whether T2 can be retained instead of T3, as recommended by the Council, should also be provided before the application is referred back to the Mayor at Stage II.
- **Transport:** The application is generally acceptable in principle however falls short of some of the transport policies requirements of the London Plan subject to appropriate conditions and/or s106 obligations which should be secured in relation to deliveries and servicing, construction logistics, paving and vegetation, cycle infrastructure and parking, car parking, public transport and a travel plan. Mayoral and local CIL payments will also need to be secured.
- **Climate change:** Though the carbon dioxide savings (35%) meet the target within Policy 5.2 of the London Plan, further information is required before compliance with London Plan energy policy can be verified. The applicant should consider the flood risk that exists at the site and supply information on the nature of the risk and to what extent it requires mitigation measures. The applicant should also supply information about the proposed approach to sustainable drainage for this development.

74 On balance, the application does not yet comply with the London Plan, for the reasons set out above; however the possible remedies set out above could address these deficiencies.

for further information, contact GLA Planning Unit (Development & Projects Team):

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