



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Wednesday 12 July 2023
at 6.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Kelcher (Chair), Councillor S Butt (Vice Chair) and Councillors Akram, Begum, Dixon, Mahmood, J.Patel and Rajan-Seelan.

1. **Apologies for Absence and Clarification of Alternate Members**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Maurice, with Councillor J.Patel present as an alternate.

2. **Declarations of interests**

None.

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 12 June 2023 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. **22/3260 - 231 Watford Road, Harrow, HA1 3TU**

Consideration of this application was deferred to a future meeting.

5. **23/0578 - Olympic Office Centre, 8 Fulton Road, Wembley, HA9 0NU**

PROPOSAL

Demolition of existing building and erection of building for use as a purpose-built Further Education College Campus of up to 8 storeys high with associated plant at roof level, provision of hard and soft landscaping and cycle parking facilities, loading bay and accessible parking bays on Rutherford Road frontage and drop off bay on Fulton Road

RECOMMENDATION~:

That the Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission subject to:

- (1) The application's referral to the Mayor of London (stage 2 referral) and the prior completion of a legal agreement to secure the planning obligations as laid out in the Committee report.
- (2) That the Head of Planning is delegated authority to issue the planning permission and impose conditions and informatives as detailed in the report.

- (3) That the Head of Planning is delegated authority to make changes to the wording of the committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions, informatives, planning obligations or reasons for the decision) prior to the decision being actioned, provided that the Head of Planning is satisfied that any such changes could not reasonably be regarded as deviating from the overall principle of the decision reached by the committee nor that such change(s) could reasonably have led to a different decision having been reached by the committee.

Lena Summers, Planning Officer, North Area Planning Team, introduced the report and set out the key issues. In introducing the report members were advised that the existing site located between Olympic Way and Rutherford Way was currently occupied by an eight-storey office building with associated car parking and soft landscaping. The site formed part of the Wembley Growth Area and part of a site allocation within the Local Plan 2019-2041. The allocated use was for mixed use main town centre uses, education/campus or residential incorporating flexible retail uses and leisure and community uses at ground floor level. The site was within the Wembley Town Centre boundary and the Tall Building Zone.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the supplementary agenda that provided information in response to the comments received from Wembley Stadium in relation to the consideration of the operational requirements of the stadium. Following the comments raised, amendments had been made to Conditions 11, 23 and 24 as detailed in the report.

The Chair thanked Lena Summers for introducing the report, as there were no Committee questions raised at this point, the Chair invited the applicant Stephen Davis, Chief Executive of United Colleges, supported by Jonathan Bainbridge (agent) to address the Committee (in person) in relation to the application. The following key points were highlighted:

- The College of North West London had been active in Brent as a key further education provider for 130 years and was recognised as a well-established community asset in Brent.
- The college formed part of the wider portfolio of United Colleges Group education settings.
- It was felt that to continue its trajectory in providing a broad reach of education and training needs to both Brent residents and students from further afield, the college required significant re-development and updated facilities. It was felt the appetite for Brent residents to access improved facilities was evident from the 25% of students studying at the Paddington campus who were Brent residents. It was hoped that with improved local facilities residents would not need to travel outside of the borough to access learning and training opportunities.
- The college offered a broad curriculum of education and training to a wide range of learners that included school leavers, ESOL learners, learners with additional needs and adult learners.

- In addition to the broader educational opportunities the college provided, they were renowned as a specialist technical education and training provider in the field of Construction and Engineering.
- It was felt that the high community value that the college provided would be further enhanced with the improved facilities and add to the significant public realm investments in Wembley Park.

The Chair thanked Mr Davis for addressing the Committee and invited Committee members to ask Mr Davis or Mr Bainbridge (agent) any questions or clarifying points they had in relation to the application and the information heard. The Committee raised queries in relation to the generation of jobs during the construction phase and the longer term, plans for mixed use of the site, the ability of the new site to meet the needs of its additional needs cohort and the site location in relation to attracting new students. The following responses were provided:

- In response to the Committee query in relation to job opportunities created throughout the construction phase of the development, the Committee were advised that the College of North West London had an existing positive relationship with Brent Works, the development would build upon that with local residents and students attending a relevant course at the college being offered employment opportunities where appropriate.
- In relation to longer term job creation, the applicant felt that the investment in the enhanced provision would generate increased employment opportunities within the building. The Committee were advised that the college was a London Living Wage employer and where possible would like to use local contractors to support the re-development, however they were bound by strict procedures and frameworks to deliver the best value for public money, as well as adhering to Safer Recruitment policies.
- Following a Committee query in relation to the mixed use of the site, the Committee were advised that due to the development's limited budget, it had not been possible to include purpose built additional mixed community space within the development, however the college hoped to work collaboratively with Brent Council to maximise the facility for mixed use where possible outside of college hours.
- The Committee were advised that a key component of the building was the ground floor acting as an active frontage to demonstrate to the local community the types of learning activities that took place in the building. Given that the ground floor would facilitate the majority of the construction curriculum, it was anticipated that this would capture the attention of potential students who were passing by the outside of the college. It was felt that using the active frontage in this way offered greater community value than a retail space.
- The Committee commended the college on their excellent reputation for the educational opportunities provided to their students with additional needs, however queried how the transition to the new campus would be managed for students with additional needs. In response the Committee were advised that the inclusion and independence of students was of paramount

importance to the college and had been carefully considered in the plans. It was acknowledged that it would be a busier environment than the Willesden campus at the entry point to the college, however the Committee noted that this also presented a development opportunity for learners with additional needs.

- The Committee were advised that safety and integration were key considerations, particularly for vulnerable students, as such the college were happy to make further iterations to the plans if issues were identified moving forwards.
- The Committee understood that cycle storage was below London Plan targets due to the predicted proportion of staff and student desks that would be occupied at any one time, however queried if the space between the Unite Students building and the proposed development site could potentially be used to provide an additional area of outdoor cycle storage if there is demand. In response the Committee were advised that the applicants were open to a conversation about how to work together to support improving the use of the space.
- In terms of attracting new learners, it was felt that the improved facilities and the visibility of the facilities via the ground floor active frontage would actively promote the college. In addition to this the College would continue to publicise the new site through their outreach work and strong relationships with Brent Adult Education.

The Chair thanked Mr Davis and Mr Bainbridge for answering the Committee's questions before moving on to offer the Committee the opportunity to ask officers any further questions they had in relation to the application. The Committee required clarity on the retention of trees, cycle storage, disabled parking provision, the mitigations planned to support the development's relationship with local surroundings, particularly on Wembley Stadium Event days, daylight/sunlight and the response to the MET Police recommendations. The following responses were provided:

- The Committee queried if it was necessary to remove 27 trees, that included 2 category B trees, to facilitate the site re-development. Officers re-assured the Committee that the application was supported by an Arboricultural Report that included a Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method statement in relation to the one tree to be retained, T28. Although the development would see the loss of 27 trees, the indicative tree planting plan included the planting of 41 new trees, this would see a net gain of 13 trees across the site. The Tree Officer required the planting of 8 additional semi mature trees at ground level to be secured via a landscaping condition, therefore on balance it was felt that the loss of 27 trees was adequately mitigated by the re-planting plans in place that would see a net gain and supported the site's Urban Greening Factor (UGF) which at 0.34, exceeded the target set by Policy G5 of the London Plan.
- The Committee queried where the drop off point was for students who were dependant on Brent's SEND provided transport to get to college, officers confirmed that the drop off bay would be within the college site.

- The Committee raised concerns that the 2 disabled bays provided as part of the development were on the public highway and could become personalised disabled bays for individuals who did not attend the college, therefore the Committee felt strongly that a condition should be put in place to stop them becoming personalised disabled bays. Officers advised that this was not a condition that could be imposed through Planning as they would be on the adopted highway, however officers would make the Highways department aware of the concerns raised by the Planning Committee.
- The Committee discussed the shortfalls in the daylight/sunlight of some windows, falling short of the BRE guidance. In response officers advised that given the existing context and the high urban density of the site it was felt that the benefits of the scheme outweighed the harm associated with the loss of daylight and sunlight in this context.
- The Committee noted that of all the residents that could potentially be affected by the reduced daylight/sunlight, only one objection was received and that was on the basis of the cumulative impact of construction in the Wembley area and not in relation to daylight/sunlight concerns.
- In response to a Committee query in relation to what the Committee felt was a limited number of cycle storage spaces planned, officers advised that the 198 cycle storage spaces had been calculated in line with the requirements of the London Plan standards, which were based on the number of staff and students (long stay parking at one space per 4 staff and one space per 20 students, with short stay parking at one space per 7 students). The calculations had been completed on the assumption of the facility being at 60% capacity at any given time.
- The Travel Plan had a target to increase student cycle trip generation by 6% which would then result in an increase of 50 student cycle spaces and 9 staff cycle spaces. The applicant confirmed that there was capacity to increase the future provision of cycle parking if needed.
- Officers clarified that the demand for cycle parking would be monitored via the Travel Plan secured by Section 106 conditions to undertake 3 and 5 year monitoring.
- The Committee queried what mitigations were planned to manage the safety and wellbeing of college users and visitors to Wembley on busy event days. Officers acknowledged the unique position of the proposed development being in close proximity to Wembley Stadium, however advised that many large scale events would be outside of college hours and where there were events that could cause a high number of people in the vicinity during college hours, the SEND transport would operate staggered collection/drop off times to ensure that vulnerable students were not exposed to periods of significantly increased activity. Additionally, via the Delivery, Servicing Management Plan (DSP) temporary fencing would be installed to ensure a physical barrier between the college and crowds.
- Following a Committee query in relation to the MET police recommendations received, the Committee felt that all the recommendations made by the Police as statutory consultees should be adopted. Therefore, the Committee requested that a further informative was

added to the application to strongly encourage Secured by Design Accreditation for the development.

As there were no further questions from members and having established that all members had followed the discussions, the Chair asked members to vote on the recommendations.

DECISION: Granted planning permission subject to the application's referral to the Mayor of London (stage 2 referral) and the prior completion of a legal agreement to secure the planning obligations, and the conditions and informatives as detailed in the Committee report and supplementary report. In addition, the Committee requested that a further informative was added that the applicant was strongly encouraged to obtain "Secured by Design" accreditation for the development.

(Voting on the recommendation was as unanimous)

6. Any Other Urgent Business

None.

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm

COUNCILLOR M. KELCHER
Chair