



# **LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

## **MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Wednesday 13 November 2024  
at 6.00 pm**

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

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Johnson.

### **2. Declarations of interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3. Minutes of the previous meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 7 August 2024 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

### **4. Glynn's Skip Hire, Fifth Way, Wembley, HA9 0JD**

#### **PROPOSAL**

Demolition of existing buildings and structures and erection of up to seven buildings ranging in height from 5 to 15 storeys to provide purpose built student accommodation (Sui Generis use), light industrial (Use Class E(g)(iii) and cafe (Use Class E(a)) floorspace, car and cycle parking, amenity space (internal & external), new public realm, landscaping, alterations to vehicular access, highway works and other associated works. (REVISED plans and supporting technical information received).

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission subject to:

- (1) The conditions and informatives as set out in the main Committee report; and
- (2) Stage 2 referral to the Mayor of London along with the prior completion of a satisfactory s106 legal agreement to secure the planning obligations as detailed within the report.

Gary Murphy (Principal Planning Officer) introduced the planning application committee report, detailing the proposal to demolish all existing buildings and develop two parcels of land situated both to the north and south of Fifth Way, Wembley, as purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) buildings, together with light industrial floorspace and a café.

The proposed PBSA was to be accommodated in seven buildings ranging in height from 5 to 15 storeys (Sui Generis use), 1,232sqm of light industrial

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floorspace (Use Class E(g) (iii) and a 100sqm café (Use Class E). In association with this, it was proposed to provide ancillary communal facilities for students, internal and external amenity space, hard and soft landscaping, new public realm, alterations to existing vehicular access, highways works and other associated works.

A total of 759 student bedrooms was proposed, comprising of 192 x cluster units and 567 x studio units. A minimum of 50% of these bedrooms (379 bedrooms) would be provided as affordable student accommodation. Provision of 609 cycle parking spaces was also proposed, along with on-site servicing facilities and disabled parking spaces.

Attention was drawn to the supplementary report, detailing further representations received after the publication of the committee report, corrections and clarifications to the published report, and the conditions and informatives outlined in the main committee report as updated within the supplementary report.

The Chair thanked Gary Murphy for introducing the report. As there were no Committee questions raised at this point, the Chair then invited Roya Latif (who had registered to speak as an objector) to address the Committee in relation to the application, who highlighted the following points:

- The Edge site comprised an elongated parcel of land which was approximately 0.6 ha in size and historically formed part of the railway line. The southern part of the site adjacent to Latif House measured approximately 1300 sqm and 20m in width.
- The proposals comprised the erection of buildings up to 15 storeys, providing 735 student bedrooms alongside 1,377 sq. m of light industrial space and a small café (class E). The southern part of the site comprised three buildings accommodating a café, student housing, and student amenity space, each measuring approximately 48m in height.
- The buildings were located to the east of the site, immediately adjoining the party wall with Traid Warehouse and Garrett Motors. With the Edge proposal measuring 15m, there was approximately 5m separation remaining to the western boundary with the Latif House site.
- The objector noted that no vehicular access was proposed for the northern portion of the site, with all servicing activity isolated to an inset loading bay on the northern frontage of Fifth Way. The designated loading bay incorporated one blue badge bay in addition to a loading area used for both the PBSA and commercial elements of the scheme. A second inset loading bay was proposed for the southern frontage of Fifth Way, which also included a blue badge bay in addition to a designated loading area.
- Whilst Roya Latif recognised that the Glynn Site formed part of the wider site allocation and supported the principle of redevelopment of the Site, there

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were concerns that the emerging proposals were being brought forward prematurely in a vacuum and without proper consideration of the potential impacts on the wider site allocation and its ability to optimise the quantum of accommodation identified in Policy. It was felt that this should be an important consideration in determining the application, which did not currently form part of the material submitted.

- The objector highlighted that the Glynn Skip Hire Site was a very narrow plot (measuring approximately 20 m in width) and comprised only a small part of the wider site allocation CSA9. It was an unusual plot of land, very tightly constrained between the more traditional plots forming the Latif House site. Historically, the site had functioned as part of the railway network infrastructure and had never been developed. It served as an open space between buildings and established urban blocks. The current edge proposals sought to infill this space.
- A significant quantum of development was being proposed across the Glynn Site, which was being brought forward first and in advance of the wider proposals for the remaining part of the Site allocation being significantly progressed. Before such proposals could be approved, it was necessary to consider the wider aspirations for the Site Allocation and to ensure that proposals on the narrowest part of the Site did not unduly compromise the wider ability to deliver on the Council's aspirations and objectives. It was essential to avoid a situation where a smaller site within this allocation hindered the optimum development potential of the principal development land parcels.
- In concluding the response, concerns regarding The Edge scheme were reiterated, including issues related to lighting, height, and the impact on Latif House.

The Chair thanked Roya Latif for addressing the Committee and invited members to ask any questions they had in relation to the information presented, with the following being noted:

- As an initial query, members inquired about the objector's residence or connection to the proposed development (excluding the full address), to which Roya Latif confirmed that the Latif Family owned Latif House on First Way, Wembley.
- In response to a query regarding the primary concern, Roya Latif clarified that the concern was the prospect of additional development. It was also felt that there was insufficient space between Latif House and the proposed development, resulting in blocked windows and other related issues.

The Chair thanked Roya Latif for responding to the Committee's queries and proceeded to invite Kieran Maidment (who had registered to speak in objection to

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certain elements of the planning application) to address the Committee. The following key points were highlighted:

- The objector, being the freehold owner of Units 3 and 4, The Mirage Centre, First Way, Wembley, did not oppose the principle of the redevelopment. However, concerns were raised regarding the intensification and the proximity of the proposed building structure to their Unit 4 building, located at the tail end of The Mirage Centre.
- It was noted that the proposed buildings A and B were offset from the boundary.
- It was highlighted that the application was most closely related to the current Latif House and The Mirage Centre buildings, which were constructed up to the shared boundary at the southernmost point.
- The neighbouring buildings were identified as being within site allocation BCSA9.
- It was generally accepted that the neighbouring buildings were likely to be developed in the future.
- Significant issues of overlooking, loss of privacy, and right to light were highlighted at the southernmost end of the 20-meter-wide strip of land.
- Kieran Maidment expressed concern over the allowance of buildings of this scale to be constructed within 5 meters of their building, not merely their boundary.
- The proposed development was felt by Kieran Maidment to potentially devalue their land for future development.
- In concluding their presentation to the Committee, Kieran Maidment asserted that a comprehensive plan for the area was necessary, as opposed to a fragmented approach that primarily benefited a select few or those who submitted planning applications first.

The Chair thanked Kieran Maidment for addressing the Committee and, as no Committee member had additional questions, subsequently invited Samruti Patel (who had registered to speak as an agent) to address the Committee.

The following key points were highlighted:

- The agent highlighted that the proposals aimed to regenerate an underutilised brownfield site to provide much-needed, high-quality, and professionally managed student accommodation with 759 student beds and industrial workspace. It was noted that the site was sustainably located within the Wembley Growth Area and was allocated for development within the

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Local Plan. It was demonstrated that there was ample capacity at other waste sites to compensate for the loss of the waste use, making the principle of development acceptable.

- It was emphasised that the proposals were the culmination of a design-led process guided by positive engagement with Officers, consultees, and local stakeholders. Pre-application engagement began in 2020, and the scheme had evolved significantly to ensure it appropriately responded to site constraints and delivered a high-quality design response, considering emerging developments and land that could come forward for future development. It was further noted that the feedback received from this process directly informed the proposals.
- Samruti Patel advised that careful consideration was given to the siting of buildings and their relationship with the surroundings. The resulting layout minimised impacts on neighbours and ensured improved connectivity.
- The agent noted that the building heights, ranging from 5 to 15 storeys, provided an appropriate transition from taller buildings closer to the stadium to lower buildings to the west. The heights were deemed acceptable given the site's location within a Tall Building Zone.
- It was further emphasised that high-quality accommodation was proposed, with students provided with various amenities, including study spaces, a café, gym, and external gardens. Fifty percent of bedrooms would be affordable, and ten percent would be wheelchair accessible.
- It was also highlighted that industrial floorspace was maximised, with modern workspace proposed suitable for SMEs and creative industries.
- Samruti Patel further expressed that detailed consideration was given to access and servicing arrangements, taking account of rights of access and discussions with transport officers and TfL. Impacts on neighbouring businesses would be minimised through the implementation of a construction management plan.
- The agent cited a number of social, economic, and environmental benefits the proposals would deliver, including:
  - 50 jobs in the completed scheme and 260 jobs during construction.
  - The scheme would generate £6.2 million of additional spend benefiting the local economy.
  - A Zero Carbon Energy Strategy, including energy efficiency measures, the installation of air source heat pumps and PV panels, and carbon offset contributions.
  - Urban greening maximised, delivering 100% biodiversity net gains.
  - A high-quality public realm and new pedestrian crossing, alongside 609 cycle spaces.

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- Over £11 million of CIL and s106 contributions towards improving local infrastructure and services.
- In concluding, Samruti Patel thanked Officers for their positive engagement throughout and for their comprehensive report to the Committee. It was noted that the proposals accorded with the development plan as a whole, having regard to material considerations. The agent expressed hope that members would support the application.

The Chair thanked Samruti Patel for addressing the Committee and invited members to ask any questions they had in relation to the information presented, with the following being noted:

- As an initial query, the Chair questioned the evidence supporting the need for student accommodation in Brent, given its considerable distance from nearby universities. In response, the Committee heard that in addition to the planning application, a Student Housing Needs Demands Assessment was submitted which set out detailed information around the number of students and where they lived. From a planning policy perspective, the London Plan identified the need for over 3000 student beds per year across London. There were reported to be 19,510 students living in Brent which was increasing with an expectation for there to be a further 28,000 students in the next 5 years. It was noted that only 24% of students lived in purpose-built student accommodation and 29% of students lived in the private rented sector, highlighting the demand for student accommodation in Brent. The locality of Brent, particularly Wembley, was well connected and boasted strong amenities.
- Members sought reassurance that plants and shrubs would be maintained at the site. Additionally, although a civil matter, members inquired whether an agreement had been reached regarding the private service roads prior to the commencement of development works. In response, Samruti Patel noted that a management plan would be in place for landscaping and tree planting within the public realm. Regarding service access roads, it was confirmed that the applicant had unfettered rights to use the access road. However, as part of the construction logistics and management process, businesses would be further engaged on how they used the road to minimise impacts, which was incorporated into the planning conditions. Discussions would be held with businesses, and a plan would be submitted to the Council for approval on how the construction impact would be managed.
- Clarification was sought regarding whether conditions had been agreed with the Metropolitan Police to address concerns about the site's ease of surveillance. In response, Samruti Patel clarified that the Metropolitan Police's concerns pertained to the external public realm areas. These concerns were discussed with officers during the application process, particularly in the context of the site plans for the ground floor and the activation of the streetscape. Natural surveillance measures were cited,

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including glazed windows and ongoing activity. It was noted that there would be 24/7 surveillance, CCTV, and a presence on site. Additionally, conditions were established to address the glazing and ensure that activity continued.

- Members questioned the evidence regarding whether students in Brent would benefit from the development and be able to afford the accommodation. While specific evidence was not available, it was highlighted that a significant proportion of students in Brent already resided in private rented accommodation, partly due to the insufficient provision of student accommodation in local authority areas. It was noted that 50% of the proposed student accommodation would be affordable, which would assist students on lower incomes.
- The Chair sought further evidence to support the assertion that individuals only reside in HMOs due to the lack of purpose-built student accommodation. While specific evidence was not available, Samruti Patel highlighted the demand and need for student accommodation in Brent, citing that for every bedspace, there were three students. The affordability issues within the private rented sector were also noted. It was suggested that if additional student accommodation were provided, students would have more choices, alleviating pressure on the private sector, which was struggling to accommodate not only students but also families and other households seeking homes in the Borough.
- Members were keen to seek details on the consultation undertaken with immediate neighbours to the proposed site, including the discussions, outcomes, and their impact on the current proposed designs. In response, Samruti Patel noted that the site discussions occurred in 2020, followed by a public consultation process. This included a dedicated consultation website, online webinars, and public exhibitions for neighbours and stakeholders, which was positively received. Post submission, comments were received from a number of local businesses and other stakeholders in the locality. The Committee was informed that careful consideration had been given to ensure the scheme responded to its context and the future development of adjoining sites. It was highlighted that the design had been meticulously planned, including the absence of directly facing windows onto adjoining sites, the use of high-level obscured windows, and inward-facing and angled windows for the student accommodation. These measures were intended to address the site's constraints. The planning agent had collaborated with officers to ensure that the distance and design would not prejudice the development of adjoining sites.
- Views were then sought on how the planning agent would be willing to collaborate with neighbours of the proposed site, considering comments from objectors. In response, Samruti Patel expressed a willingness to engage with neighbours to provide a better understanding of the proposals and to reassure stakeholders that the development would not prejudice neighbouring sites. Additionally, the ways in which construction works would

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be managed to minimise impacts was outlined, as incorporated into the planning conditions.

- Members expressed a desire for the Council's involvement in the allocation of units, in addition to the relevant university, to ensure that the proposed development met both the university's requirements and the Council's needs for residents and students. In response, Samruti Patel noted that the nominations agreement provision was already included in the heads of terms, which would secure affordable student accommodation. Consequently, dialogue would be taking place with officers.
- Members raised questions regarding the lease term under which students could reside at the development. Samruti Patel clarified that the standard lease term was 50 weeks, which could be continued. This prompted further questions about the potential for a longer lease term. In response, it was noted that students typically had the option to lease for 38 weeks or longer, demonstrating the flexibility of the lease. There would be a 3-4 week grace period of the the student moving out to allow for cleaning and maintenance to be arranged for the next student in the following academic year. In response to further questioning, it was clarified that students had the option to live in the student accommodation for the full duration of their course, rather than moving out after their first year to find alternative accommodation. It was observed that most students, after their first year, tended to form groups and move to different types of accommodation together. However, under the proposed scheme, there was no restrictions in place preventing students from staying in the accommodation with a cluster of six students.
- As a further query, members questioned which universities would be approached. In response, the Committee heard that this had not yet been decided but would be agreed upon under the nominations agreement and was likely to involve London universities.

The Chair thanked representatives for responding to the Committee's queries and then moved on to offer the Committee the opportunity to ask the officers any remaining questions or points of clarity in relation to the application, with the following being noted:

- Views were sought from officers regarding the confidence in securing a nomination agreement with relevant universities. Gary Murphy (Principal Planning Officer) explained that the s106 heads of terms included an obligation requiring the applicant to use "reasonable endeavours" to secure nomination agreements with universities. There was an emphasis on securing nomination agreements for purpose-built student accommodation, and it was felt there was no reason why such an agreement could not be secured. David Glover (Head of Planning and Development Services) added that a demand assessment would also need to be submitted to demonstrate significant demand for the proposed scheme. It was noted that having 50% affordable student accommodation, compared to the typical 30% in many

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schemes, was likely to be an attractive feature for universities under the nomination agreement.

- Following on from the previous question, details were sought regarding the choice of wording "reasonable endeavours" as opposed to "best endeavours," which would create a firmer commitment and a higher threshold for securing a nomination agreement. In response, Solomon Simbanane (Planning Lawyer) explained that the choice between "reasonable endeavours" and "best endeavours" was largely a commercial decision. From a legal perspective, there were different degrees of endeavours that could be contracted. It was noted that "best endeavours" represented a much higher category. The choice of wording was relative to the bargaining power of all parties within the contract, and the commercial reality needed to be considered within the scope of the agreement.
- In response to further questioning regarding whether the affordable student accommodation units were dependent on securing a nominations agreement, members were advised that this would indeed form part of the nomination agreement, with the university responsible for allocating the units. It was also confirmed that the units would be capped at an affordable rent for student accommodation.
- Members requested assurance from officers that, during Wembley Stadium events, there would be booking arrangements for vehicles entering and exiting the building site. In response, the Committee was informed that a standard condition had been imposed on any development in Wembley, stipulating that no deliveries were permitted within four hours of an event at the stadium.
- Reference was made to paragraph 121 of the committee report, which indicated that out of 430 windows assessed, 318 did not meet the target. Concerns were raised regarding the expectation that students paying significant rent amounts should not have to endure limited daylight, a condition deemed unacceptable for other residents, especially if the accommodation was intended to contribute to the Council's Housing Target. In response, Gary Murphy (Principal Planning Officer) acknowledged that the committee report recognised the noticeable impacts on daylight and sunlight for existing surrounding developments, which needed to be considered in the context of the area and the dense nature of the forthcoming development. It was noted that the adverse impacts were balanced against wider planning benefits. It was further highlighted that students constituted a more transient population and were not full-time residents in the home. The daylight and sunlight assessment also considered windows that marginally failed the tests. Additionally, other windows within surrounding buildings that served dual aspect rooms were tested. In response to further questioning about the more adverse impacts on surrounding development, it was acknowledged that The Waterside would be particularly and substantially affected. Whilst acknowledging the concerns raised by members, Victoria McDonagh

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(Development Management Service Manager) further added that DSP had been taken into account regarding the development plans, considering the dense urban environment. David Glover (Head of Planning and Development Services) outlined that the differences between student accommodation and a permanent flat were significant, noting that, unless individuals were residing in a new build-to-rent block, flats typically did not offer many of the communal facilities available in student accommodation blocks. It was not suggested that students were undeserving of adequate daylight and sunlight; rather, it was emphasised that the nature and scope of students' living experiences were distinct and wider.

- The Chair noted, as a point of fact, that every 2.5 units of student accommodation counted as 1 unit towards the Council's Housing Target. The definition of the affordability of student accommodation was also outlined, specifying that rental costs should be equal to or below 55% of the maximum income that a new full-time student studying in London away from home could receive under the government's maintenance loan for living costs for the academic year.
- Members inquired whether developers had been approached to ascertain whether a financial contribution could be obtained for the Council's Housing Target, which could be more beneficial than securing 50% affordable student accommodation. In response, Gary Murphy (Principal Planning Officer) explained that the Glynn Skip Hire scheme was providing 50% affordable accommodation onsite, meeting the Fast Track threshold set out in the London Plan. It was noted that, to provide payment in lieu of 50% affordable accommodation, an exceptional circumstance needed to be demonstrated. This was not typically how these schemes were approached, as the starting point was that affordable accommodation should be provided onsite. The Committee heard that the proposed Glynn Skip Hire scheme was compliant with London Plan policy.
- Members sought assurance that the proposed development would not adversely affect the potential for future developments on neighbouring sites. In response, Gary Murphy (Principal Planning Officer) presented slides, highlighting and explaining the wider site allocation, which recognised the existence of multiple land ownerships within the policy. It was noted that sites were being developed as individual plots and were assessed on their merits and their responses to site constraints. While it was acknowledged that there were short distances to the boundaries of surrounding buildings, officers had determined that these distances would not result in a loss of privacy in terms of the design. In concluding the response, it was felt that in view of the site constraints and bespoke design of the scheme, it would not prejudice the potential for development on the neighbouring sites.
- Members raised questions around whether empty student accommodation, resulting from shorter 38-week tenancies or holiday periods when students were not using the accommodation, could be utilised to address the housing

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crisis. In response, Gary Murphy (Principal Planning Officer) advised that purpose-built student accommodation, outside of term-time or during the summer holiday period when students often moved out, was used short-term for visitor accommodation in London or foreign students taking summer courses. It was highlighted that there was significant demand for the student accommodation to be put to use and that it would not remain empty.

- Reference was made to Chapter 11 of The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023), raising questions about whether utilising empty student accommodation for visitors in London or foreign students taking summer courses was the most effective use of land to meet the Council's housing needs for homes. In response, Victoria McDonagh (Development Management Service Manager) emphasised that purpose-built student accommodation was a bespoke category distinct from C3 dwellings. It was noted that the London Plan recognised student accommodation as contributing towards the Council's housing targets, with a specific target of 12.5, although it was not classified as a conventional C3 dwelling but rather as a bespoke product. The significance of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was also highlighted. Furthermore, the need for a variety of land uses, such as conventional housing, student accommodation, and industrial space, for the benefit of the community and wider society, was emphasised.
- Highlighting concerns relating to overheating in 45% of the bedrooms raised further questions around resolving the issue to reduce heat and energy demand for the building. In response, Gary Murphy (Principal Planning Officer) explained that an overheating assessment had been conducted, which found no overheating risk with openable windows. However, due to the building's location, not all windows could be openable. To mitigate any overheating risk, a mechanical ventilation and heat recovery system was proposed. David Glover (Head of Planning and Development Services) also provided detailed information on the operation of the mechanical ventilation and heat recovery system.
- In response to further questions raised, the Committee were advised that there were existing bus stops already in the area, so no new bus routes were being proposed specifically for the development. However, bus routes and frequencies had changed. It was noted that Transport for London (TfL) had identified the need for a new bus stop along Fifth Way. Regarding the impact on local transport, the planning application was supported by a transport assessment, which found the impact on Wembley Park station to be negligible. The application would secure a contribution of £208,000 towards bus capacity enhancements in the area. As the site was a car-free development, it was anticipated that there would be no impacts on the local road network once built and operational. Other financial contributions would be required to meet the tests of being necessary, related to the development, and acceptable in planning terms. Members were informed that the only

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other financial contribution would be a Healthy Streets contribution of £50,000 to improve the pedestrian environment in the local area.

- In response to members' final query, it was confirmed that pre-commencement photographs documenting the condition of the roads had already been included within the Draft Construction Planning Conditions.

As there were no further questions from members the Chair then moved on to the vote.

### DECISION

**RESOLVED** to grant planning permission subject to the conditions and informatives as updated in the supplementary Committee report along with the Stage 2 referral to the Mayor of London and the prior completion of a satisfactory s106 legal agreement to secure the planning obligations detailed in the report.

(Voting on the above decision was as follows: For 6, Abstention 1)

### 5. 1-11 Elm Road and 10-12 St Johns Road, Wembley, HA9

#### PROPOSAL

Demolition of existing hotel building and community centre and erection of a part 6, part 8 and part 10 storey 318 room aparthotel plus basement accommodation with associated ancillary facilities, community floorspace (Use Class F1/F2), servicing, landscaping and cycle and refuse storage.

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission subject to:

- (1) The conditions and informatives as set out in the main Committee report; and
- (2) Stage 2 referral to the Mayor of London along with the prior completion of a satisfactory s106 legal agreement to secure the planning obligations as detailed within the report.

James Mascal (Career Grade Planning Officer) introduced the planning application committee report, detailing the proposal for the demolition of existing hotel building and community centre and erection of a part 6, part 8 and part 10 storey 318 room aparthotel plus basement accommodation with associated ancillary facilities, community floorspace (Use Class F1/F2), servicing, landscaping and cycle and refuse storage. Attention was drawn to the supplementary report which set out the receipt of an additional petition containing 10 letters of support which referenced the economic benefits and design of the scheme from properties along High Road, following the publication of the committee report. Minor

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alterations and corrections to the main report were also detailed within the supplementary report.

The Chair thanked James Mascall for introducing the report and then invited Simon Fowler (who had registered to speak as the applicant's representative) to address the Committee in relation to the application, who highlighted the following points:

- The redevelopment proposals had initially been discussed with officers of the Council in 2020, focusing on the masterplanning of the site and surrounding area, and exploring various options.
- A number of workshops had been conducted to identify how the area could transition over time. Once these principles were embedded within the local plan, it was noted that positive meetings had been subsequently held with the Council's planning team & design officers.
- The applicant's representative highlighted that the collaborative approach between teams guided the process, resulting in numerous iterations of the scale and transitions of massing within the development and to adjacent properties. Efforts were made to minimise impacts on neighbours and ensure that the comprehensive masterplan anticipated in the site allocation could continue to progress.
- Simon Fowler expressed that the proposed scheme was designed to respond to the changing character of Wembley town centre, with the height and mass being transitional to the scheme to the south at 6 St. Johns Road, which Members first resolved to grant in April 2022. It was noted that throughout the application, it was demonstrated that a tall building on this site was contextually appropriate, with no substantial harmful short-term effects, and that the scheme aligned with the anticipated masterplanned redevelopment.
- In detailed terms, Simon Fowler further emphasised that significant efforts were made regarding materiality, the façade of the building, and creating an active frontage. Collaboration with officers had focused on integrating the scheme into the townscape, including revisions to servicing and the landscaping strategy.
- From the outset, it was felt that the redevelopment would maximise public benefits. It was further expressed that community space was ensured to be integral to the proposals and accessible to all, significantly enhancing the streetscape and townscape. The opportunity was also taken to highlight that the planning application had garnered substantial positive interest from the local community, with local businesses expected to benefit from increased local spending throughout the construction and operational stages, while maximising local employment opportunities.

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- In closing their presentation to the committee, the applicant representative expressed gratitude for the time taken to consider the planning application and indicated readiness to answer any committee questions.

The Chair thanked Simon Fowler for addressing the Committee and invited members to ask any questions they had in relation to the information presented, with the following being noted:

- Reference was made to the community use space of the proposed development and as an initial query, members sought details on who could use the space and at what rates. In response, Simon Fowler confirmed that there would be no restrictions on the use of the community space. The space was designated under Class F1/F2 use. As a community centre, it could be hired for various functions, including use by churches, at rates likely to reflect the market rates for a community facility in the location.
- In addition, members requested clarification on the proposed plans, particularly concerning the demolition of the existing community centre and the erection of a hotel. Simon Fowler clarified that the planning application included the demolition of the community centre and the erection of the hotel. It was noted that the site allocation referenced the re-provision of community use, and the applicant representative expressed a keen interest in providing public benefit through the proposed development.
- In response to further questioning, Simon Fowler advised that a Construction Management Plan would be implemented to ensure that no utilities or assets would be adversely affected. It was also noted that Thames Water was a statutory consultee through the plan, serving as a mechanism to ensure that no sewers or pipes would be ruptured in the area.
- Members sought clarification regarding the submission of a fresh planning application for the scheme, given that existing planning permission for the site was already in place. Simon Fowler explained that the initial planning application had been formulated at a time when aspirations for the site and the area were not as clearly defined as they were currently. Considering the scale and anticipated changes in the area, the previous scheme was deemed to have underdelivered. The current proposed scheme was considered a better contextual response, with a more appropriate scale.
- Members sought further details regarding the aspirations of the scheme and the fact that the proposed development exceeded the Tall Building Zone. In response, Simon Fowler explained that the aspiration, initiated five years ago, was to establish a masterplan to ensure the redevelopment of the area. Regarding the Tall Building Zone, it was clarified that the policy in the Local Plan did not restrict all buildings outside of Tall Building Zones. Simon Fowler further elaborated on the details of the Tall Building Zone Policy.

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- Views were then sought regarding whether the proposed development was in line with the character of the area. In response, Simon Fowler stated that, given permission had previously been granted for an 18-storey building on the opposite side of the road to the proposed development, a 10-storey building was considered an entirely adequate response. It was also noted that the building was of transitional height, which did not prejudice the future redevelopment of the remaining parts of the site allocation. The proposed development had been designed to ensure that it did not prejudice the potential for development on adjacent sites.
- Members observed that the term for visitors' aparthotel stays was a maximum of 90 days and sought details on the target audience. Simon Fowler responded that Wembley had one of the most significant demands for visitor accommodation, given the proximity of Wembley Stadium to the site. It was felt that there was an untapped demand for hotel accommodation. It was noted that the 90-day restriction for visitor stays had been imposed by the Council, as the aparthotel differed from a traditional hotel. Detailed information about the nature of the rooms was provided, including that 10% of the rooms were wheelchair rooms.

The Chair thanked representatives for responding to the Committee's queries and then moved on to offer the Committee the opportunity to ask the officers any remaining questions or points of clarity in relation to the application, with the following being noted:

- Views were sought regarding the rationale for developing a tall building outside of the Tall Building Zone in an area predominantly filled with residential properties, following the permission of the previous planning scheme. In response, James Mascall (Career Grade Planning Officer) explained that the previous consent had been considered at a Planning Committee in 2018, prior to the adoption of the Local Plan. The site allocation policy for Elm Road was one of the new key considerations from the Local Plan. While it was acknowledged that the tall building was not within the Tall Building Zone, it was felt that this would not harm the surrounding character of the area. It was noted that the building was situated within the context of many other buildings within the Tall Building Zone, such as the King Edward Court development, which was 11 storeys in height and situated at a higher ground level than the proposed development. The site allocation policy also recognised that the development was in an area of transition and within the Wembley Opportunity Area, designated for growth and regeneration. It was further noted that the proposed development was on a corner site and had an open character. From an urban design perspective, it was felt that visually, the additional height on the corner site could be supported. While the proposed development was taller than the surrounding buildings, the materials used would reflect the general composition of those houses. Members were advised that the development was also compliant with the London Plan. Victoria McDonagh (Development Management Service Manager) further added that considerations had been made regarding

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whether there was any harm in situating the building outside of a Tall Building Zone. The townscape analysis had determined that, in the context of various views and other aspects of policy (D9), no harm was found. It was concluded that the building fit within the character of the townscape and had no impact on any protected views or heritage assets. The proposed development, being on a corner site, would assist in the transition of wider sites coming forward for development in the future. Benefits of the development included its potential as a visitor attraction, serving as a focal area in London, and the creation of construction and operational job opportunities under the Employment Training Plan.

- Members reiterated concerns that the views of the committee required further consideration by officers, particularly in challenging proposed developments that exceeded the boundaries of the Tall Building Zone. Members were keen to seek detailed reasoning behind the transition from the extant permission of up to 5 storeys to the acceptance of a 10-storey aparthotel, given its location outside the Tall Building Zone in a residential area, with limited benefits. In response, Victoria McDonagh (Development Management Service Manager) acknowledged that the proposed development was not within the Tall Building Zone. However, detailed analysis revealed no harm in permitting a building of that height, considering the design components. The Committee heard that the proposed scheme had been reviewed by a Quality Review Panel and deemed acceptable from a design perspective by the design officer. Slides were presented, and David Glover (Head of Planning and Development Services) highlighted and explained the CGI view from the East to the site.
- In response to further questioning, members were advised that planning permission had been granted in 2022 for the conversion of a family dwelling house at no. 14 St John's Road into two flats. The windows of the property were also obscure glazed. The proposed development would be situated within 9 metres of these windows. There were no concerns regarding privacy, as there were no directly facing windows, and the windows were obscure glazed, serving non-habitable rooms in accordance with the SPD1 Guidance.

As there were no further questions from members the Chair then moved on to the vote.

### DECISION

(Voting on the above decision was as follows: For 3, Against 3, Abstention 1)

As there was an equality of votes, the Chair exercised his casting vote to grant planning permission.

**RESOLVED** to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions and informatives detailed in the main committee report, along with 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 detailed in the report.

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### **6. Any Other Urgent Business**

There was no other urgent business.

The meeting closed at 8:15pm  
COUNCILLOR KELCHER  
Chair