Committee: Development	Date: 8 th November 2017	Classification: Unrestricted	Agenda Item Number:
Report of: Director of Place		Title: Application for Planning Permission	
Case Officer:		Ref No: PA/17/017	725
Richard Humphreys		Ward: St Peters	

1.0 APPLICATION DETAILS

Location:	Regents Wharf, Wharf Place, E2 9DB		
Existing Use:	Disused Jacuzzi and sauna ancillary to residential accommodation		
Proposal:	Change of use of the existing vacant space at lower ground floor into a one bedroom residential unit and planted courtyard.		
Drawings and documents	 400-PL-400-00 Location plan 400-PL-01 Block Plan 400-PL-02 Rev 4 - Existing Site Plan 400-PL-03-Existing lower ground floor 400-PL 04 Existing elevations 400-PL-05 Existing sections 400-PL-06 Rev 6 Proposed Site Plan 400-PL-07 Proposed lower ground floor 400-PL-08 Proposed elevations 440-PL-09 Proposed sections 1 400-PL-10 Proposed sections 2 400-PL-11 Rev 1 Existing Elevation E-E Section FF 400-PL-12 Rev 1 Proposed Elevation E-E Section FF 400-PL-13 Rev 1 Existing – Proposed Elevation 400-PL-14 – Privacy 		
Applicant:	Mr Barry Angell		
Ownership:	Applicant and 21 leaseholders of Regent Wharf		
Listed Building:	None.		
Conservation Area:	Regents Canal Conservation Area		

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This application is reported to the Development Committee due to 20 letters of objection from neighbouring residents.
- 2.2 The proposal involves the change of use of part of a disused communal Jacuzzi and sauna at lower ground level of Regents Wharf to a single bedroom dwelling, the demolition of a single storey structure (part of the vacant communal facility) to form a screened amenity courtyard and alterations to the elevations.
- 2.3 The proposal involves revision to a scheme refused planning permission in November 2016 under delegated power and seeks to overcome previous objections. Officers have considered the application against the policies in the London Plan 2016, Tower Hamlets Core Strategy 2010, the Managing Development Document 2013, the National Planning Policy Framework and other material considerations including the Building Research Establishment's Guidance on daylight and sunlight.
- 2.4 The proposed dwelling would accord with development plan policy to increase housing supply and meet housing standards including natural light. The design of the proposed alterations is considered satisfactory and would preserve the character and appearance of the Regents Canal Conservation Area.
- 2.5 The proposal would not unduly impact the amenity of neighbouring residents and would also afford future occupiers a suitable level of amenity in accordance with Core Strategy policy SP10 (4) and policy DM25 of the Managing Development Document.
- 2.6 The proposed dwelling would be provided with a cycle parking space and would be serviced in an appropriate manner including arrangements for refuse storage. Subject to a condition to secure 'car free' arrangements, the proposal would not have adverse transport implications including impact on the local highway network.
- 2.7 A large number of residents have expressed concerns about the impacts the development. Officers consider these can be mitigated by conditions and concerns do not outweigh the benefits of providing a new dwelling in redundant ancillary residential accommodation.

3.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The Committee resolve to **GRANT** planning permission subject to the Director of Place given delegated authority to issue the planning permission and impose conditions and informatives to secure the following matters:
 - 1. 3 year time limit,
 - 2. Approved plans,
 - 3. External finishes to match existing,
 - 4. Facility for the parking of a bicycle to be provided and maintained,
 - 5. Details of the retractable canopy to the amenity courtyard to be submitted and approved in writing. The approve canopy to be retained for the life of the development.
 - 6. 'Car free' legal agreement to be executed.
 - 7. 'Secured by Design' accreditation.

4.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 4.1 Regents Wharf is one of a number of residential blocks located on Wharf Place on the south western side of the Regent's Canal within the Regents Canal Conservation Area. The boundary with the London Borough of Hackney runs down the centre of the canal.
- 4.2 The building is not listed and there are no listed buildings in the vicinity. The surrounding area is predominately residential comprising converted wharfs or purpose built blocks. Some industrial and commercial units are also located in the vicinity.
- 4.3 The application premises lies at lower ground level of Regents Wharf. It is currently vacant but previously comprised a communal Jacuzzi, sauna, WC and shower room that was permitted as part of planning permission PA/07/00411 for the construction of a 3-storey addition to Regents Wharf to provide 3 x 1-bed flats.



Figure 1 – Redundant Jacuzzi / Sauna



Figure 2 – Redundant Jacuzzi / Sauna

4.4 At the rear, a narrow down ramp provides access to a car park beneath London Wharf an adjoining residential block to the south east that also has ground level car parking fronting Wharf Place. Adjoining the car parking area fronting Wharf Place, part of the application premises comprises a single storey brick built structure running in front of London Wharf.



Figure 3 - Access to a car park beneath London Wharf



Figure 4 - single storey brick built structure in front of London Wharf to be demolished

7.0. MATERIAL PLANNING HISTORY (most relevant in bold)

- 5.1 BG/90/00234 Erection of 3-storey building (Regents Wharf) comprising 20 flats with basement underground car park. Permitted 7th November 1991.
- 5.2 PA/04/00160 Partial demolition of 2-storey residential unit to courtyard level and construction of a 3-storey building on north-east corner of the courtyard. The proposal involved the conversion of existing basement space into a maisonette and added three new flats. An appeal against non-determination was dismissed on 27th January 2005 due to harm to the appearance and character of the area and adversely impact on amenities of existing residents.
- 5.3 **PA/05/2129 Construction of a 3-storey building of three flats over existing entrance and bin store.** Appeal against non-determination dismissed by the

Planning Inspectorate 26th September 2006 due to of sense of enclosure. This proposal concerned the site of the current application.

- 5.4 PA/06/01087 Construction of 3-storey building to form 3 flats over existing entrance and bin store (revised scheme). Appeal against non-determination allowed 18th April 2007. The approved plans showed the communal sauna and Jacuzzi at lower ground level the site of the current application PA/17/01725.
- 5.5 PA/07/00411 Planning permission granted 18th June 2007 for the construction of a 3 storey building to provide 3 x 1-bed flats, provision of bin store enclosure and upgrading of entrance. The approved plans showed the communal sauna and Jacuzzi at lower ground level the site of the current application PA/17/01725. Conditions:
 - 3 year time period.
 - Approval of facing materials
 - Refuse storage facilities to be provided and thereafter maintained
 - Bicycle storage to be provided and maintained
- 5.6 PA/07/03/321. 4th January 2008, facing materials approved pursuant to PA/07/0411.
- 5.7 PA/09/02273 Planning permission for the erection of two dwellings in a disused carpark area. Refused 26th April 2010. This application concerned the main car parking area at Regents Wharf not the current application site. Appeal dismissed by the Planning Inspector on the 30th March 2010. Reason:
 - "Loss of part of the existing communal amenity space for the occupiers of Regents Wharf,
 - Proposed flat 2 would not provide satisfactory living conditions."
- 5.8 PA/11/00834 Planning permission granted 7th February 2012 to erect a new dwelling within part of the basement parking area. This application again concerned the main car parking area at Regents Wharf not the current application site.
- 5.9 PA/12/00514. Erection of a one bed dwelling within the area of the lower car park level. Planning permission refused 14th August 2012.
- 5.10 PA/13/01945 Planning permission refused 17th October 2013 to erect a one-bedroom dwelling within the area of the lower car park level. This application again concerned the main car parking area at Regents Wharf not the current application site. Refusal Reason:

"Loss of part of the existing communal amenity space for Regents Wharf development which has important amenity value, the replacement amenity space is in a poor location and would not adequately re provide the amenity space to the same quality."

- 5.11 PA/15/02997 Construction of a new residential flat within rear car parking space (amended proposal). This application again concerned the main car parking area at Regents Wharf not the current application site. Permitted 26th January 2016.
- 5.12 PA/16/02761 Erection of no 1 porters lodge in a disused space. This application concerned the space subject to the current application. Permission refused 29th November 2016. Reason:

"The proposed unit by reason of its poor internal daylight levels, lack of privacy and outlook, lack of separation between the residential unit and the car parking area would result in a poor quality living environment for the future occupiers of the development contrary to policy DM4 and DM25 of the Managing Development Document 2013 and SP10 of the Core Strategy 2010."

5.13 PA/17/00362 - Erection of no 1 porters lodge in a disused space. Withdrawn 24th April 2017.

Material enforcement history

5.14 ENF/08/00139. On 25th November 2008 the following notices were served pursuant to planning permission PA/07/00411:

Breach of Condition Notice - Required steps:

- To enlarge the refuse storage facility and modify its rear entrance to accord with approved drawings No.2319.P402, P406 and P407,
- Install and maintain bicycle storage facilities for 8 cycles, in accordance with approved drawing No. P2319. P.402.

Enforcement Notice - Required steps:

• Modify the metal infill panel to be in accordance with the approved planning drawing No. 2319.P.406.

6.0 PROPOSAL

- 6.1 Application is now made to change the use of part the vacant communal space at lower ground floor into a one bedroom residential unit. The proposal differs from scheme PA/16/02761 refused on 29th November 2016 in the following respects:
 - Demolition of the structure in front of London Wharf to create a planted amenity courtyard with translucent glass screens on the eastern and southern perimeters,
 - Two pairs of full height glazed aluminium powder coated sliding doors looking into the new courtyard to light a proposed combined kitchen / living /diner and bedroom,
 - New window in the front elevation to serve the proposed kitchen / living /diner
 - Area of the flat reduced to 50.6 m2 from 68 m2,
 - 3.2 m2 internal storage provided beneath the refuse store forming part of the approved development PA/07/00411.

7.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 7.1 In determining the application the council has the following main statutory duties to perform:
 - To determine the application in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise (Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
 - To pay special attention to whether the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Regents Canal Conservation Area

(Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

The development plan

- 7.2 The development plan for Tower Hamlets comprises the London Plan 2016 and the Tower Hamlets Local Plan jointly the Adopted Policies Map, the Core Strategy 2010 and the Managing Development Document 2013.
- 7.3 For details of the status of relevant policies see the front sheet for *"Planning Applications for Determination"* agenda items. The following national, regional and local planning policies and supplementary planning documents are most relevant to the application:

National policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard 2015

Regional policy

The London Plan 2016

- 3.3 Increasing housing supply
- 3.5 Quality and design of housing developments
- 6.13 Parking
- 7.4 Local Character
- 7.6 Architecture
- 7.8 Heritage assets and archaeology

Local policy

Tower Hamlets Core Strategy 2010

- SP02 Urban living for everybody
- SP10 Creating distinct and durable places
- SP12 Delivering place making

Tower Hamlets Managing Development Document 2013

DM3 - Delivering Homes

DM4 - Housing standards and amenity space

- DM14 Managing waste
- DM22 Parking
- DM24 Place sensitive design

DM25 - Amenity

DM27 – Heritage and the historic environment

Supplementary planning guidance

The Mayor's '*Housing*' SPG 2016 Regents Canal Conservation Character Appraisal and Management Guidelines (LB Tower Hamlets) Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: a guide to good practice Building Research Establishment 2011

Adopted Policies Map - Allocations

Regents Canal Conservation Area Blue Ribbon Network (The Regents Canal) Wharf Place forms part of the Tower Hamlets Green Grid

8.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSE

- 8.1 The views of the Directorate of Place are expressed in the MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS section below.
- 8.2 The following were consulted on the application:

<u>External</u>

Canal and Rivers Trust

8.3 No comments given the separation from the Regent's Canal.

London Borough of Hackney

8.4 No objections.

Transport for London

8.5 No comments received.

Internal

Highways and Transport

8.6 As impacts on car parking have been raised, a '*Permit Free*' approach should be taken if permission is granted.

Waste Management

8.7 No objections. The existing bin store appears to have sufficient space for additional waste capacity.

9.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATION

- 9.1 71 notification letters were sent to nearby properties as detailed on the attached site plan. A site notice has been displayed and the application advertised in East End Life.
- 9.2 The number of representations received in response to statutory publicity of the application is as follows:

Representations received				
Objecting:	20	Supporting	0	
No of petitions received:			0	

- 9.3 Material objections may be summarised as:
 - The flat is proposed below ground level with ground level windows level resulting in no outlook because of proposed translucent screens. The apartment is at the bottom of the 90-degree angle of two much taller buildings. The flat would experience very limited natural light in conflict with policy DM04 of the Managing Development Document 2013, policy SP02 of the Core Strategy 2010 and policy 3.5 of the London Plan 2016. The application of white reflectance to walls within the flat not a permanent solution to the lack of daylight.
 - No access to fresh air.
 - No provision for foul sewage.

- Conflict with Local Plan SO14/SP05/DM14 Dealing with waste and Policy DM13 – Sustainable Drainage. The application makes no provision for dealing with waste or sustainable drainage.
- Limited privacy. The property can be viewed from the street and the sunken courtyard opens up the flat to overlooking from London Wharf adjoining.
- The planned living space is extremely small, 24 m2 as shown on drawing 440-PL-07, in conflict with policies SO7/SO8/SO9/SP02/DM4 – Housing standards and amenity space requiring 50 m2 minimum (2 people, 1 bedroom).
- The area drawn as a light well is a vehicle access ramp into a car park, and subject to passing vehicles and people.
- The conversion of part of the existing Regents Wharf bin store into storage space for the apartment will be loss of community refuse space.
- Out of place within the street scene. The translucent panels would look very strange against the existing buildings. Regents Wharf's frontage is already inconsistent following recent developments. The proposal would introduce a third inconsistency with the small sunken courtyard out of place in the middle of a parking area. Conflict with London Plan policy 7.6 Architecture and Core Strategy SO22/SO23/SP10 – Creating distinct and durable places
- Lack of defensible space between the courtyard and the existing car parking. Cars could park against the glass of the proposed apartment disturbing occupants especially at night. The translucent screens could aggravate the intrusion of car headlights.
- Conflict with London Plan policy 7.3 requiring crime to be designed out. The property will be vulnerable to theft and vandalism due to the windows being at ground level and next to a footpath.
- Loss of communal amenity space for residents of Regent's Wharf.
- Serious parking problems on Regents Wharf. There are only eight designated car parking spaces.
- 9.4 Non-material objections:
 - The existing space already suffers from damp which will extend to the flat since water will collect in the courtyard and there is no provision for drainage.
 - Access to electricity meters
 - The proposed basement courtyard will attract littering and potentially vermin.
 - The property is not wholly owned by the applicant.

10 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 The application has been assessed against relevant policies under the following town planning matters:
 - 1. Land Use
 - 2. Urban design and heritage assets
 - 3. Housing quality
 - 4. Refuse
 - 5. Transport

Land Use

10.2 The application site is a disused communal amenity ancillary to a residential block. There is no policy in the development plan to protect such spaces. There is support for additional housing at all levels of planning policy. No land use objection was raised to the proposed change of use when the previous application was refused on 29th November 2016.

Urban design and heritage assets

- 10.3 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 relates to applications affecting a conservation area. It requires that *"special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area"*. There is a presumption that development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas.
- 10.4 The existing single storey structure in front of London Wharf is unsightly, poorly built and of no architectural merit. No objection is seen to its demolition. The other alterations comprising the formation of a courtyard with translucent glass screens, the insertion of two pairs of full height glazed aluminium powder coated sliding doors, a new window in the front elevation and a rear door to the electricity meter cupboard are not considered to raise architectural concerns. It is considered the development would preserve the character of the conservation area.

Housing quality

Residential space standards

- 10.5 The dwelling would comprise 50.6 m2 meeting the 50 m2 required by the national standard, London Plan Table 3.3 and Tower Hamlets Policy DM4 '*Housing standards and amenity space*' for a 1 bedroom 2 person dwelling. The 15 m2 double bedroom is also compliant both in area and dimensions. There would be 3.2 m2 of internal storage again compliant. 2.8 m floor to ceiling height would exceed requirements.
- 10.6 The courtyard would provide 26 m2 of private outdoor amenity space exceeding the 5 m2 required by Standards 26 and 27 of the Mayor's '*Housing*' SPG and MDD Policy DM4.

<u>Privacy</u>

10.7 The Mayor's 'Housing' SPG Standard 28 requires proposals to demonstrate how habitable rooms are provided with adequate privacy in relation to neighbouring property, the street and other public spaces. The translucent screens to the courtyard would ensure privacy to the proposed kitchen / living / diner and the bedroom from the street. The rear windows would also be translucent providing privacy from the ramp to the car park beneath London Wharf. There would be no overlooking of habitable rooms from adjoining property although the courtyard would be overlooked from residential accommodation in London Wharf. It is proposed to install a retractable canopy to assist privacy. The applicant's agent says it is important to note that looking down onto the terrace would be no different from the situation on the other side of the building (and many other residential development buildings) where it is possible to look down onto terraces/balconies without posing a privacy problem.

Sunlight and daylight

- 10.8 MDD Policy DM25 'Amenity' seeks to ensure adequate daylight and sunlight levels. The Mayor's 'Housing' SPG Standard 32 advises that all homes should provide for direct sunlight to enter at least one habitable room for part of the day. Living areas and kitchen dining spaces should preferably receive direct sunlight.
- 10.9 The application is supported by a Sunlight and Daylight Assessment by GIA who conclude:

"The two habitable rooms within the flat have been technically assessed for Average Daylight Factor (ADF), No Sky Line (NSL) and Room Depth Criterion (RDC). Both rooms will far exceed the minimum recommended ADF values, providing very good levels of daylight. guantum. As measured by the NSL, the whole room area of both rooms will have a view of the sky, ensuring a good distribution of the available daylight quantum. The presence of small scale planting in the courtyard has not been considered in the assessment as these are not fixed obstructions and as such it is not common practice to include them in the simulations. Should such elements be introduced, they would not materially affect the quality of daylight indoors, especially considering that the daylight levels are well above the minimum recommendations. BRE states that sunlight is most appreciated in living areas and the greatest expectation of sunlight is in south-facing rooms. An assessment of Annual Probable Sunlight Hours (APSH) has therefore been undertaken on the south-facing window serving the Living/Kitchen/Dining room. The results show that the room will receive sunlight levels in line with those recommended by BRE both throughout the year and for the winter months.

10.10 The Average Daylight Factor (ADF) for the living / kitchen / diner would be 3.1% and the bedroom would achieve 4.3% both exceeding the Building Research Establishment's. Both rooms are within 90 degrees of due south and would receive adequate sunlight in line with BRE Guidance. Officers consider the proposed flat would receive satisfactory daylight and sunlight.

Refuse storage and recycling

- 10.11 The Mayor's 'Housing' SPG Standard 23 requires storage facilities for waste and recycling containers to meet local authority requirements and at least British Standard BS5906: 2005 'Code of Practice for Waste Management in Buildings.' With weekly collections the Code recommends 100 litres of refuse storage for a single bedroom dwelling, with a further 70 litres for each additional bedroom and 60 litres internal space for the storage of recyclable waste.
- 10.12 The proposed development would utilise the existing refuse store at Regents Wharf. Plans have been submitted that demonstrate adequate capacity both for the existing and proposed development.

Transport

- 10.13 There is no policy requirement to provide car parking in new residential development London Plan Policy 6.9 requires development to provide secure, integrated and accessible cycle parking facilities in line with the minimum standards in Table 6.3 in inner London for Class C3 (dwellings) 1 cycle space for single bed units. MDD Policy DM22 '*Parking*' requires developments to meet car and cycle parking standards and be permit free in areas with parking stress and good public transport accessibility.
- 10.14 An additional cycle parking stand would be provided. It is recommended that any permission should be subject to a *'car free'* agreement preventing residents from purchasing an on-street parking permit from the local authority.

Other matters

10.15 The property is provided with water supply and drainage. These are matters for Thames Water Plc. The proposed dwelling would be adequately ventilated by rear windows, the two pairs of sliding doors looking into the courtyard and the new ground

floor window on the Wharf Place elevation. It is considered that the proposed development would not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring residents.

10.16 With regard *to 'Secured by Design,'* the applicant's agent says that advice from the Metropolitan Police has not taken any at this stage but is intended once planning is approved. If planning permission is granted a condition to achieve '*Secured by Design'* accreditation is recommended.

11 Human Rights

- 11.1 In determining this application the council is required to have regard to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. The following are highlighted to Members:
- 11.2 Section 6 of the Act prohibits authorities (including the council as local planning authority) from acting in a way which is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. Various Convention rights are likely to be relevant, including:-
 - Entitlement to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law in the determination of a person's civil and political rights (Convention Article 6). This includes property rights and can include opportunities to be heard in the consultation process;
 - Rights to respect for private and family life and home. Such rights may be restricted if the infringement is legitimate and fair and proportionate in the public interest (Convention Article 8); and
 - Peaceful enjoyment of possessions (including property). This does not impair the right to enforce such laws as the State deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest (First Protocol, Article 1). The European Court has recognised that "regard must be had to the fair balance that has to be struck between the competing interests of the individual and of the community as a whole".
- 11.3 This report has outlined the consultation that has been undertaken on the planning application and the opportunities for people to make representations to the council as local planning authority.
- 11.4 Both public and private interests are to be taken into account in the exercise of the council's planning powers and duties. Any interference with a Convention right must be necessary and proportionate.
- 11.5 Member must, therefore, carefully consider the balance to be struck between individual rights and the wider public interest.

12 EQUALITIES ACT

12.1 The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination in respect of certain protected characteristics, namely: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or beliefs, gender and sexual orientation. It places the Council under a legal duty to have due regard to the advancement of equality in the exercise of its powers including planning powers. Officers have taken this into account in the assessment of the application and the Committee must be mindful of this duty inter alia when determining all planning applications. In particular the Committee must pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 12.2 The protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Act acknowledges that compliance with the duties set out may involve treating some persons more favourably than others, but that this does not permit conduct that would otherwise be prohibited under the Act.
- 12.3 The proposed development would provide additional housing within an existing building. With regard to gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation there are no identified equality considerations.

13.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Localism Act (amendment to section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)

- 13.1 Section 70(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) entitles the relevant authority to grant planning permission on application to it. Section 70(2) requires that the authority shall have regard to:
 - The provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application;
 - Any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application; and,
 - Any other material consideration.
- 13.2 Section 70(4) defines "local finance consideration" as:
 - A grant or other financial assistance that has been, or will or could be, provided to a relevant authority by a Minister of the Crown; or
 - Sums that a relevant authority has received, or will or could receive, in payment of Community Infrastructure Levy

In this context "grants" might include New Homes Bonus.

13.3 As regards Community Infrastructure Levy, the London Mayoral CIL became operational from 1 April 2012. The Borough's Community Infrastructure Levy came into force on 1st April 2015. The proposal would not be liable for CIL as no new floorspace would be created.

14.0 CONCLUSION

14.1 All relevant policies and considerations have been taken into account. Planning permission should be APPROVED for the reasons set out in the MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS section of this report.

