

Committee: Development Committee	Date: 27 September 2018	Classification: Unrestricted	Agenda Item Number:
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Report of: Corporate Director of Place	Title: Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent
Case Officer: Hamdee Yusuf	Ref No: PA/18/01477 and PA/18/01478
	Ward: St. Katherine's & Wapping

1. APPLICATION DETAILS

Location: Raine House, 16 Raine Street, London, E1W 3RL

Existing Use: D1 Community Centre (ground floor) and dance school (1st floor)

Proposal: Refurbishment and reconfiguration of existing community facility. No change of use is proposed.

Drawing and documents: 1464_00_10; 1464_00_100; 1464_00_101; 1464_00_102; 1464_00_130; 1464_00_131; 1464_00_160; 1464_00_161; 1464_00_162; 1464_00_163; 1464_00_164; 1464_00_10; 1464_00_200 A2; 1464_00_201 A2; 1464_00_202 A1; 1464_00_230; 1464_00_231 A2; 1464_00_260 A2; 1464_00_261; 1464_00_262; 1464_00_263; 1464_00_264; 1464_24_400; 1464_31_500; 1464_31_501; 1464_31_900; 1464_31_901; 1464_31_902; 1464_32_500; 1464_33_400; 1464_35_100; 1464_35_101; 1464_35_200; 1464_35_201; 1464_72_400; 1464_72_401; 1464_72_402; 1464_72_403; Clarifications and Amendments – Point 1_Revision B.

Applicant: London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Ownership: London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Historic Building: Grade II* Listed Building
Conservation Area: None.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The applications for planning permission and listed building consent were considered by the Development Committee at their meeting on 23 August 2018.

2.2 The applications were deferred so that committee members could visit the application site and better understand the proposed internal and external changes being

proposed. The Committee also requested more information on the context to the refurbishment scheme.

3. COMMITTEE SITE VISIT

- 3.1 The site visit took place on Wednesday 5 September and was carried out in accordance with the protocols for Committee Site Visits set out in the Planning Code of Conduct and the Development Committee Procedure Rules. Four members of the committee were able to attend and see the external parts of the building including the rear garden and the ground floor internal spaces. The first floor was not accessible, however those members present were satisfied that they had seen the parts of the building where significant changes are proposed, the most significant issues have been raised and have attracted the most public interest.
- 3.2 Members will be able to report back their findings to the full committee at the meeting on 27 September 2018.

4. CONTEXT TO THE SCHEME PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Raines House is a two-storey Grade II* listed council-owned building, which the Council has brought the building back into its management in January 2018. The Council is intending to refurbish and enhance the existing building to create a Community Hub for use by local community and voluntary groups and managed by an external managing agent.
- 4.2 The Mayor in Cabinet approved proposals in November 2016, to create network of community hubs across Tower Hamlets. Raines House will become part of this network of Community Hubs. The ground floor will be used as a community space and the intention is for the first floor to be leased to the current occupier, Pollyanna Theatre School.
- 4.3 The refurbishment and remodelling of the building will include major repairs (replacement roof, brickwork, windows and doors), to the building to safeguard its historic fabric, improvements to the interior (new toilets, kitchen, lift) and the creation of flexible spaces for community use. The overall cost of the project (including contingency and professional fees) is estimated at £1,325,000.

Public consultation

- 4.4 The applicant has explained that community consultation events were held at Raines House in January, March and May 2018 (prior to submission of the applications) to share the proposals for the future use of the building and listen to the views of local residents. Invitation letters were sent to 950 local homes and businesses ahead of each event. Posters advertising the events were displayed on notice boards, in shop windows and at Raines House. These events were attended by a total of 230 people.

Project timetable

- 4.5 The indicative project timetable has been provided by the Council's Capital Delivery Team. This is subject to receiving the necessary planning permission and listed building consent.

Date	Task
August 2017	Appointment of architects
October 2017	Completion of concept design and feasibility assessment

November 2017	Pre-application advice
January 2018	Discuss initial designs with Members ahead of community consultation
27 th January 2018	First community engagement event to consult on initial concept design and inform design development
3 rd March 2018	Second community engagement event
Feb/March 2018	Further pre-application advice following consultation
November 2017 – March 2018	Completion of surveys and reports required to support planning application
April 2018	Refinement of designs in response to consultation and survey outcomes
23 rd May 2018	Third community consultation
11 th June 2018	Submission of planning application
June 2018 – Oct 2018	Prepare detailed working drawings Procure a contractor to undertake refurbishment
November 2018	Start on site
Late Spring 2019	Appointment of managing agent
Late Spring 2019	Completion
Summer 2019	300 th Anniversary Celebration at Raines House

Interim arrangements

- 4.6 The applicant has stated that Wapping Social Club will relocate to Glamis Hall (owned by East End Homes) during the refurbishment works to hold their activities and that the weekly bingo club will also be able to use Glamis Hall for this period. The Council has provisionally booked space at Glamis Hall for this purpose.
- 4.7 In the meantime, the Council continues to provide an on-site security presence to oversee the use of the building for pre-booked activities.
- 4.8 The applicant has stated that Pollyanna Theatre School will be moving to 15 Chandler Street on a temporary basis while the refurbishment works are being carried out at Raines House.

5. USE OF THE BASEMENT

- 5.1 At Development Committee on 23 August 2018, registered speakers asked for the plans to be amended to include the opening up and refurbishment of the basement to create more community space and allow the proposed works to be phased in such a way as to enable the social club to remain at Raines House whilst the refurbishment works are carried out. These points have been re-iterated in further representations received since the committee.
- 5.2 The applicant has stated the following with regard to the basement:

“The potential to include the basement within the scope of works was considered as part of the initial feasibility. There is currently no access to the basement space and the ground floor slab level has been lowered from the original during previous refurbishment works, reducing the floor to ceiling height in the basement. The pavement level vents which previously provided light to the basement have now been covered up.”

“Opening up a basement space with no current access point, no daylight and no ventilation was considered unviable and would be expected to incur an additional cost of £500k to create a space that would not be suitable for community use. Daylight penetration could be achieved by creating new light-wells at the rear of the building. However these would open up into the existing garden, reducing useable outdoor space and incur further substantial costs.”

“In response to the latter point, the extent of the refurbishment works mean that it would not be possible for any part of the building to be used during the period of the works, for health and safety reasons.”

6. ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATIONS

6.1 Since the committee meeting, additional representations have been received from representatives of “Community Solutions” who provide services from 15 Chandler Street and a local resident. These can be summarised as follows:

- Tower Hamlets should liaise further with the Community regarding the effect that the decision to move current Raines House users into 15 Chandler Street is having on the community. Services for current users of 15 Chandler Street are being adversely affected as there is no space for additional user requirements.
- Review the Community request to stop planning at this stage and add in the refurbishment of the basement of Raines House to bring in additional services and income to the area.
- Review the plans to refurbish Raines House in line with current listed building requirements to renovate the interior and exterior in line with period features.
- Delay any works on Raines House until end of May next year, so that these do not interrupt the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the building.
- An architect has been commissioned by Community Solutions to prepare alternative plans that clearly demonstrate how the basement area could be refurbished and opened up, receiving light via new light-wells and access steps leading to the rear garden. The alternative proposals go on to explain how the community centre could be linked to the open space immediately to the south of the site, between Raines House and St Peter with St John’s Church. The refurbishment should be based on these alternative plans.
- The deferral should prevail, pending an investigation of Raines House and a full audit of services at Chandler Street has taken place. Most services offered at Chandler Street are not free to use and a charge is levied by the provider.

7. OFFICER ADVICE

7.1 The role of the Development Committee is to determine planning applications and applications for listed building consent referred to them under the terms of reference of the committee, acting on behalf of the Council as a Local Planning Authority (LPA).

- 7.2 The applications must be determined on their own merits in the context of relevant Development Plan policies and other material considerations.
- 7.3 The Council as LPA has a duty under Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to give special consideration to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Preservation in this context means not harming the interest in the building, as opposed to keeping it completely unchanged.
- 7.4 In summary the principal material considerations for the committee are whether the proposed internal and external works would preserve or enhance the setting and appearance of the grade II* listed building and whether they would cause any harm to its special architectural and historic interest.
- 7.5 Representations have been made which advocate that a better outcome could be achieved for community services in the locality if the basement was included in the refurbishment proposals. Some background information has been provided by the applicant and summarised in this report to explain potential basement works were factored in to the project feasibility considerations, but were not progressed. This information is provided for background context only. The Council as a Local Planning Authority (LPA) must consider applications for permission and consent in terms of what has been applied for. The LPA cannot base its decision on a hypothetical, alternative scheme that does not form part of an application.
- 7.6 Requests have been made to delay refurbishment works until after the 300th anniversary of the establishment of Raines House in the summer of 2019. If permission and listed building consent were granted, a standard condition would be attached requiring work to commence within three years (and subject to the prior discharge of any pre-commencement conditions).
- 7.7 It would be unlawful for the Council as a planning authority to grant permission and consent subject to conditions that prevent the permitted works from being carried out before the anniversary date as such a condition would not meet the tests for planning conditions as set out in the NPPF.
- 7.8 The Council as the applicant and owner could decide to delay the implementation of the works, if it wished to do so. There is also no compulsion on an applicant to carry out the development or works that benefit from the permission.
- 7.9 There are strong and well-articulated opinions about the refurbishment works, the future of Raines House and impacts on community facilities generally within the Wapping Area. In terms of deciding the applications, there would be no material change of use of the building arising from the proposed refurbishment works. The nature of the occupiers of the building are not a planning matter, however the contextual information set out earlier in this report explains the provisions that have been made for existing groups to return after the proposed works are completed and the interim arrangements to accommodate the current occupiers.

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 The recommendation to grant planning permission and listed building consent remains unchanged.