

<b>Committee:</b> Development	<b>Date:</b> 12 September 2013	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted	<b>Agenda Item Number: 8</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Corporate Director of Development and Renewal		<b>Title:</b> Application for Listed Building Consent	
<b>Case Officer:</b> Kamlesh Harris		<b>Ref No:</b> PA/13/01581	
		<b>Ward:</b> Limehouse	

## 1 APPLICATION DETAILS

- Location:** Poplar Baths, 170 East India Dock Road, London E14 0EH
- Existing Use:** Vacant – former community training centre and public baths
- Proposal:** Alterations to rear elevation, basement and ground floor to facilitate the creation of new electricity sub-station to serve the Poplar Baths and surrounding buildings.
- Drawing Numbers and reports:** 50\_N\_01 and 50\_N\_61; 50\_O\_01B, 50\_Y\_01B, 50\_Y\_41B and 50\_Y\_61B; 150, 151, 152, 153 and 154; 401302735.  
Site location plan;  
Heritage Statement, June 2013;  
Structural repairs report by PEP; and  
Structural Engineering Appraisal Report Draft, April 2011
- Applicant:** Guildmore Ltd and London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- Owner:** London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- Historic Building:** Grade II Listed
- Conservation Area:** Not applicable

## 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report deals with an application for listed building consent for works to Poplar Baths.
- 2.2 The works would facilitate the construction of a new electricity substation within the south west corner of the building (to the rear).
- 2.3 The report advises the Development Committee on the officer recommendation that listed building consent should be granted subject to necessary conditions and that the application should be referred to the Secretary of State for determination as required by Regulation 13 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990.

## 3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the Committee resolve to refer the application to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government with the recommendation that the Council would

be minded to grant Listed Building Consent subject to conditions as set out below.

- 1) The works hereby granted consent shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

REASON: As required by Section 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to avoid the accumulation of Listed Building Consents.

- 2) Full details including samples (where specified) and drawings, in respect of material and finishes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council as local planning authority in consultation with English Heritage before the relevant approved work is begun. The relevant work shall be carried out in accordance with such approved details, as follows:

- a) Proposed brickwork to be used for the repairs to the brick elevations. This should comprise a sample panel to be erected on site, measuring approximately 1 meter square and demonstrating the brick bonding, mortar mix and finishing method. This sample should be retained on site for the duration of the works.
- b) Proposed new metal windows, including a 1:1 scale sample. This sample should provide clear illustration of the proposed opening method, ironmongery, surface finishes, beading and glazing. Details should also be provided of proposed method of fixing to the existing building, where this differs from existing.
- c) Proposed louvered doors and panels, including a 1:1 scale sample. Details should also be provided of the associated framing and method of fixing to the building.

REASON: To ensure that the special architectural or historic interest of this building is safeguarded in accordance with the requirements of Tower Hamlets Core Strategy policy SP10 and policies DM24 and DM27 of the Managing Development Document 2013.

- 3) All new internal works and finishes and works of making good shall match the existing original work adjacent in respect of materials used, detailed execution and finished appearance, except where indicated otherwise on the drawings hereby approved or as required by any condition(s) attached to this consent.

REASON: To ensure that the special architectural or historic interest of this building is safeguarded in accordance with the requirements of Tower Hamlets Core Strategy policy SP10 and policies DM24 and DM27 of the Managing Development Document 2013.

## **4 PROPOSAL AND LOCATION DETAILS**

### **Proposal**

- 4.1 This application involves proposed alterations to the Grade II listed Poplar Baths to facilitate a new electricity sub-station including the installation of cable ducts at rear. The works would provide the necessary electrical infrastructure to facilitate a

more significant proposal for the restoration and repair of the listed swimming baths, which would bring the building back into use as an indoor leisure centre with swimming pool. These more significant works are the subject of separate planning and listed building consent applications which will be reported to the Development Committee later this year.

- 4.2 The proposed development comprises the reconfiguration of the building at the southwest corner to facilitate a new electricity substation, including cable ducts. The ground floor transformer room would measure 5.8m by 3.7m on plan and with an internal head height of 2.4m.
- 4.3 At the basement the works would involve the insertion of four loadbearing brick walls to create an enclosure which fits within the existing structural frame. Two of the new walls are tied to the existing structure, and two would be freestanding of the existing structure. There would be no requirement for the demolition of structures at basement level, other than the southern wall of the existing electrical switch room.
- 4.4 At ground level the works would involve the removal of one of the two symmetrically arranged concrete stairs at the back of the existing stage which connect the lower (street) level with the upper (poolside gallery) level. The works would also require the removal of a lavatory under the stairs and a pair of existing internal double doors which form a lobby.
- 4.5 Two internal loadbearing brick walls are to be inserted, to the north and east, along with fire protected steel stanchions along the south. The new enclosure would project into a largely featureless area that would originally have been the location of collapsible dressing boxes related to the seasonal use of the building as a pool/public hall and which have since been removed.
- 4.6 At the upper (poolside gallery) level, the tiled walls at the back of the stage are to be retained. A section of the floor will be removed to form the roof of the new substation.
- 4.7 Externally the doors and windows to be overlapped by the new internal enclosures would be removed and replaced with bronzed metal louvered windows to match the existing in design.
- 4.8 A new pedestrian doorway would be inserted at the south elevation, aligning with the window bay above. The tall, tripartite windows would be replaced with new double glazed metal windows with a bronzed finish, with frames and glazing bars to match existing windows.
- 4.9 Associated steelwork and brickwork repairs will be carried out in association with the substation works will ensure that the structural failings of the building are properly remedied and that the repairs are carried out in a way that would have the least impact on the architectural integrity of the elevation. The Heritage Report anticipates that the existing 'silver grey' coated red bricks on the external face of the building will not be re-usable and matching, handmade bricks have been sourced.

### **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.10 Poplar Baths is located to the south of East India Dock Road opposite Chrisp Street town centre and markets. The site is bounded by Poplar Bath Street to the west, Grove Villas to the east and Lawless Street to the south. Further to the east of the site is All Saints Docklands Light Railway station.

- 4.11 The building is listed as a building of special architectural and historic interest (Grade 11). The most significant external elevation of the baths in heritage terms is the front elevation facing East India Dock Road. The rear and side elevations are less significant and are viewed mainly from the residential streets and estate access roads.
- 4.12 The area immediately surrounding the application site to the south and west is mainly residential in character with a variety of buildings ranging from two to seven storeys in height.

## **5 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 5.1 Current undetermined applications as follows:
- 5.2 PA/13/01432(19 June 2013) –Application for full planning permission for the demolition of existing garages and ball court, erection of 10 storey residential block to provide 60 affordable housing units along with external alterations and refurbishment to Poplar Baths building including the demolition of chimney and associated ancillary works to provide indoor wet and dry sports and leisure facilities, roof top games area, plus ancillary landscaping and vehicular parking.
- 5.3 PA/13/01441(19 June 2013) –Application for listed building consent for internal and external alterations and refurbishment to Poplar Baths building including demolition of chimney and associated ancillary works.

## **6 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES**

### **Government Planning Policy**

- 6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2012) - Chapter 12 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'

### **London Plan Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London (2011)**

- 6.2 Policies:
- |     |                                 |
|-----|---------------------------------|
| 7.4 | Local Character                 |
| 7.6 | Architecture                    |
| 7.8 | Heritage assets and archaeology |

### **Adopted Core Strategy (2010)**

- 6.3 Policies:
- |      |   |
|------|---|
| SP09 | Creating attractive and safe streets and spaces |
| SP10 | Creating distinct and durable places            |

### **Managing Development Document (adopted April 2013)**

- 6.4 Policies:
- |      |                                       |
|------|---------------------------------------|
| DM24 | Place Sensitive Design                |
| DM25 | Amenity                               |
| DM27 | Heritage and the historic environment |

## **7 CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

- 7.1 The views of the Directorate of Development and Renewal are expressed in the material planning considerations section below.

### **English Heritage**

- 7.2 No objection. English Heritage welcomes the proposal and sees this as the first step in the regeneration and repair of this iconic and highly significant listed building.

As well as providing essential power provision on site, the proposal will serve to inform the wider scheme for the site by enabling further understanding of the structural composition of the building and undertaking of trial repairs to the structural frame and external brickwork. The proposal will also allow consideration, at an early stage, of the treatment of new and existing openings in the brickwork, including louvres and window samples.

#### **LBTH - Borough Conservation Officer**

- 7.3 No objection. This proposal has been subject to much pre application discussion. The works involved will help to facilitate the wider reuse and restoration of this important heritage asset which is included on the English Heritage Register of Heritage at Risk. The detailed information with regard to brickwork and window replacement which will be secured by means of condition will help to inform the forthcoming application for the overall building.

### **8 LOCAL REPRESENTATION**

- 8.1 A total of 66 neighbouring properties within the area shown on the map appended to this report were notified about the application and invited to comment.
- 8.2 The application has also been publicised in East End Life and on site.
- 8.3 No letters of representation have been received.

### **9 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 9.1 As this Grade II listed building is owned by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, the Council cannot determine applications for Listed Building Consent for works to buildings that it owns. Regulation 13 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 requires that such applications are referred to the Secretary of State, together with any representations received following statutory publicity. The terms of reference of the Development Committee require that where the Council is applying for works to a Listed Building that it owns, the application must be considered by the Committee.

#### **Setting and Appearance of the Listed Building**

- 9.2 When determining listed building consent applications, Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, requires that regard should be paid to the desirability of preserving the building or/and its setting, and any features of special architectural or historic interest.
- 9.3 The application proposal seeks to create a new UK Power Networks compliant electricity substation, including the installation of cable ducts. The proposed substation would be a critical piece of infrastructure required to facilitate the proposed future refurbishment and re-use of the baths. If consent is granted the carrying out of the minor works, including brick work repairs and window replacements would also provide an opportunity to complete an external repair sequence at one of the less sensitive parts of the building.
- 9.4 The proposed location of the substation would be at rear on the south-west corner of the building facing Lawless Street. Whilst the Poplar Baths building is a building of special architectural and historic interest the works would affect the side and rear elevations are utilitarian in character and of lesser architectural interest than the main

front elevation.

- 9.5 In design and heritage terms, the location of the substation would be appropriate in terms of the character and appearance of the listed building. The rear elevation is faced in red brick and is subservient to both the front elevation and the west façade. The introduction of a substation at that point would have minimal impact on the whole building.
- 9.6 The external works proposed, including replacement windows and doors and repairs to brick work would be in keeping with the architectural appearance of the listed building and are supported by both English Heritage and the Borough Conservation Officer.
- 9.7 The internal alterations would not affect features of special architectural or historic significance. They would represent a minimal intervention in the overall fabric of the listed Baths. No objections have been raised to the internal works by English Heritage or the Borough Conservation Officer.
- 9.8 The internal and external refurbishment works and elevation treatment together with the change in materials for the windows would not harm the overall special architectural or historic interest of the listed building. The materials proposed would have only a marginal and limited effect on the setting and appearance of the building due to the rather industrial feel of the building when viewed from the rear. The replacement of original Crittall windows with new steel framed thermally broken double glazed windows would match existing windows and finished in a similar colour.
- 9.9 The proposed works are therefore considered sympathetic and would preserve the character, fabric, integrity and identity of the listed building. This proposal therefore meets the requirements outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), Policy SP10 of the adopted Core Strategy (2010) and Policies DM24 and policy DM27 of the Managing Development Document (adopted April 2013).
- 9.10 Furthermore, the external works required to facilitate the sub-station would allow consideration, at an early stage, of the proposed approach to the treatment and repair of new and existing openings in the brickwork in other parts of the building, confined to a limited and less prominent part of the building.

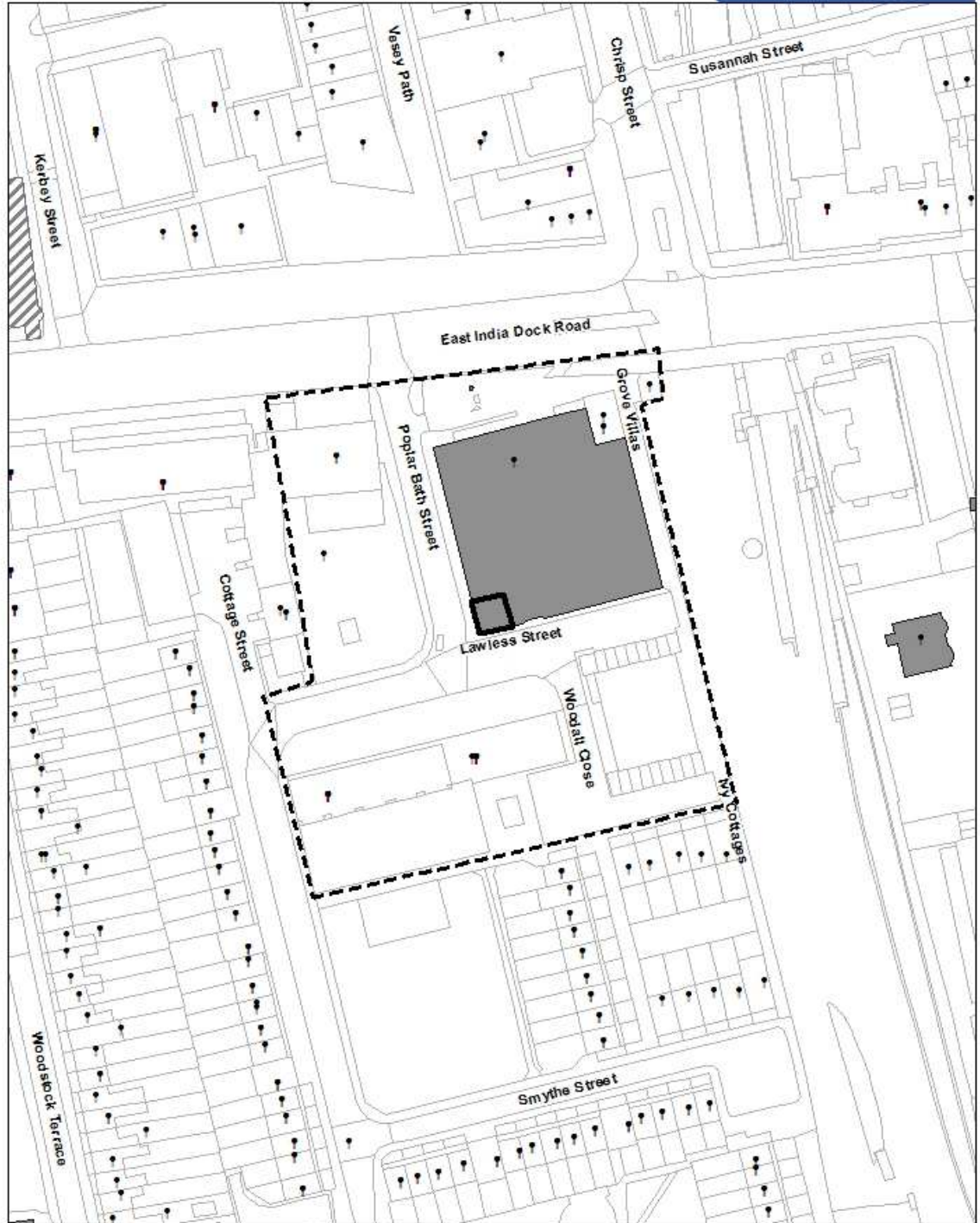
### **Other Considerations**

- 9.11 The proposed sub-station itself would occupy less than 2% of the overall ground area of Poplar Baths and would involve minor internal works to the main building. The substation would be ancillary to the established leisure use of the main building and would therefore be permitted development. Officer's opinion is that the proposals would not require planning permission in their own right.

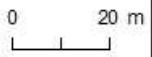
## **10 CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 All other relevant policies and considerations have been taken into account and the Secretary of State can be advised that this Council would have been minded to grant Listed Building Consent subject to the conditions set out in the RECOMMENDATION at the beginning of this report.

**Planning Application Site Map**  
PA/13/01581



- Planning Application Site Boundary
- Locally Listed Buildings
- Land Parcel Address
- Consultation Area
- Statutory Listed Buildings



This Site Map displays the Planning Application Site Boundary and the neighbouring Occupiers / Owners who were consulted as part of the Planning Application process.  
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1:1,250