

Committee: Development	Date: 14 th May 2015	Classification: Unrestricted	Agenda Item:
Report of: Corporate Director of Development and Renewal		Title: Full Planning Permission Application	
Case Officer: Brett McAllister		Ref Nos: PA/14/02753 (Full Planning Permission & PA/14/02754 (Listed Building Consent)	
		Ward: Island Gardens	

1. APPLICATION DETAILS

- 1.1 **Location:** The Forge, 397 & 411 Westferry Road, London, E14 3AE
- 1.2 **Existing Use:** Vacant Warehouse permitted for business use (Use Class B1).
- 1.3 **Proposal:** Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for:
- Change of use of part of The Forge from business use (Use Class B1) to convenience retail food store (Use Class A1) with gross internal floor area of 394m² and net sales area (gross internal) of 277m²;
 - Change of use of a separate unit of The Forge (Use Class B1) to interchangeable uses for either or financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments, office, non-residential institutions (nursery, clinic, art gallery, or museum), or assembly and leisure (gym), namely change of use to uses classes A2, A3, A4, B1a, D1 and D2 with gross internal floor area 275.71m²;
 - The remainder of the ground floor would be for office use split into 3 units (Use Class B1a)
 - 297.17m² GFA of new floor space created at 1st floor level (internally) for office use, split into 3 units (Use Class B1a)
 - Internal and external changes and maintenance to the Forge to facilitate the change of use to retail convenience store including new customer access to the north west elevation, internal partitions, works to the roof to facilitate new plant equipment and satellite dish; making good to walls (internal and external), maintenance to internal cranes and general building maintenance;

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The linked applications for planning permission and listed building consent were considered by the Development Committee on 11th March 2015. A copy of the original report is appended.
- 2.2 The Committee deferred the applications in order to visit the site, to better understand the proposals and their effect on the setting and appearance of the listed building.
- 2.3 A site visit was undertaken on 2nd April 2015 at 6.30pm. Members will have the opportunity to report back on their findings at the next meeting of the Development Committee on 14th May 2015.

3. FURTHER REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 Following the deferral of the application by the Committee, the Council has received additional information from the applicant and three further representations from a ward councillor and members of the public.
- 3.2 A letter was received from the applicant's agent, after the previous committee responding to matters that were raised at committee. Matters raised in the letter which are not covered in the committee report are summarised as follows:
- 3.3 History of the Site
 - A condition requiring an information notice board be erected and maintained inside the building is suggested. The notice board would advise on the history of The Forge and the historical importance of the building for the local area.
 - The same time as the Forge was renovated in 2007 the use changed from Use Class B2 to Use Class B1.
 - The Forge may well have been compartmentalized when it was in active industrial use and the latest changes should be considered the most recent evolution of the building.
- 3.4 New External Opening
 - The new entrance on north western elevation was suggested by Conservation Officer.
 - There was concern that customers would be much less inclined to travel past the unit on the south east half of the building to get to the unit on the other side of the building.
 - Deliveries to a unit on the north-western side without an entrance would have to travel further creating more noise and disturbance to neighbours.
- 3.5 Deliveries and Size of Vehicles
 - Parking arrangement and service management plan agreed with Council Highways officers and TfL.
 - Service Management Plan states that the maximum vehicle that would be used for deliveries would be an 8 metre rigid lorry.
 - Prior to the application there would be no restrictions to the delivery vehicles and times used.
 - If the building cannot be serviced from the rear (as was part of the reason for refusal in the previous application) and not from the front then the Council must accept the building will remain vacant.

3.6 Robustness of Marketing

- The suggestion to split the building into a number of smaller offices has several issues including removing the sense of openness of the building, not being publicly accessible and limited natural daylight.
- Site was also discounted by other potential uses which also would have had amenity and highways matters.

3.7 A Councillor has circulated an email illustrating concerns that he raised at the March committee relating to the potential size of the delivery vehicles that would service the proposed retail unit and the resulting impact on highway safety on Westferry Road.

3.8 The email includes four photographs of a 16.5 metre long articulated delivery lorry outside of a Tesco Express at Landmark on Westferry Road. The pictures show the traffic disturbance caused while the lorry is parked, caused by vehicles having to overtake it or waiting to overtake it.

3.9 One further letter of support and letter of objection have been received since the March committee. They do not raise any new issues.

4. **ASSESSMENT**

Servicing & Loading

4.1 The proposed loading bay to be created on the public highway outside the Forge would be 15 metres in length with parking bays immediately north and south of the loading bay. As outlined in the service management plan the retail unit would be served by 8 metre long rigid lorries. The 15 metre loading bay allows an adequate entry and exit taper for an 8 metre lorry that would enable the lorry to park tight to the kerb without the need to manoeuvre into the space.

4.2 The loading bay would be marked slightly wider (2.5 metres) than the parking bays it would be converted from (2 metres) in order to fully accommodate the delivery vehicles which are 2.5 metres wide.

4.3 Parking services have confirmed that if a delivery vehicle was found to be off-loading outside of the loading bay and overlapping onto adjacent parking space the loading vehicle would be liable for traffic enforcement and a penalty ticket.

4.4 In terms of the concerns raised relating to a similar retail development at Landmark, Westferry Road, it should be noted that here is no designated loading bay and no restriction placed on the size of the delivery vehicles by parking bays at the Landmark Tesco.

5. **OTHER ISSUES RAISED AT THE SITE VISIT**

5.1 At the site visit a member asked about the number of residential units served from the north western core of the Forge Square development.

5.2 Further investigation shows that a total of 76 residential units are served from this core with a total of 190 residential units in the development as a whole.

5.3 Also at the site visit, some members asked about how the historic fabric of the building including important fixtures and fittings would be preserved and incorporated within the proposed development. Following further consultation with the Borough

Conservation Officer, a number of additional conditions have been recommended in order to fully safeguard the historic fabric of the building.

6. RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Planning application

Officers do not wish to change their original recommendation to **GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION**, subject to conditions.

6.2 Listed Building Consent application

Officers do not wish to change their original recommendation to **GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT**, but recommend that the following additional conditions are attached, requiring details to be submitted prior to commencement:

1. Details of layout and internal furniture and equipment and how it relates to the historic fabric to be submitted and approved prior to any new use coming into the building.
2. Details of crane position and reversible fixing of crane in position.
3. Method statement relating to amendments to steel bracing on western corner of the building in connection with formation of new entrance to ensure structural stability of travelling crane and building structure.
4. Requirement for there to be a noticeboard erected inside the Forge advising about history of building and how it relates to history of wider area.
5. Scheme for removal of external render and making good the underlying original brickwork on the northern elevation bays affected by the proposed new entrance.
6. Details of internal stairs.
7. Details of internal ramps.
8. Details of central partition wall in relation to central colonnade.
9. Details of signage for proposed uses including fixing details.
10. Details of internal finishes must include floor finishes.

6.3 The Committee may wish to add, vary or delete conditions based on their detailed consideration of the applications at the site visit.