

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE  
HELD ON TUESDAY, 18 JUNE 2024**

**COUNCILLORS**

**PRESENT** Sinan Boztas (Chair), Mahym Bedekova (Vice Chair), Josh Abey, Peter Fallart, Thomas Fawns, Alessandro Georgiou, Nelly Gyosheva, Bektas Ozer, Michael Rye OBE, and Jim Steven.

**OFFICERS:** Karen Page (Head of Planning and Building Control), Sharon Davidson (Planning Decisions Manager), David Maguire (Senior Planning Officer), Samuel Wong (Senior Planning Officer), Mike Hoyland (Senior Transport Planner), John Hood (Legal Adviser), and Harry Blake-Herbert (Governance Officer).

**Also Attending:** Applicant and agent representatives, deputies, members of the public, press, and officers observing.

**1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Kate Anolue, Ahmet Hasan and Lee Chamberlain. Cllr Chamberlain was substituted by Cllr Alessandro Georgiou.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received regarding any item on the agenda.

**3 REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL**

Received the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control, which was **NOTED**.

Cllr Rye highlighted that point 8 of the report was incorrect, as there had not been a Members' Library for several years, and queried where the Schedule of Decisions were circulated.

**4 24/01102/RE4 - JOHN WILKES HOUSE, 79 HIGH STREET, ENFIELD, EN3 4EN**

David Maguire, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the report and highlighted the key aspects of the application. An update report had been issued prior to the meeting which included additional information. A further condition had

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been requested, to ensure that an independent fire strategy, produced by a third party was submitted for approval by the local planning authority.

A deputation was received from Cllr Nicki Adeleke, Ponders End Ward Councillor, who spoke against officers' recommendations.

A deputation was received from Rob Brassett, Chairman of the Friends of Durants and Ponders End Parks, who spoke against officers' recommendations.

Jodie Rudgley (Rapid Assessment & Resettlement Team Manager), Richard Sorensen (Head of The Housing Advisory Service) and Jonathon Toy (Community Safety Strategic Lead), officers representing the applicant, spoke in response.

Officers responded to comments in respect of consultation, advising that the application was advertised through a press notice published on 24 April in the Enfield Independent. In addition, 210 neighbouring premises were notified by letter and the usual consultation reach was extended/widened. A site notice was also placed at the entrance of the building. Residents were aware of the proposals given around 30 objections had been received.

In response to Members' queries relating to safety and security, officers responded that a condition had been recommended that the facility obtain a secure by design accreditation prior to occupation. The applicant would be required to submit details and deliver the measures asked for, which the Police would need to approve before operation. With regards to fire safety there were three exits on the ground floor, an external and a protected internal stairway, and an independent fire assessment had been sought by condition. The doors would be designed in accordance with the Police's security standards and building fire regulations, with a mechanism to evacuate.

In response to Members' questions and comments regarding impact on the surrounding area, officers replied that people became homeless for a variety of reasons, and it was important not to make pre-conceptions that potential occupants would pose a risk to the community. Around 550 people were approaching the council each month for help with housing, the council had 434 single people in temporary accommodation, and had a legal responsibility to help homeless people. Staff working at the site would be well trained and there was a management plan and operating model in place. There would be a rigorous risk assessment process before somebody would be placed at the premises, which was not designed for, and would not house anyone with medium or high-risk needs. Concerns relating to anti-social behaviour were an operational matter and went beyond the planning process remit. If there were issues of anti-social behaviour, this would be a matter for the ASB team or the Police, if they could not be resolved by the management company. The premises was located in an urban high street; there would be a maximum of 36 residents who would utilise public facilities in addition to some staff, but the premises was not expected to have a greater impact than conventional residential housing. Officers were satisfied that the application would not

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result in undue noise, overlooking or loss of light to neighbouring properties and thus would not give rise to undue harm.

In response to Members' enquiries in respect of the change of use, officers advised that multiple attempts had been made to market/let the building for alternative purposes previously, but proposed tenants had not taken up use of the space. The change of use was to meet an identified need for housing in the borough. Sui generis referred to where an application did not fit neatly within a use class; there was no permitted development and separate planning permission would need to be applied for to change between/ move to a different use.

In response to Members' questions relating to quality of accommodation, officers responded that all units would have natural light and ventilation. The kitchens and a living area provided were described as relatively small but functional/adequate and in line with what had been provided in the award winning Somewhere Safe To Stay facility in Edmonton. Breakfast would be prepared for residents by staff, there was a cooker on each floor, and these were not expected to be in high demand, as a lot of residents would be working so would likely get food out or eat at different times. Based on how the existing hub was run, the number of bathroom facilities were thought to be sufficient and the applicant would ensure that this was the case; there was a disabled toilet on the ground floor. Many of the rooms were said to be larger in size than minimum requirements and due to its use, the building had been designed to optimise the amount of short-term accommodation that could be provided. The bin store would be enclosed and there was a condition requiring additional detail as to refuse collection/servicing.

In response to Members' queries regarding periods of time, officers replied that there was some flexibility in the 5 years sought; the aspiration was for it not to be required for the whole duration, but that this was dependant on need. If members were minded to go for a shorter time to see how the scheme worked, they would need a good planning reason, as officers were satisfied that the change of use met the policy requirements and would not give rise to undue harm. Members had to bear in mind that it would take some time to complete the works to make the building habitable, embed practices, and get up and running. Officers said that if the number of days residents could stay at the premises was controlled, they would have to go into alternative temporary accommodation, such as hotels. A condition could be added that the permission apply personally to just the council as an emergency accommodation hub so only the council could occupy it and solely for emergency use.

In response to Members' questions and comments in respect of parking, officers advised that there were a sufficient number of spaces and demand was not expected to be high, but there would potentially need to be some additional signage to show that the car park was for residents and not those visiting shops.

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Cllr Rye proposed a countermotion, that an amendment be made to restrict the length of time temporary permission was granted to two years, because of the impact on neighbouring amenity, the significant change of use from office to residential, and it involved the importation of a significant transitory population in the immediate area. This was seconded by Cllr Ozer.

This counterproposal, having been put to the vote; Members AGREED:

- 1) That in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 the Planning Decisions Manager be authorised to GRANT consent subject to conditions; the amendment made by the countermotion, and that permission apply to the council only.
- 2) That the Planning Decisions Manager be authorised to make any alterations, additions or deletions to the recommended conditions as set out in this report.

### **5**

#### **24/01437/FUL - ENFIELD DISTRICT HEAT NETWORK BETWEEN SOUTHBURY ROAD EN1 HERTFORD ROAD AND ST MARTINS ROAD N9**

Samuel Wong, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the report and highlighted the key aspects of the application. In response to a Member's enquiry, the officer responded that BNG stood for biodiversity net gain. Cllr Georgiou pointed out that Members had queried at the time why officers had proposed the original approved route.

The proposal having been put to the vote; Members AGREED:

1. That planning permission be GRANTED subject to conditions.
2. That the Planning Decisions Manager be granted delegated authority to finalise the wording of the conditions to cover the matters in the Recommendation section of this report.

### **6**

#### **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Members NOTED the dates of future meetings as set out in the agenda.

The Chair thanked Members and officers for their time and contributions, and the meeting ended at 20:49.