

PLANNING COMMITTEE
10th January 2022

**ADDENDUM TO SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT AND BUILDING
CONTROL'S REPORT**

Agenda Item 6 - Application 21/4709/FUL

Agenda Item 7 - Application 21/4722/FUL

Agenda Item 8 - Application 21/4723/FUL

Late objection relating to the above items was received on 6th January, raising concerns in regard to the financial matters, capital expenditure which are not directly relevant to planning matters.

An objection received for all planning applications asserting that:

- The Applicant has failed to apply applicable statutory obligations under [Town & Country Planning General Regulations 1992 \(SI 1992/1492\)](#) (TCPGR 1992) when preparing the Hendon Hub planning documents and when making this submission to the SPC.
- The Applicant unlawfully applied Schedule 12A of LGA to withhold relevant information from Barnet residents on at least four separate occasions when developing the Hendon Hub proposals that are now submitted by the Applicant to the Applicants own SPC.

A second objection was also received for all planning applications, and which was circulated to all Members by Mr Brad Blitz which in summary states: the principle of development clashes with local or national policies; Lack of need; overshadowing/loss of privacy; harm to Hendon Library, detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity; loss of homes; negative effect on character and appearance of the area; traffic and parking pressures. The objection also details various other matters relating to The Burroughs SPD, existing policy, Historic England comments, abuse of process and non-transparency. It concludes that: the applications are not being proposed to advance the public interest; process has a built-in bias, and officers are deliberately misdirecting the Committee, raising potential charges of misconduct.

Officer Comments

Historic England's comments and position on all the planning applications has been provided in full and therefore there has been no deliberate attempt or otherwise to misdirect the Committee or any members of the public by officers.

Agenda Item 8 - Application 21/4723/FUL

Late additional representation received from Head of Libraries:

The library service very much welcomes the opportunity to have a new library building and we are excited about the potential that it offers.

Though much loved, the current building was constructed in 1929 around the needs of a 1930s library service. The internal space currently occupied by the Library Service poses several operational challenges which inhibit the range of services that can be provided.

The proposed new library building will have a larger footprint than we currently occupy and offers the opportunity to create more flexible and efficient spaces which can be adapted to provide both the traditional library offer and deliver a more dynamic set of services. Many successful new library buildings across the country have included flexible spaces that can be used by a range of council and community partners to deliver additional services such as technology sessions, adult and community education and career support. It's these kinds of services that will be facilitated by the provision of a new library building.

The new library also offers an opportunity to significantly improve access to the Local Studies Service also based within Hendon library. This service holds a wide range of unique resources relating to the history of the borough and is currently housed in a set of small rooms behind the public library footprint. Exhibition space is limited to two small cabinets and there is no dedicated area in which residents can consult the resources held by the service. The new building is an opportunity to remedy this.

Much like retail spaces, public libraries benefit from open frontages that can easily showcase the services provided within and which have the capacity to draw the attention of passers-by including those previously unfamiliar with the library offer. Whilst the frontage of the current library is architecturally striking there is little scope for outward promotion and library users are required to enter a long way into the building before they reach or can see any library services. A more open frontage of the kind proposed in the new building would therefore increase both the Library Service's capacity to attract new users into the building and would improve security during self-service opening hours. Both are factors in increasing use of the library.

Indeed, footfall to a library is generally increased after provision of a new facility, often quite significantly. For example, issues of books and other library materials increased by 38% following the move of East Barnet Library into the new facility in New Barnet (Q3 2018 compared to Q3 2019). This trend is also borne out in other parts of the country.

And finally, in March 2020 the Community Leadership and Libraries Committee considered a report by the Activist Group who had been commissioned to undertake an independent evaluation of the Library Service in Barnet. Their report advocated using development opportunities of this kind to improve the quality of library buildings across the borough. This project provides the opportunity to implement that recommendation in relation to Hendon Library.

Agenda Item 9 - Application 21/4613/FUL

Late additional representation received from Head of Libraries:

The school libraries resources service is one of the less well-known elements of the Barnet Library Service, a bit of a hidden gem if you will. This service supports the teaching and learning that takes place in Barnet's classrooms and it does this by loaning project collections of books and other resources to schools in the borough, running literacy and library related INSET courses and providing professional guidance to schools about setting up and making the most of their own school library.

The service holds around 94,000 items and issues around 9,000 project collections/ 57,000 items per year. The service is currently based at the rear of Hendon Library, behind the public library space. It is fair to say that this space is pretty inadequate. Currently two 10 ft containers are required to store resources and there is insufficient packing and delivery space. The service is also unable to showcase its services to schools, run INSET courses on site or expand its services to reach more schools in the borough.

We support this planning application because it will provide an appropriate space for the SLRS and will finally give them the scope to grow and develop the service further to better support schools in the borough.