



Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2023/2031
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Address:	2 Wakefield Road, Tottenham, London, N15 4NL
Proposal:	Change of use of vacant lock-up garages (B8 Use Class) to office space (E Use Class).
Case Officer:	Oskar Gregersen
Valid Date:	22/08/2023
	3
Applicant:	Mr Geldzahler
Agent:	Mr Sruli Lieberman

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION subject to conditions

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposed development

This is an application for the conversion of a series of garages, B8 use, for use as office space, with associated works to provide car and bicycle parking.

Site and Surroundings

The application site is a row of six garages situated on a corner site at the junction of Wakefield and Townsends Roads. The site backs on to a storage yard and railway tracks, with a residential property on either side. From satellite imagery the site appears largely disused. The site is located in a highly connected area, with a PTAL rating of 6a, and is also located within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) and adjacent to an area covered by an Article 4 Direction relating to the change of Warehouses to residential.

The site is not located within any conservation area, nor is it locally listed.

Relevant Planning and Enforcement history

The most recent planning history in relation to the site is as follows.

Planning Cases (4)

1 - HGY/2018/0951

Proposal: Demolition of 2 Wakefield Road and existing adjoining garages, and erection of 3 storey building with mansard roof to provide 10 flats (6 x one-bed, 2 x two-bed, 2 x three-bed) and private amenity space, refuse store and cycle store

Decision: Refuse

2 - HGY/2019/0192

Proposal: Demolition of the existing building and erection of a new 3 storey building providing 7 new residential dwellings. The development would comprise 3 x 1 bedroom, 3 x 2 bedroom and 1 x 3 bedroom dwellings.

Decision: Approve with Conditions

3 - HGY/2020/0246

Proposal: Erection of 2 storey building to provide 2x2 bedroom residential units

Decision: Withdrawn

4 - HGY/2020/3052

Proposal: Demolition of existing garages and erection of a part-1 and part-2 storey building to provide 2 residential dwellings and associated landscaping and development.

Decision: Refuse

CONSULTATION RESPONSE

The responses below were received following consultation on the application:

LBH Transportation Team:

- a. The site has excellent public transport accessibility (PTAL=6a) and is located within a CPZ.
- b. The application form indicates the proposal includes provision for 4 car park spaces, although two vehicles are illustrated on the proposed plan. The London Plan parking standards require the proposed office use to be car free, in this highly accessible location. There is also ample on-street parking to accommodate potential demand for 'Blue Badge' holder parking.
- c. The proposals include provision for five bicycles. This complies (exceeds) with London Plan (minimum) standard. However, the long-stay cycle parking should be sheltered, secure and accessible.
- d. The existing vehicular crossover should be reinstated as footway. The developer will be responsible for corresponding cost of these works including cost of any required TMO / on-street parking revisions.
- e. It is not clear whether the garages are to be demolished and replaced by a new building or refurbished. If demolition and reconstruction works are envisaged, a planning condition requiring submission of a construction management statement, for approval prior to start of works, is recommended.

LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised by way of 14 letters. The number of representations received from neighbours, local groups, etc in response to notification and publicity of the application were as follows:

No of individual responses: 5

Objecting: 5

The following issues were raised in representations that are material to the determination of the application and are addressed in the next section of this report:

- Parking concerns
- Plumbing and electricity access on site
- Increased bulk and mass
- Glazing causing overlooking
- Out of character for the area
- Site unsuitable/Insufficient parking

The following issues raised are not material planning considerations:

- Land registry showing different address

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main planning considerations raised by the proposed development are:

1. Principle of development;
2. Design and appearance;
3. Impact on neighbouring amenity;
4. Transport considerations;

Principle of development

London Plan Policy D3 seeks to optimise the potential of sites, having regard to local context, design principles, public transport accessibility and capacity of existing and future transport services.

According to the documents submitted with the application the buildings C8 use as garages have fallen to vacancy, and as such it is proposed to bring the site back into use under use class E. Local Plan (2017) Policy SP8 focuses on facilitating the restructuring of the borough's employment land portfolio to allow an increase in B1 (now Class E) floorspace whilst enabling the modernisation of old stock and managed transfer of obsolete industrial sites to alternative uses. Balanced restructuring and diversification are more likely to assist in stimulating sustainable economic growth compared to an approach which focused on a significant net increase or decrease in the total supply of employment land in the borough. Small and medium sized enterprises are important elements in the sub-regional economy, and they need to be fully supported.

In addition, Local Plan Policy states that the need for an increase in the provision of good quality, flexible office space, particularly for small businesses is supported by the views of commercial property agents active in Haringey- as identified in a survey carried out as part of the Employment Land Study 2009. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are also an important part of Haringey's economy, and the London Plan highlights the need for local authorities to ensure adequate provision is made for SMEs, given the anticipated role of these businesses in accommodating future growth of employment outside central London. Where appropriate and viable, the Council will encourage the provision of such office accommodation for SMEs. Environmental enhancement and high quality design are an important element in the enhancement of existing employment sites.

The proposal seeks to take a site that is currently vacant and disused as Class C8 and bring additional Class E office space to the Borough. This is deemed to be an acceptable and welcomed change, compliant with the above Policy.

Design and appearance

London Plan (2021) policies emphasise the importance of high-quality and seek to optimise site capacity through a design-led approach. Policy D4 'Delivering good design' states that development proposals should enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape, with due regard to street hierarchy, building types, forms and proportions.

Local Plan Policy SP11 (2017) and Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) Policy DM1 seek to secure the highest standard of design which respects local context and character to contribute to the creation and enhancement of Haringey's sense of place and identity. DPD Policy DM1 'Delivering High Quality Design' requires development proposals to meet a range of criteria having regard to the following: building heights; form, scale and massing prevailing around the site; urban grain; sense of enclosure and where appropriate following existing building lines; rhythm of neighbouring or local regular plot and building widths; active, lively frontages to public realm; and distinctive local architectural styles, detailing and materials.

In this instance, permission is sought for the alteration of an existing structure housing six garages to facilitate a change of use to office use. With respect the appearance, the vast majority of the exterior of the building would remain similar to that of the existing, however the front elevation would be altered in that the existing metal garage doors would be replaced with floor to ceiling glazing and a set of double doors acting as the main entrance.

It is also proposed to provide cycle parking for up to 10 bicycles in a configuration of 5 stands. Officers note that the drawings show parking for two vehicles, however as the site is in a PTAL zone of 6a the site will be required to be car-free, which will be explored later in this report.

Overall, Officers deem that the changes in appearance of the garages would be an improvement compared to the currently disused garages, which appear as a detractor to an otherwise varied Victorian residential area, as the frontage would appear more active and inviting, without altering the scale or massing of the existing building.

As such, the LPA deem that the proposed changes to the building would bring a visual improvement to the area, and would be in general accordance with London Plan (2021) Policy D4, as well as Local Plan (2017) Policy SP11, and DPD Policy DM1 and can be supported.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

London Plan Policy D6 outlines that design must not be detrimental to the amenity of surrounding housing, in specific stating that proposals should provide sufficient daylight and sunlight to surrounding housing that is appropriate for its context, while also minimising overshadowing. London Plan Policy D14 requires development proposals to reduce, manage and mitigate noise impacts.

DPD Policy DM1 'Delivering High Quality Design' states that development proposals must ensure a high standard of privacy and amenity for a development's users and neighbours. Specifically, proposals are required to provide appropriate sunlight, daylight and aspects to adjacent buildings and land, and to provide an appropriate amount of privacy to neighbouring properties to avoid overlooking and loss of privacy and detriment to amenity of neighbouring resident.

With respect to neighbouring amenity, the most prominent issues raised in comments pertain to potential disruption and waste caused by a change from Class C8 to Class E use, along with possible overlooking caused by the addition of glazing on the front elevation of the building.

Officers note that the likelihood of disruption to neighbouring residential properties would likely be minimal, as a Class E office use would most commonly operate from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday (a period where a large percentage of the workforce are also working). As such any disruption would not be deemed to be excessive and would accord with Policy.

Additionally, comments were left of the application stating that the proposed glazing on the front elevation would cause issues of overlooking. Officers deem that, by virtue of the orientation of the site and relation to any nearby windows of neighbouring properties, the overlooking from the glazing would be no more detrimental than that of the front facing windows of neighbouring residential buildings and would be compliant with policy.

As such, Officers deem that the proposal would not adversely affect neighbouring amenity and would be compliant with London Plan (2021) Policy D6 and DPD Policy DM1 and is acceptable in amenity terms.

Transport considerations

London Plan Policy T1 requires all development to make the most effective use of land, reflecting its connectivity and accessibility by existing and future public transport, walking and cycling routes, and to ensure that any impacts on London's transport networks and supporting infrastructure are mitigated. Policies T4, T5 and T6 set out key principles for the assessment of development impacts on the highway network in terms of trip generation, parking demand and cycling provision.

Local Plan Policy SP7 'Transport' states that the Council aims to tackle climate change, improve local place shaping and public realm, and environmental and transport quality and safety by promoting public transport, walking and cycling and seeking to locate major trip generating developments in locations with good access to public transport. This is supported by DPD Policy DM31 'Sustainable Transport'.

DPD Policy DM32 'Parking' states that the Council will support proposals for new development with limited or no on-site parking where there are alternative and accessible means of transport available, public transport accessibility is at least 4 as defined in the Public Transport Accessibility Index, a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) exists or will be provided prior to the occupation of the development, parking is provided for disabled people; and parking is designated for occupiers of developments specified as 'car capped'.

The Council's Transportation Team has been consulted and advises that the proposed office use should be car-free (for which a condition will be added), and that the existing vehicle crossover should be reinstated.

By virtue of the high public transport accessibility of the site, Officers deem that the proposal for change of use to offices would be acceptable in transport terms, provided that the use remains car-free and the existing vehicle crossover is reinstated as footway in an effort to improve the surrounding area.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered acceptable as it would introduce Class E office space to an area where it is deemed it would not be intrusive to neighbouring residential dwellinghouses, and would reactivate a corner that is currently disused.

All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been taken into account. Planning permission should be granted/refused for the reasons set out above. The details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION

CIL APPLICABLE

The increase in internal floor area would not exceed 100 sq.m. and therefore the proposal is not liable for the Mayoral or Haringey's CIL charge.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION subject to

Subject to the following condition(s)

Conditions:

- 1 The development to which this permission relates must be begun no later than three years from the date of this decision notice, failing which the permission shall be of no effect.

Reason: This condition is imposed by virtue of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans and drawings listed in this decision notice, other than where those details are altered pursuant to the conditions of this planning permission.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 Any building permitted to be used as Office Space (Class E) is to remain in use as within the meaning of Class E of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order and for no other purpose, and shall at no point be converted to use Class C

Reason: In order to protect the residential nature of the surrounding area and maintain the site as use Class E

- 4 The cycle parking provided on site is to be covered and secure. Details of the proposed cycle store are to be provided to the council and approved in writing prior to occupation of the site.

Reason: To ensure that the cycle parking provided on site is safe and secure in line with Policy and Transport recommendations

- 5 By virtue of the high public transport accessibility of the site (PTAL 6a), and the presence of a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) nearby, the proposed development is to remain car free in accordance with DPD Policy DM32.

Reason: The site benefits from a high accessibility to public transport and provides adequate cycle parking, as such the requirement for on-site parking is not required.

Informatives:

INFORMATIVE: Party Wall Act

The applicant's attention is drawn to the Party Wall Act 1996 which sets out requirements for notice to be given to relevant adjoining owners of intended works on a shared wall, on a boundary or if excavations are to be carried out near a neighbouring building.

INFORMATIVE: Land Ownership

The applicant is advised that this planning permission does not convey the right to enter onto or build on land not within his ownership.

INFORMATIVE: Details of Highway Agreement - Section 278

The applicant is advised that an agreement under Section 278 of the Highways Acts 1980 is required for the reinstatement of the footway from a vehicle crossover.

INFORMATIVE: Hours of Construction Work

The applicant is advised that under the Control of Pollution Act 1974, construction work which will be audible at the site boundary will be restricted to the following hours:-

8.00am - 6.00pm Monday to Friday

8.00am - 1.00pm Saturday

and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.