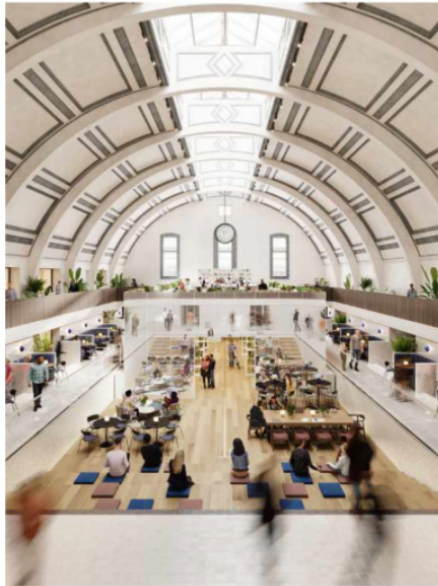


## Squire & Partners' Haggerston Baths overhaul plans approved

3 FEBRUARY 2022 · BY WILL ING



1/15 Current view of the pool at Haggerston baths (left) and Squire + Partner's plans to turn the pool into office space

Squire & Partners has been granted planning permission to turn a historic east London bathhouse into offices and community space

The Grade II-listed Haggerston Baths was built in 1904 for Shoreditch Borough Council – but has lain empty after Hackney Council closed the pool in 2000. In 2017, the council selected developer Castleforge to overhaul the site.

Castleforge originally worked with Gpad before appointing Squire + Partners, who authored an initial planning application which was submitted in 2020. However, this application was lost in a cyber attack on Hackney Council and the practice later tweaked the scheme.

Squire's scheme will turn the Edwardian pool hall into 'flexible community space' with public access during working hours at least five days a week.

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The development will also see the creation of 5,500m<sup>2</sup> office space, including in a new six-storey brick extension, which is set to replace an existing extension on Swimmers Lane, as well as a café and gym.

A tenth of the new office space will be discounted by 20 per cent, meaning the development would provide less affordable workspace than Hackney planning policies call for. However, planners accepted the refurbishment would be expensive, and that Haggerston is unlikely to attract top office rental prices.

Planners at Hackney Council recommended the scheme for approval, saying: 'The proposal is considered to be imaginative in the multiple uses proposed, which make use of original features and existing spaces to create a mix of uses that will help support each other and bring new users into the refurbished building for a range of activities.'

Members of Hackney Council's planning committee unanimously voted to approve the application at a meeting yesterday evening (2 February).

Squire's application received 33 objections, including from The Hackney Society, which raised concerns about

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the 'massive roof element' and the 'curious' elevations of the proposed design.

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The society also criticised the inclusion of 'highly varied/textured brick' in the new elements of the building, arguing that it will be 'similar to every other new residential development in the area' and 'fight with the existing building'.

Matthew Reid, head of development and asset management at Castleforge, said: 'It is great to see our planning application for Haggerston Baths proceed to the next stage with Hackney Council.'

We are looking forward to bringing this Grade II-listed building back to life while conserving its most significant original heritage features. Castleforge is committed to adding value to the Haggerston community by seeing it removed from the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register.'

Squire & Partners declined to comment.

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