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Development Management
Regeneration and Planning
London Borough of Camden
5 Pancras Square,
Kings Cross,
London
N1C 4AG

23 June 2023

Submitted via the Planning Portal: PP-12252844

Dear Elaine,

**TEMPLAR HOUSE, 81-87 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON WC1V 6NU
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION**

On behalf of our client, CER Investment SARL, please find enclosed an application for full planning permission in relation to Templar House, High Holborn, London WC1V 6NU ('the Site'). Following pre-application advice and a meeting on-site with Officers in July 2022, full planning permission is sought for the following:

"Use of the external link block terraces, replacement of existing balustrades and provision of new doors, and the provision of additional external amenity space at ground floor, and other associated works"

This application is submitted to the London Borough of Camden ('the Council') via the Planning Portal.

Site Description

Templar House (81-87 High Holborn and 24 to 27 Eagle Street) comprises a part-nine (plus plant area) part-seven storey building (plus basement) faced with Portland stone on the High Holborn elevation and a mixture of brick and stone on the Eagle Street elevation. The side elevations are not visible from the public realm.

The existing building on the Site was constructed in 1959 to designs by Richard & McLaughlin Architects and was an infill building following bomb damage during WWII.

The building is laid out as three blocks, one fronting onto High Holborn to the south, one onto Eagle Street to the north and one forming a connecting block in between. The latter is set in from the boundaries with the adjoining sites creating courtyard spaces to the west and east.

The building formerly comprised offices on the first to 8th floors on the building fronting High Holborn and offices on the first to 7th floors of the building fronting Eagle Street, with plant equipment located at roof level. There was retail floorspace at ground floor level fronting onto High Holborn, which is provided across five retail units. Vehicle access was from Eagle Street via a ramp into the basement which was used as car parking

The Site is in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. There are no statutorily listed buildings adjacent to the site however there are listed buildings in the wider area, including the Rosewood Hotel at 247-252 High Holborn (Grade II) approximately 20m south of the Site.

Background and Application Format

CER Investments SARL purchased the Site on 28 September 2019, with the intention for Uncommon to both own, occupy and manage the office and retail floorspace. To facilitate this objective, three standalone planning applications were submitted and duly approved (refs. 2020/1350/P, 2020/1310/P, and 2020/1351/P), and which were subsequently amended as follows:

- Application A: 2020/1350/P – amended by 2021/3561/P, and 2022/4204/P.
- Application B: 2020/1310/P – amended by 2021/3885/P, and 2022/4205/P.
- Application C: 2020/1351/P – amended by 2021/3887/P, and 2022/4206/P.

Works are progressing well on-site with the construction stage expected to complete in September 2023, with occupation of the development due to take place following this, later this year. Both the Applicant and the wider design team are looking forward to seeing the contribution which this development will make to the vitality of this part of Holborn and indeed the wider area.

Proposed Development

Driven by a desire to bring the building back in to functional and operational use at the earliest opportunity, our Client has been reviewing the works permitted, and following this review and further design refinement it has become apparent that there is an opportunity to maximise the quality of the proposed office accommodation.

As a result, and as discussed and agreed with Officers at the London Borough of Camden during a site visit / pre-application meeting in July 2022 our Client is seeking to utilise the existing link block terraces as office amenity space, and also create an area of additional amenity space at ground floor. The detailed proposals are set out in the supporting plans which have been submitted as part of this application, together with the accompanying Design Document prepared by astudio architects.

The Development Plan

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) requires special attention to be given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area when exercising planning functions.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that *“where in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise”*.

The parts of the development plan of relevance to this application are:

- The London Plan (2021); and
- The Camden Local Plan (2017) and associated policies map, with alterations (2017).

The Site is subject to the following allocations/designations relevant to land use / this application:

- Located in the Central Activities Zone (CAZ);
- Located in the Holborn Intensification Area;
- Located in the High Holborn/Kingsway Central London Frontage; and
- Located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Planning Policy Assessment

Policy E1 (Economic development) of the CLP seeks to secure a successful and inclusive economy in Camden by creating the conditions for economic growth and harnessing the benefits for local residents and businesses by supporting proposals for the intensification of employment sites and premises where these provide additional employment and other benefits in line with Policy E2 (Employment premises and sites).

Policy E2 (Employment premises and sites) prioritises the provision of employment premises and sites in the borough and protects premises or sites that are suitable for continued business use. Specifically in relation to intensifying the levels and quality of employment floorspace provided, the policy outlines that the Council will view favourably premises which include floorspace suitable for start-ups, small and medium-sized enterprises.

In design terms, the proposed terraces are modest in size and height and the use of appropriate materials does not harm the character or appearance of the building or its setting, but would optimise the office accommodation on-site by providing ancillary facilities which would be of benefit to Uncommon, those working in the building below and the pool office of office stock in this principally commercial location. This is line with the objectives of Policy E1 (Economic development) and Policy E2 (Employment premises and sites).

In addition, a Noise Impact Assessment Report prepared by Auricl has been submitted. This confirms that the noise impact on the nearest noise sensitive property is predicted to be negligible, therefore use of the proposed terraces should be acoustically acceptable and should not restrict the granting of planning permission. There would be no impact on adjacent residential or office workers caused by the use of either the ground floor amenity space or the upper terrace and nor would there be any issues in terms of overlooking.

The proposals considerably increase the quality of accommodation provided in this location. The provision of additional amenity to supplement the office floorspace should be considered to be a welcome addition to the commercial nature of this area, providing an opportunity to increase the vibrancy and vitality of the area and given the current fight to quality by potential occupiers.

By reusing the existing building and upgrading the quality of space compared to the existing condition, it is important with this approach to add as much value to the clients and customers to become as attractive as an equivalent new build. The terrace is one example of this added value which when sensitively designed enriches the local fabric and longevity of use. On this basis, we feel these proposals should be welcomed.

Conclusion & Administrative Matters

This letter has been prepared in support of the planning application at Templar House, High Holborn which forms part of the wider package of works that seek to bring the currently vacant building back into operational use at the earliest opportunity. To assist with the determination of this application, the following information has been submitted in addition to the relevant Application Forms:

1. Planning Assessment (i.e. this letter);
2. CIL Form (for the purposes of validation);
3. Site Location Plan;
4. Design and Access Statement;
5. Noise Impact Assessment Report;
6. Application Drawings

This application has been submitted via the Planning Portal, and the application fee of £766.00 paid directly.

Closing

We trust that the information submitted is sufficient and allows you to validate the application. Should you require any further clarification, information or assistance please do not hesitate to contact James Leuenberger (james.leuenberger@montagu-evans.co.uk / 07341 090034) at this office in the first instance.

Yours sincerely,

Montagu Evans

Montagu Evans LLP

Enc.