

From: Richard Cohen

Sent: 28 July 2023 16:41

To: Save Museum Street; David Fowler

Subject: Objection to amended plans for Museum Street

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I have registered my objection to the amended plans for Museum Street

Richard Cohen

As a long-standing local resident, I feel compelled to object to the plans to redevelop the site at One Museum Street (Selkirk House site).

I will start by saying that the last thing this area needs is further commercial development and intensification of an already over-developed area.

I feel that it is neither necessary nor desirable for there to be yet another high-rise structure inserted into our area as your proposals suggest. The existing Travelodge block already overshadows neighbouring older structures and in your proposals this building would be scaled up even higher and on a more massive scale. It would be visible from a wider area completely dominating the neighbourhood and damaging views of nearby historic buildings.

The local community of residents and businesses and amenity groups has already objected to the first set of proposals and the amended plans on which we are now being consulted still present a building which is grossly out of scale with the surrounding area. Yet we are now being presented with a new set of proposals which in no way deal with the objections that were so powerfully raised by residents and expressed vocally to candidates standing for local elected office.

The St Giles/Holborn neighbourhood urgently needs much more residential accommodation and yet the amended proposals provide for no more than 9 "low-

cost homes for rent". Furthermore the accommodation which is deemed to be "affordable" would require residents to have an annual income of at least £75,000, far above average earnings in London. These proposals would only be justifiable if you were considering investing in affordable residential accommodation and this is clearly not the case with these new proposals. It is only by providing more places for people to live at affordable prices that new life can be breathed back into this central London neighbourhood which has suffered huge losses to its businesses since 2020.

There are strong environmental arguments against the proposed redevelopment as well. Tearing down a structure that is only 55 years old and replacing it with another large building uses huge amounts of new concrete, steel and energy thereby adding to global warming. The existing building could easily be adapted by retrofitting and repurposing for varied uses like studios, workshops, social housing and hotel rooms.

It seems to me to be futile to propose yet more office space at a time when huge changes in the way office work is done are changing the character of inner city areas. The companies that operate out of Central St Giles for example, a major nearby development, have managed to continue working as the majority of their staff now carry out their work from home or operate on a hybrid working pattern. The need for yet more office space in the centre of the city is highly doubtful.

I look forward to hearing from you. I hope you will ensure that this objection is registered in the appropriate way within the Camden Planning procedures.

RICHARD COHEN

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