

From: Patrick Lindley
Sent: 26 August 2023 16:28
To: Planning
Subject: 2023/2653/L and 2023/2510/P

Good afternoon

I am writing regarding the redevelopment of the Travelodge site between the Shaftesbury Theatre, New Oxford Street and Shaftesbury Avenue, opposite The Post Building. Typing that sentence brings the scale of the site home to me. It really is a cornerstone of the who area between the British Museum and Covent Garden. For me, this area has always been a bit of a Cinderella, and so I was so pleased when the new traffic scheme and planting by Shaftesbury Theatre was such a success. I have loved eating outside at Beirut Cafe this summer, which is between my gym (Jubilee Hall) and my home in Hanway Place on the Camden side of the border with Westminster!

My interest in the site is a very personal one. I walk past it most days and have lived in the area for nearly 25 years. I really want to see the area tidied up, continuing the recent progress driven by the Post Building and the new traffic arrangements. I was very excited to see the area model in the window by Domino's Pizza, and the subsequent photos.

Sadly these plans revealed a vast missed opportunity, to the extent that I need to object to the development. The new tower is way too high and way too bulky, and will create a wind-tunnel at ground level. Therefore while the streetscapes may look very appealing on a mock up, they will feel soulless. Meanwhile the tower will destroy the beauty of streetscapes across Bloomsbury and the wider area. I am sure it will make much of the area dark, depending on where the sun is. Its shadow will be even longer than its 75m height suggests, as it will create a precedent for mega towers elsewhere.

There is an opportunity for this development to change the feel of the space between the British Museum, and the Covent Garden, instead of which it will create a no-man's land. I was walking through Rathbone Square this morning, and commented to a visitor how much I love it: light, sympathetic to its surroundings with a human scale and feel. This ghastly proposed development is the reverse. When Camden have done such a great job enhancing so much of the area of late, why take two steps back in such a key site by creating a

monolithic tower that is completely out of proportion to anything. Even CentrePoint is less hulking. Furthermore, that tower sits in open space rather than being crammed in the middle of a conservation area between a Hawksmoor Church, the UK's busiest museum and Covent Garden.

This site has the ability to unify Bloomsbury and Covent Garden, complementing the many fine Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian buildings in the conservation area. Instead, it will create a desert of bland corporate architecture centred on an oversized tower that is being build to maximise returns for the few, not the pleasure of the many. Please reject this application.

Kind regards
Patrick Lindley