

Miriam Baptist  
Planning Officer  
Supporting Communities  
London Borough of Camden  
5 Pancras Square  
London N1C 4AG

12 January 2024

Dear Miriam

**2023/1492/PRE Land to west of Royal Mail Sorting office bounded by Phoenix Place, Mount Pleasant, Gough Street & Calthorpe St. Camden WC1: Amalgamation of Commercial Units 2 and 3.**

Please find enclosed an application to the London Borough of Camden (the Council) for the proposed amalgamation of Commercial Units 2 and 3 (both only c.98 sqm GIA each) at Phase 1 Mount Pleasant. This proposed change is sought due to severe lack of market interest in the units mainly due to their small size.

Planning History Context

Original permission 2013/3807/P: Comprehensive redevelopment, following the demolition of existing buildings, to construct four new buildings ranging from 5 to 15 storeys (above basement level) in height, to provide 38,724 sqm (GIA) of residential floorspace (345 dwellings) (Class C3), 823 sqm (GIA) of flexible retail and community floorspace (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, D1 or D2), with associated energy centre, waste and storage areas, basement level residential car parking (54 spaces), the re-provision of Royal Mail staff car parking (approximately 196 spaces) cycle parking, residential cycle parking (431 residential spaces) hard and soft landscaping to provide public and private areas of open space, alterations to the public highway and all other necessary excavation and enabling works. The application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement. Granted subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement on 27/02/2014.

Planning condition 46 of 2013/3807/P relates to “Limit on amalgamation of commercial units” and states: “In the event that the flexible ground floor units within Block A are occupied by A1, A2 or A3 units, no two units (as laid out on the approved drawings) shall be amalgamated or further subdivided unless prior agreement in writing is provided by the Local Planning Authority.”

Following comprehensive and unsuccessful marketing of Commercial Units 2 and 3, and also following pre-application discussions with the Council, this application is to vary planning condition 46 of the original planning permission in order to ensure these units can be occupied by a commercial operator.

## Pre-application Advice

Pre-application advice was received from the London Borough of Camden (the Council) on 28 July 2023 and in relation to the principle of amalgamation it stated,

*“We note that the proposal for larger units, and possibly the associated larger named brands they are likely to appeal to, is by nature contrary to the original permission 2013/3807/P which approved small units and restricted amalgamation via condition 46 (limit on amalgamation of commercial units) in order to encourage occupation by small and independent shops and help sustain the diversity, vibrancy and character of the area as well as provide premises for local businesses.*

*Despite this, we may concede on the amalgamation of Units 2 and 3 on receipt of sufficient marketing evidence showing the units have been marketed as smaller separate units with limited success. Although some marketing evidence has been received, we would like further information and detail including any specific appointment/visit dates from the interested retailers. We would also like to see evidence of the rent offer marketed to small business tenants.*

*The site is part of the Central District Alliance’s Business Improvement District area and so it would be useful to know if there has been any communication or assistance from them in marketing the units, or finding meanwhile uses.*

*Any remaining empty units we would be keen to know what efforts will be made to ensure these are attractive for smaller businesses, including exploring options for meanwhile use(s) or offered to small retail/retail start-ups at below market rent.”*

## Application Pack

In response to the Council’s pre-application advice we have prepared a comprehensive Retail Marketing Report. We consider that the only realistic chance of these two commercial units being successfully let is to amalgamate them, as illustrated in the Retail Marketing Report.

Also included in this planning application:

- Planning application form
- The correct fee payment
- Design Statement
- Existing and proposed floor plans (no elevational changes are proposed as part of this application)
- Site location plan
- Copy of original planning application

## Summary

We are very proud of our Mount Pleasant scheme in the London Boroughs of Camden and Islington, and the delivery of affordable and private homes, and are very keen to ensure that uses can also be found for the ground floor to ensure a good street level experience. We consider that varying this condition of the original planning permission will improve the overall planning status of Mount Pleasant and contribute to a sustainable development in this area.

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Yours sincerely

*Stuart Blakley*

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