14 BEDFORD ROW

Statement of Community Involvement

May 2024



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14 BEDFORD ROW

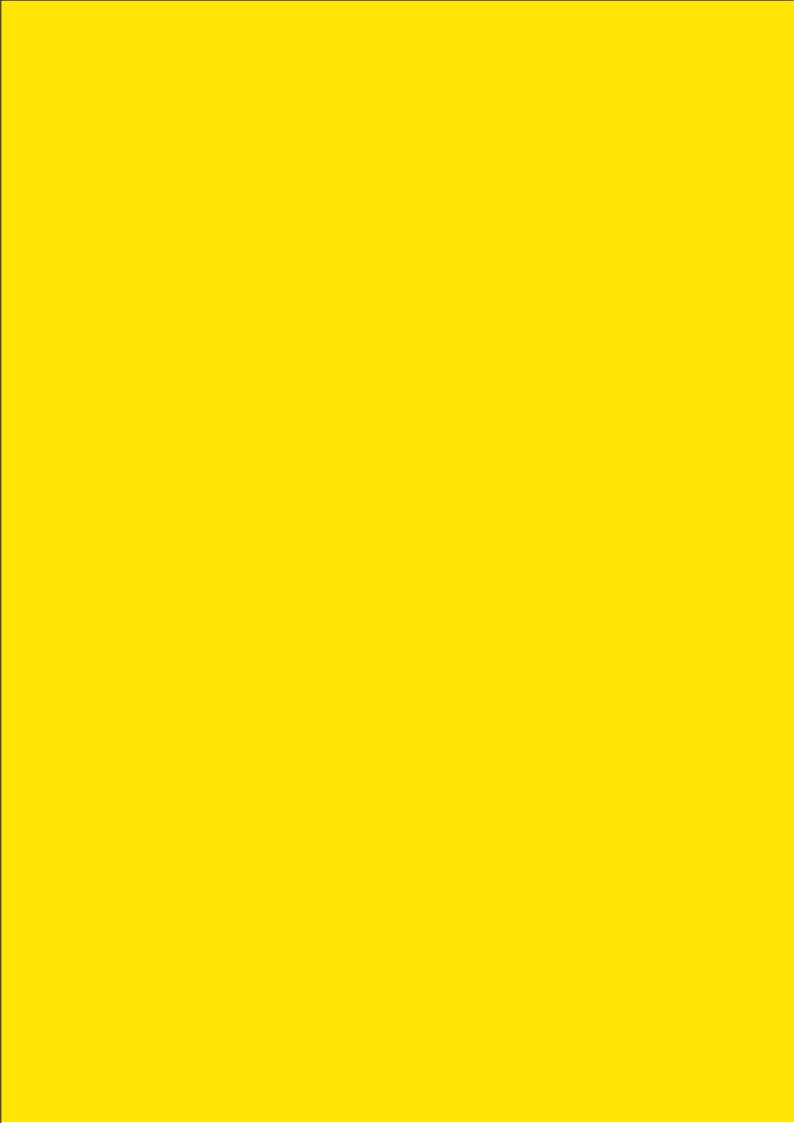
Statement of Community Involvement

This document has been prepared by Concilio on behalf of True North Management



APPENDICES

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared in support of a planning application (the 'Application') for the proposals at 14 Bedford Row, WC1R 4QR, the 'Site'. The scheme is being brought forward by True North Management (the 'Applicant') and the proposed description of the development is:

Change of use from Office (Use Class E) to Apart-Hotel (Use Class C1), partial demolition of link structure, introduction of terrace, rooftop plant and other associated physical works.

A comprehensive description of the proposals can be found in the Design and Access Statement accompanying this submission.

This report details the public consultation carried out to date in order to inform the design evolution of the proposals. The consultation process has been carried out in accordance with national and local policies, as is laid out in **Section 2.0** of this report. The consultation took place from December 2023 to February 2024.

Concilio is a communications agency that specialises in political and stakeholder engagement in support of the built environment. Concilio has managed the communications programme, ensuring robust and in-depth engagement has taken place.

1.2 The Consultation Process and Objectives:

Concilio was appointed in November 2023 to perform a comprehensive community consultation and to manage the pre-application consultation process with neighbouring residents and occupiers as well as interested stakeholders.

The Applicant has a vested long-term interest in the area and believes that the local community and other key stakeholders should be engaged to ascertain their views on emerging proposals and to consider their feedback when designing the scheme. The Applicant therefore implemented a comprehensive programme of community engagement which began in December 2023 and included the following:

Engagement with locally elected representatives

From the outset, the Applicant sought to engage with the political leadership of LB Camden, inviting ClIr Clarke (GLA Member for Barnet and Camden) and ClIr Beales (Cabinet Member for New Homes, Jobs and Community Investment) to the Community Open Days on 22nd and 24th February 2024. All three local ward members (for Holborn and Covent Garden) – ClIrs Fulbrook, Olad and Vincent – were also invited to these events. Following design freeze (for planning purposes), ward councillors were notified of the updates to the scheme ahead of the submission of the planning applications.

Engagement with interested community stakeholders

The Applicant sought to engage with community representatives from an early stage. Invitations to briefing sessions and literature concerning the consultation were sent to:

- Central District Alliance
- Bloomsbury Conservation Areas Advisory Committee (BCAAC)
- Camden Cycling Campaign
- Camden History Society
- Bloomsbury Association
- The Georgian Group
- Holborn Community Association
- Immediate site neighbours

Direct liaison with residents and businesses

The Applicant ensured that members of the project team were able to discuss the plans with residents and businesses who wished to be involved in the application process. This was achieved through the targeted delivery of consultation letters to 28 neighbouring addresses, of which 26 were commercial premises and 2 were residential. Given that the nature of the application is for a change of use that is common in the area and the scheme is a refurbishment within the envelope of the existing buildings, and that there would be minimal impact to neighbouring properties— 28 addresses were identified to be consulted. The letters provided all the related contact details for True North Management and/or Concilio, and the information for the Community Open Days. The identified community groups will be notified of planning application submission once the the application has been validated.

Community Open Days

The Applicant sought to widely engage with key stakeholders, residents, and community representatives in the area. The identified community groups were notified via email on Monday 29th January and reminders issued Friday 9th February while ward members were also notified on the same days via email. 26 commercial neighbours were notified via a 2nd letter on the same dates and two members of the project team visited the two neighbouring residential properties to invite them to the Community Open days on two occasions. The Applicant hosted two public consultation events on-site. The first event was held on **Thursday 22nd February 2024** between 16:00-19:00 on-site. The second event was held on **Saturday 24th February 2024** between 10:00-14:00. In total, the events were attended by six people who provided feedback over the course of the sessions, with more information on this provided in **Section 4.** Overall, participants of the exhibitions were positive about the proposals, especially in relation to the prospect of a Retrofit-First approach to refurbishing the buildings, the creation of new jobs in the area and the proposed sustainability and urban greening enhancements.

The Applicant has sought to involve the local community and stakeholders extensively as part of a transparent and collaborative engagement process.

This process is in addition to ongoing correspondence and communication with the LB Camden as part of the formal pre-application process.

2.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.1 Policy Framework

There is no statutory requirement to involve the community at the pre-application stage of planning proposals. However, planning policy at every level strongly encourages pre-

application consultation with the community on proposals for significant developments. Camden Council's Statement of Community Involvement (2016) recommends that preapplication consultation undertaken by a developer should comply with the principles and approach of community involvement set out in the document.

Camden Council's Statement of Community Involvement in Planning (adopted in July 2016) makes clear that: 'We strongly encourage all applicants to consult any neighbours who may be affected by their proposals before they submit a planning application. We encourage other groups such as local Conservation Area Advisory Committees (CAACs) and any other local interest groups to be consulted. It is especially important to undertake consultation on a wider scale for major, or potentially controversial, proposals where:

- the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on the environment or on the local community, and
- the nature of the development is likely to attract significant local interest.'

This is in alignment with the suggestion in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that it strongly encourages developers to involve the local community from an early stage. They suggest that this should take a variety of forms such as local exhibitions, public meetings, circulation of leaflets or the creation of well-publicised digital mediums, including a facility to make online comments.

Paragraph 39 of The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (updated December 2023) outlines that early engagement has "significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties". Paragraph 16 of the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) encourages pre-application engagement with the community where it will add value to the process and outcome.

Paragraph 42 of the NPPF sets out that "the participation of other consenting bodies in preapplication discussions should enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle, even where other consents relating to how a development is built or operated are needed at a later stage". The consultation strategy has been designed to meet the requirements for consultation as laid out in the NPPF, Planning Practice Guidance and Camden Council's Statement of Community Involvement in Planning.

2.2 Planning Description of development

The refurbishment of the building will bring an unoccupied building back into use through a sensitive and sustainable approach to design, providing in-demand, high-quality visitor accommodation in a suitable location and delivering strong local economic benefits. The description of development, as set out in the accompanying Planning Statement is as follows:

Change of use from Office (Use Class E) to Apart-Hotel (Use Class C1), partial demolition of link structure, introduction of terrace, rooftop plant and other associated physical works.

3.0 THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

3.1 Aims of Consultation

The Applicant was keen to ensure the consultation strategy put in place delivered a series of key aims to assist with the evolution and development of the proposals:

- To raise awareness of the emerging proposals for the redevelopment of the Site and discuss the public benefits.
- To undertake consultation at an early stage that ensured feedback could be incorporated into the emerging design proposals.
- To build a long-term positive relationship with the local community.
- To enable constructive dialogue between local stakeholders, the community, the project team and the Applicant.
- To ensure everyone who wanted to take part in the consultation was able to by being accessible and inclusive.

3.2 Consultation Process

The consultation strategy and process that Concilio has undertaken in relation to the Application has been developed with both local and national policy and the above aims in mind. Specifically, the consultation process has:

- Conducted an engagement programme that is appropriate for the local community and key stakeholders.
- Conducted consultation using a mix of mediums to maximise awareness, including proposed individual meetings with key stakeholders, in-person events, dedicated contact numbers and email addresses for online engagement.
- Ensured the consultation was well publicised through the delivery of consultation letters.
- Analysed the results from the consultation objectively.
- Publicised collective responses with due regard to the Data Protection Act and General Data Protect Regulation (GDPR) requirements.

3.3 Consultation Area

A consultation area was identified to reflect the scale of the proposed redevelopment proposals. The consultation area consisted of **28** addresses, comprising two residents and 26 businesses around the site.

3.4 Project Contact and Communications Channels

Four letter templates were issued, each one targeted at the four key stakeholder groups – politicians/councillors, commercial neighbours (26No), immediate residential neighbours (2No at 12 and 13 Bedford Row) and community groups/associations. Details of the two inperson exhibitions held on site were provided on the consultation letters. The letters also included a freephone number and e-mail address for general questions and comments. The freephone number was provided so those who did not have access to the internet could still engage with the consultation. Any emails received throughout the process were responded to by the project team in a timely manner. The Applicant ensured that the channels of communication remained open throughout the pre-application period.

The interactive in-person exhibitions sought the views of the public and were attended by six people across the two days, who provided meaningful feedback. The team sought to maximise access to the exhibitions by holding the first across the late afternoon and early evening of a weekday (Thursday), and the second across the late morning and early afternoon on a weekend (Saturday).

Appendix A is a copy of the consultation email to politicians/councillors.

Appendix B is a copy of the consultation letter to commercial properties.

Appendix C is a copy of the consultation letter to immediate residential neighbours.

Appendix D is a copy of the consultation email to community groups/associations.

Appendix E is a copy of the in-person exhibition display boards.

3.5 Consultation - Levels of Engagement

As part of the consultation, Concilio invited ClIrs Clarke and Beales, the three ward councillors (ClIrs Fulbrook, Olad and Vincent), residential and commercial neighbours, and community groups to the two in-person Community Open Days. There was also door-to-door engagement with both residential neighbours on either side of the site.

We engaged the following community group at the in-person exhibition:

• Camden Cycling Campaign

We continue to be available to the following stakeholders if they would like a briefing (none have so far taken up the opportunity offered to them):

- Central District Alliance
- BCAAC
- Camden History Society
- Bloomsbury Association
- The Georgian Group
- Holborn Community Association
- Other immediate site neighbours

Raising Awareness

Attendees at the public exhibitions were able to provide their feedback through a survey and had the opportunity to provide open feedback through the email address provided with the consultation letter. The project team continues to accept comments if stakeholders wish to submit them. As above, the consultation was advertised via a letter drop to 28 addresses in the vicinity of the site, identified as being key stakeholders for consultation in the context of the proposals, whilst political and community stakeholders were also invited to participate at the public consultation through an email notification.

4.0 **FEEDBACK**

4.1 Introduction

The consultation on the proposals for the Application took between December 2023 and February 2024.

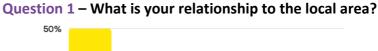
As outlined above, this involved outreach via letter (and door-knocking for the two residential neighbours), meetings with key stakeholders, two in-person exhibitions, and a survey with an open question box where people could leave feedback.

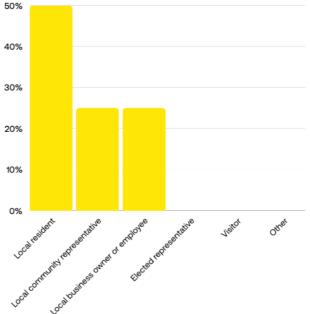
During the consultation period, meeting invitations were sent to political and community stakeholders. The proposed format of these meetings involved a presentation from the project team and an open Q&A session to understand initial views and opinions. None of the stakeholders opted to attend a briefing meeting.

The sections below outline the feedback received throughout the consultation, and specifically at the two Community Open Days (public exhibitions).

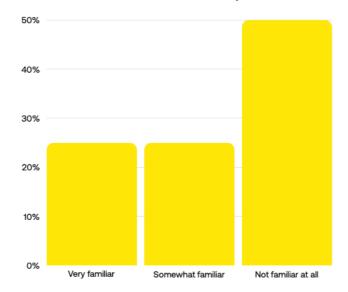
4.2 Community Feedback

A total of 4 survey responses were received. A report of the feedback received is outlined below:

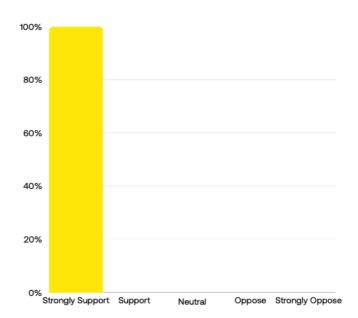




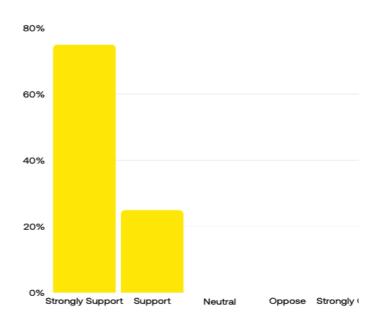
Question 2 – How familiar are you with the current state of 14 Bedford Row and 12-13 and 14 Jockey's Field?



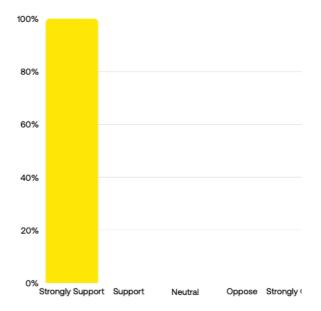
Question 3 – Our proposals seek to refurbish the vacant building that is awkwardly configured and not fit for the current office market. Do you support bringing a vacant building back into use?



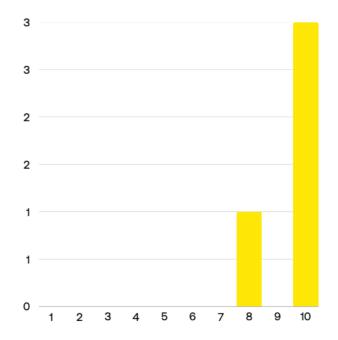
Question 4 – How supportive are you of the proposed apart-hotel use on this site that will create new jobs in the area and respond to the need for more apart hotels in the area?



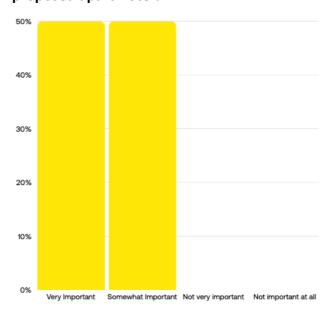
Question 5 – Our proposals work within the existing envelope of the Grade II listed building. Do you support a Retrofit-First approach to using the existing envelope of this building to bring forward this refurbishment?



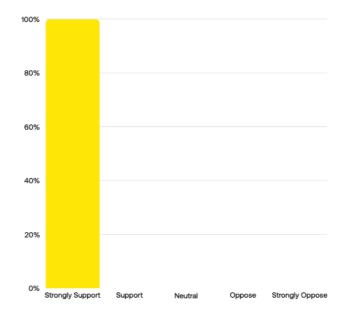
Question 6 – On a scale of 1 to 10, how do you rate our proposed design?



Question 7 – How important is the provision of cycle storage in the proposed apart-hotel?



Question 8 – Do you support our proposed sustainability and urban greening enhancements?



4.3 Summary of Responses

The feedback gathered from the consultation has enabled the project team to consider the evolution of the proposals and enhance relationships with the local community. The Applicant has established themselves as a new member and partner of the community and has gathered key public feedback to inform the design review process and to help positively tailor the proposed development where possible.

The consultation made clear that the community is supportive of the overall positive impact of the proposed development. Additional feedback on the proposals provided by way of feedback cards at the exhibition expressed desires to get the construction underway as soon as possible, given that the property is no longer suitable as office space. Other attendees showed enthusiasm for the building to be brought back to life, for wellness and sustainability to be a key feature, for visual amenity improvement, for the incorporation of cosy lighting and the addition of green roofs. All of this feedback has been considered and incorporated where practicable into the scheme design. One attendee expressed their desire for construction noise to be minimised, which it will be to the greatest extent practicable. Two questions were also asked about whether the roof terrace would be accessible to the public (which it will not) and whether locals would be hired in the construction phase (which the Applicant will endeavour to ensure as part of its dealings with a Contractor, once selected). Further details of the local employment strategy will be agreed between the Applicant and the Council as part of the Section 106 negotiation process.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

Throughout this consultation, the Applicant has effectively engaged with a wide range of stakeholders, including locally elected politicians, community groups, and residents, and has followed an engagement approach that has been transparent and accessible to all parties.

The Applicant's consultation on the proposals for 14 Bedford Row has prioritised an open and collaborative approach to engagement, genuinely seeking to understand the views of the local community and establish close relationships.

The Applicant has worked with the design team to address these comments and positively refine the development to further support the comments made by stakeholders. The Applicant has been and remains fully committed to working on community considerations about possible implications of the development, including throughout the construction and operation phases.

5.2 Continued Engagement

Throughout this consultation process, the Applicant has been committed to genuine dialogue with the local community.

The Applicant will ensure that the submission of the application does not mark the end of community engagement and will continue to discuss the proposals with the local community throughout the planning application determination process. Once the application has been validated, there will be a period where those who are interested can visit the planning portal to view and comment on all documents submitted as part of the application.

Should the application be approved by Camden Council, the Applicant will continue to work with the local community and stakeholders throughout the lifetime of the project, ensuring that neighbours are provided with a Construction Management Plan (CMP), and that any disruption during the construction phase is mitigated to the greatest extent possible. The Applicant and selected Contractor will ensure that there is a community liaison forum in place during the construction period and that an open line of communication is maintained, providing regular updates to neighbouring residents, political stakeholders and community groups. Once operational as an apart-hotel, the Applicant will take the same approach of partnership and transparency with the community, reflective of their long-term commitment to 14 Bedford Row.

6.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A

XX January 2024

Cllr XXX Member Support, Town Hall, Judd Street London WC1H 9JE

Dear Cllr XXX,

I am writing to you on behalf of True North Management Ltd, the new owner of 14 Bedford Row, 12-13 and 14 Jockey's Fields, which it acquired from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy earlier in January.

True North is a London-based developer and operator of high-quality hospitality schemes, and is currently working up proposals to breathe new life into the three buildings through the provision of high-quality apart-hotel (serviced apartments).

As you may be aware, the buildings have been vacant for well over two years, and currently offer no benefit to the street or wider community. Having been unsuccessfully marketed to potential office tenants during that period, True North Management has engaged highly respected White Red Architects to lead the design process for their renewal.

True North is committed a 'Retro-First' approach meaning their priority is to take a highly sustainable approach to design, and to refurbish the buildings within their existing envelopes. In addition to material economic benefits, the proposals will restore a vacant Grade II Listed building and safeguard it for future conservation.

To help inform the emerging proposals for the building, True North would welcome to meet with you in your capacity as a Holborn & Covent Garden ward councillor. We would be delighted to host you on-site at 14 Bedford Row to give you an opportunity to view the building in its current condition. If you could please send us an email with your availability over the coming weeks, that would be much appreciated.

We will also be hosting **Community Open Days** on the site, at 14 Bedford Row London WC1R 4ED on the following dates and times:

Thursday 22nd February, between 4pm and 7pm Saturday 24th February, between 10am and 2pm

If you have any questions or would like to speak to a member of the project team, please contact Siddo Dwyer on sdwyer@conciliocomms.com or free phone telephone 0800 193 0884.

Yours sincerely,

Siddo Dwyer Account Director Concilio Communications



Appendix B

IMPORTANT CONSULTATION INFO 1 Bedford Row London WC1R 4BU

7th February 2024

REMINDER

Dear Neighbour,

I am writing to you on behalf of True North Management Ltd, the new owner of 14 Bedford Row, 12-13 and 14 Jockey's Fields, which it acquired from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy earlier in January

True North is a London-based developer and operator of high-quality hospitality schemes, and is currently working up proposals to breathe new life into the three buildings through the provision of high-quality apart-hotel (serviced apartments).

As you may be aware, the buildings have been vacant for well over two years, and currently offer no benefit to the street or wider community. Having been unsuccessfully marketed to potential office tenants during that period, True North Management has engaged highly respected White Red Architects to lead the design process for their renewal.

True North is committed a 'Retro-First' approach meaning their priority is to take a highly sustainable approach to design, and to refurbish the buildings within their existing envelopes. In addition to material economic benefits, the proposals will restore a vacant Grade II Listed building and safeguard it for future conservation.

To help inform their emerging proposals for the building, True North Management is keen to meet with neighbours and gather feedback on how a new use could benefit local residents and businesses.

14 Bedford Row Community Open Days

Thursday 22nd February, between 4pm and 7pm Saturday 24th February, between 10am and 2pm at 14 Bedford Row London WC1R 4ED

Hosted by True North, the meeting will be an opportunity to see the existing condition of the building followed by a short presentation on the emerging proposals. Attendees will be invited to ask questions of the team and provide feedback to help inform the next phase of the project.

If you have any questions or would like to speak to a member of the project team, please contact Siddo Dwyer on sdwyer@conciliocomms.com or free phone telephone 0800 193 0884.

Yours sincerely,

Siddo Dwyer Account Director Concilio Communications



Appendix C

30 January 2024

Dear Neighbour,

I am writing to you as the CEO and Founder of True North Management Ltd. I rang your doorbell today to introduce myself, but there was no answer.

True North is the proud new owner of 14 Bedford Row, 12-13 and 14 Jockey's Fields, having acquired the building from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy earlier in January. We are a London-based developer and operator of high-quality hospitality schemes, and are currently working up proposals to breathe new life into the three buildings through the provision of a high-quality apart-hotel (serviced apartments).

As you will be aware, the buildings have been vacant for well over two years, and currently offer no benefit to the street or wider community. Having been unsuccessfully marketed to potential office tenants during that period, True North Management has engaged highly respected White Red Architects to lead the design process for their renewal.

True North is committed a 'Retro-First' approach meaning our priority is to take a highly sustainable approach to design, and to refurbish the buildings within their existing envelopes. We do not envisage any impact in height or massing, nor any impact on your daylight or sunlight amenity. In addition to material economic benefits, the proposals can restore a vacant Grade II Listed building and safeguard it for future conservation.

To help inform their emerging proposals for the building, we are keen to meet with our neighbours and gather feedback on how their proposed new use could benefit local residents and businesses.

14 Bedford Row Community Open Days

Thursday 22nd February, between 4pm and 7pm Saturday 24th February, between 10am and 2pm at 14 Bedford Row London WC1R 4ED

Hosted by True North, the meeting will be an opportunity to see the existing condition of the building followed by a short presentation on the emerging proposals. Attendees will be invited to ask questions of the team and provide feedback to help inform the next phase of the project.

If you have any questions or would like to speak to a member of the project team, please contact Jill Ju (jill@truenorthm.com) or William Polisano (william.polisano@drum-london.com).

Yours sincerely,

Jill Ju CEO & Founder – True North

Appendix D

[TBC] XXX XXX XXX

XX January 2024

[COMMUNITY GROUP]

XXX

XXX

Dear [COMMUNITY GROUP],

I am writing to you on behalf of True North Management Ltd, the new owner of 14 Bedford Row, 12-13 and 14 Jockey's Fields, which it acquired from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy earlier in January.

True North is a London-based developer and operator of high-quality hospitality development, and is currently working up proposals to breathe new life into the three buildings through the provision of high-quality apart-hotel (serviced apartments) for professionals working in Holborn and the city.

As you may be aware, the buildings have been vacant for well over two years, and currently offer no benefit to the street or wider community. Having been unsuccessfully marketed to potential office tenants during that period, True North Management have since engaged highly respected White Red Architects to lead the design process to facilitate their renewal and reopening.

True North is committed a 'Retro-First' approach meaning their priority is to take a highly sustainable approach to design, and to refurbish the buildings within their existing envelopes. In addition to material economic benefits, the proposals will restore a vacant Grade II Listed building and safeguard it for future conservation.

To help inform their emerging proposals for the building, True North Management is keen to meet with [COMMUNITY GROUP] and gather feedback on how a new use could benefit local residents and businesses.

14 Bedford Row Community Open Days

Thursday 22nd February, between 4pm and 7pm Saturday 24th February, between 10am and 2pm at 14 Bedford Row London WC1R 4ED

Hosted by True North, the meeting will be an opportunity to see the existing condition of the building followed by a short presentation on the emerging proposals. Attendees will be invited to ask questions of the team and provide feedback to help inform the next phase of the project.

If you would like to speak to a member of the project team or RSVP for the Open Days, please contact Siddo Dwyer on sdwyer@conciliocomms.com or free phone telephone o800 193 0884.

Yours sincerely,

Siddo Dwyer

Account Director

Concilio Communications



Appendix E



The Team



WHITE RED ARCHITECTS



Donald Insall Associates
Countened Architects and Historic Eukläng Consultants

CONCILIO



Developer & Operator

Planning Consultant

Heritage Consultant

Community & Engagement

14 Bedford Row

The Site

The site is comprised of 3 buildings, 1.4 Bedford Row to the front and 12-13 and 1.4 Jockey's Fields to the rear. It is its of 11 heart of several growth districts within 18 Candlen, including the Knowledge Quarter, the Central Activities Zone and the Central Activities District IBD. It is excellently located, in closs walking distance of both Holborn and Chancery Lane station







Looking south on Jo Fields



14 Bedford Row

Current Site Contraints

- » Poor environmental performance (EPC rating of D)
- Significant accessibility issues due to internal level changes
- Poorly lit internal space

- » Awkwardly configured floor plates
- » Irregular, untidy plant which is in need of rationalisation
- Overlooking to residential neighbours from Jockey's Fields buildings







Current internal space at 14 Bedford Lightwell at 14 Bedford Row





Current internal space at 14 Bedford Row

14 Bedford Row

Design Considerations



14 Bedford Row

Our Vision



A heritage-led conversion to bring a long-vacant building back into use



Providing a best-in-class apart hotel in a well connected central location



Supporting local businesses and tourism to deliver increased spend within LB Camden



A RetrofitFirst approach which commits to working within the existing envelope of the building in order to mitigate environmental harm and protect neighbouring amenity

14 Bedford Row





