



## STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

In support of an  
Extension of Hours Planning Application for  
**Dabbous, 39 Whitfield Street**

on behalf of  
**Dabbous**

**June 2013**



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement provides details of Dabbous' public consultation process to support the application for extension of opening hours at their restaurant located on Whitfield Street, in the London Borough of Camden.
- 1.2 Dabbous are committed to a programme of community engagement, to ensure that stakeholders are provided with details of the proposals in advance of the planning application being submitted, and have an opportunity to give feedback.
- 1.3 Dabbous recognise that extension of opening hours applications will often generate considerable interest from local stakeholders. To this end, Dabbous are fully committed to engaging and liaising with their local community in order to address any issues or concerns raised.
- 1.4 For any community engagement to be successful it must involve an inclusive approach based on the needs of the local community. This ensures that communities play an active part in proposals that affect the environment within which they live. It is also in Dabbous' interests to ensure that the proposed extension of opening hours is supported by their neighbours.
- 1.5 Nationally, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines and encourages positive community engagement between all parties involved and affected by the proposals. Specifically the NPPF states that:
- "Early engagement has significant potential to improve the effectiveness of the planning system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better co-ordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community."*
- 1.6 The NPPF also recognises that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities.
- 1.7 This Statement sets out the details of the consultation exercise undertaken by Dabbous to engage with the community in respect of the extension of opening hours application for their restaurant at 39 Whitfield Street, London. This engagement process will continue with officers and the community, following the submission of the application to the London Borough of Camden.

## **2.0 CONSULTATION PROGRAMME OF ENGAGEMENT**

- 2.1 Planning and development can, by its very nature, be a sensitive process and a given proposal can often be many local residents' first experience of the planning system. The consultation process is useful in terms of helping minimise potential conflicts, often through providing information and explaining the various elements of a proposal. The overall objective of effective consultation is to help to ensure that local people feel engaged with the planning process throughout the various stages of the application.
- 2.2 Involvement can only improve the quality and efficiency of decisions by drawing on local knowledge and minimising unnecessary conflict. Proactive and pragmatic consultation can help achieve developments that are mutually beneficial to all parties.
- 2.3 This application follows on from an earlier application submitted to the Council earlier this year for the extension of opening hours (until 01:30am everyday) alongside alterations to the hours of plant operation (LPA reference: 2013/0771/P).
- 2.4 As the restaurant is located close to a number of residential properties, Dabbous sought to undertake an effective consultation process in connection with the previous application. In relation to the current resubmission application, Dabbous seeks to ensure this engagement is maintained.
- 2.5 Dabbous's overall objective are for the local community and key stakeholders to:
- Have access to information and clarity on application proposals and the planning system
  - Have access to a useable forum for people to formally comment upon, and ask questions about the proposals
  - Put forward their ideas and feel confident that there is a process for considering these
  - Obtain on-going feedback on the progress of the application

### **3.0 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

- 3.1 A key consideration in the proposals that are the subject of this application was to ensure the inclusion of relevant stakeholders. This section identifies the consultation that was undertaken in connection with the previous application (LPA reference: 2013/0771/P).
- 3.2 In order to achieve targeted engagement with the immediate neighbours of the site, a letter providing details of the proposals and an invitation to a consultation evening was distributed in November 2012. This was sent to addresses in Whitfield Street, Scala Street and Tottenham Street as it would be residents on these streets that would potentially be most affected by patrons leaving the restaurant on their way back to neighbouring Tottenham Court Road or to Goodge Street Tube Station (see Appendix 1 for radius of addresses).
- 3.3 Letters were also sent to the three Labour Ward Councillors, informing them of the proposals and inviting them to the consultation evening.
- 3.4 The letter explained that Dabbous proposed to submit an application to extend their opening hours to 1.30am to allow patrons to take time over their meals and enjoy coffee or after dinner drinks in their bar area located in the basement of the restaurant (see Appendix 2 for a copy of the letter).
- 3.5 In addition to providing information for stakeholders, the letter provided information about a consultation evening that was held on Tuesday 27 November 2012. A postal address, email address and telephone number were provided to ensure a wide range of communications channels were available for respondents to provide feedback and contact the project team.
- 3.6 To ensure that direct engagement continues with residents and local businesses located within the immediate vicinity of the site, a letter has been prepared for addresses in the streets surrounding Dabbous to notify them of the current application submission.
- 3.7 All lines of communication will remain open for the duration of the current application submission.

## **4.0 REVIEW OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 Dabbous held a consultation evening for local residents and businesses on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2012, from 6.00 to 7.30pm to gauge the public opinion of their plans.
- 4.2 Residents and businesses from the surrounding streets (Whitfield Street, Scala Street and Tottenham Street) were invited to the consultation evening, along with the Charlotte Street Residents Association and Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Centre.
- 4.3 The event was held at the restaurant on Whitfield Street so that those attending would have the opportunity to visit the restaurant, and experience it during a busy week-night service. Members of the planning team, along with the owners of Dabbous were on hand during the evening to provide information and answer questions.
- 4.4 Seven local people attended the event; representatives from an architects practice on Tottenham Street, the owners of the adjacent Toy Museum (who also live at the premises) on Whitfield Street, a representative from the Charlotte Street Residents Association and residents from Scala Street. This resulted in representatives attending from each street that was invited to the event.

### **KEY COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSALS – SUPPORT**

- 4.5 Throughout the course of the evening members of the project team spoke to the attendees to gauge their opinions on the proposed development. The key issues, and responses are listed below:
- Pleased local stakeholders were being consulted on the proposals
  - Dabbous is an asset to the neighbourhood
  - Closing on Sundays and Mondays helps to retain the areas 'village feel'
  - Dabbous deal with issues quickly and efficiently
  - Opening later could help to enhance the area by encouraging more businesses to locate here
- 4.6 Dabbous are committed to engaging with local stakeholders throughout their planning application and into the future, and want to be seen as an integral part of the local community. To this end they are delighted that their neighbours feel

so positively about their presence on Whitfield Street, and remain committed to ensuring this good will remains. Currently the restaurant closes on Sundays and Mondays, and there are no plans for this to change in the near future.

- 4.7 Furthermore, Dabbous are delighted that local residents recognise their commitment to being good neighbours. They pride themselves on their speed in resolving issues and cite the example of their front doors banging loudly whenever they were closed. In response to neighbours' concerns they were quickly fixed, and no further problems have been reported. Furthermore, additional alterations to the doors were undertaken in December 2012 to make their closing even quieter.

#### KEY COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSALS - CONCERNS

- 4.8 Whilst the consultation evening was primarily positive, there were some concerns raised about the proposals which are listed below:

- Nervous about the long-term implications of extended hours once Dabbous leave the premises
- Extended opening hours at Dabbous may pave the way for other restaurants in the area to open later
- Concerned about smokers on Scala Street

- 4.9 The main concern highlighted by residents was the potential long-term impact of the change in opening hours. Whilst residents acknowledged Dabbous are considerate neighbours, they were nervous about the implications once Dabbous vacated the site. Dabbous assured attendees they have no plans to leave Whitfield Street in the foreseeable future, and very much view the restaurant as their flagship venture. Whilst in time to come they may look to undertake other ventures, they do not intend to close their first project.

- 4.10 Dabbous take the concerns of their neighbours very seriously. To this end they take measure to try to ensure that their patrons do not smoke on Scala Street. To date they have placed an ashtray on a stand on Whitfield Street, and have a sign up in their reception area asking patrons to stand on Whitfield Street. In addition, if reception staff see patrons standing on Scala Street they will ask them to move to Whitfield Street. A doorman has now also been employed on Fridays and Saturdays (the restaurant's busiest nights) to ensure patrons are considerate to the restaurants neighbours.

ON-GOING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT - 2013

- 4.11 Given the interest displayed by residents and stakeholders in the proposals, Dabbous will ensure that information continually flows through existing channels to interested parties.
  
- 4.12 To ensure that direct engagement continues with residents and local businesses located within the immediate vicinity of the site, a letter has been prepared for addresses in the streets surrounding Dabbous to notify them of the current application submission.
  
- 4.13 The Dabbous project team will be contactable throughout the application process and beyond in order to ensure continued dialogue throughout the process.

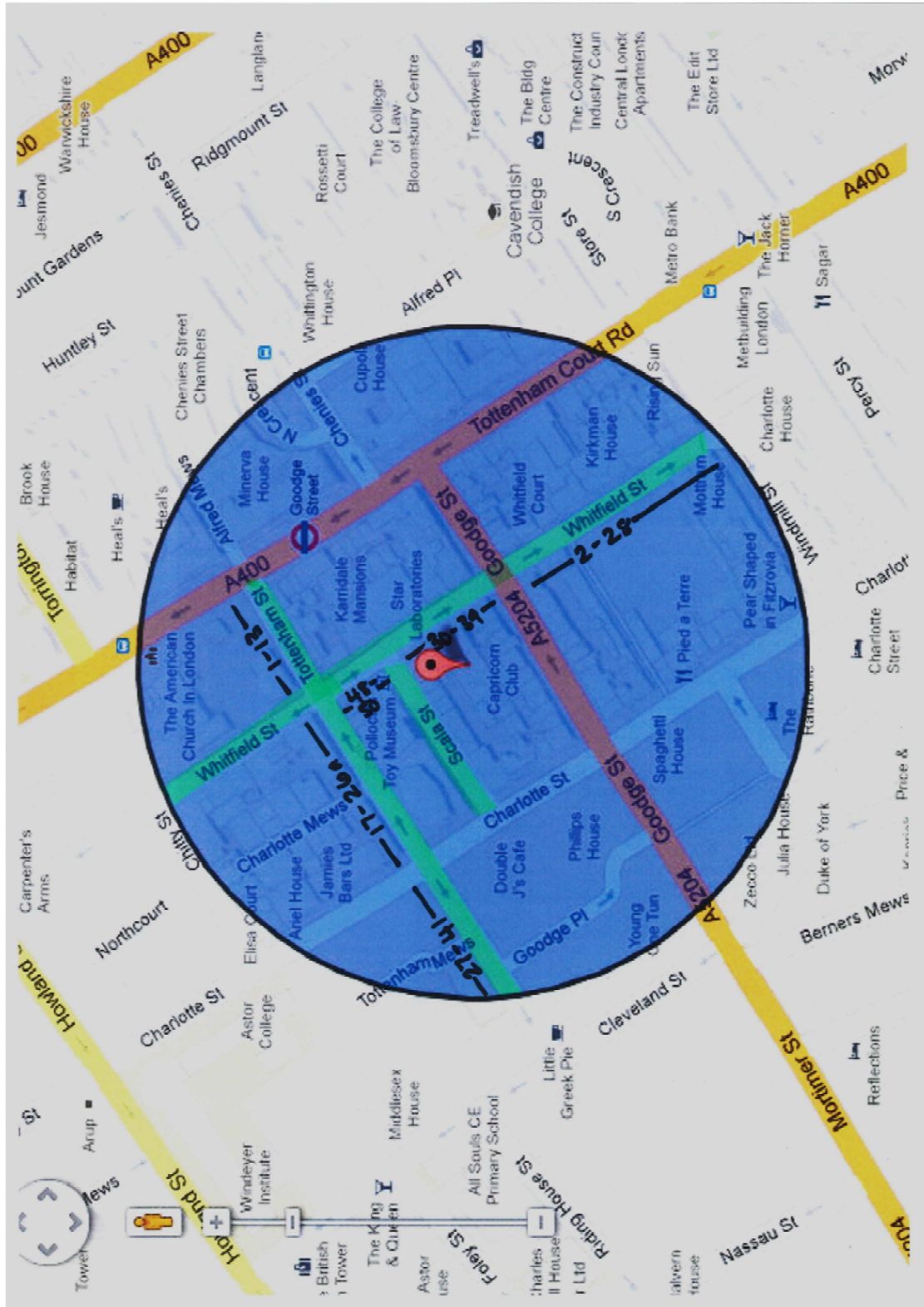


## **5.0 SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS**

- 5.1 Dabbous are pleased with the response to their proposals to extend the opening hours of their restaurant on Whitfield Street. Feedback and discussions held have been invaluable and have helped to inform the proposals that will be submitted to the London Borough of Camden to be determined.
- 5.2 Engagement is, of course, an on-going process, and Dabbous are committed to continuing the dialogue with both the Council and key stakeholders. In line with this, Dabbous will continue to maintain open lines of communication for local stakeholders and will keep the dedicated consultation email address open throughout the duration of the planning application.

### APPENDIX 1

Streets chosen for the postal distribution of letters to local stakeholders:



**APPENDIX 2**

## Letter sent to local stakeholders



Magdalen House  
148 Tooley Street  
London SE1 2TU  
T: 020 7357 8000  
F: 020 7357 9865  
[www.communicationspotential.co.uk](http://www.communicationspotential.co.uk)  
[info@communicationspotential.co.uk](mailto:info@communicationspotential.co.uk)

**Monday 5 November**

Our Ref: LG/12-1681

Dear Local Resident,

**Dabbous, 39 Whitfield Street**

I am writing to you on behalf of Ollie Dabbous and Oskar Kinberg, to invite you to an informal open evening at Dabbous, their restaurant and bar on Whitfield Street.

As you may know, Dabbous opened its doors in January 2012 and is split over two floors. Following a string of five star reviews, awards and accolades Dabbous has quickly established a reputation for light, modern food, with an emphasis on clean flavours and seasonal ingredients.

In the New Year Dabbous hope to submit a planning application to Camden Council to extend their opening hours to 1.30am, giving their patrons more time to enjoy their meals and after dinner drinks. However, before the planning application is submitted, Ollie and Oskar would like to take the opportunity to invite their neighbours to the restaurant to hear a little more about their plans, and hear your comments in return.

The open evening will be taking place on **Tuesday 27 November** between **6.00-7.30pm**. During the evening Ollie and Oskar will be on hand to provide more details, and answer any questions you may have in relation to the proposals.

If you are unable to attend the open evening or have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me or my colleagues via email at [planning@dabbous.co.uk](mailto:planning@dabbous.co.uk) or on 020 7357 8000.

I would be grateful if you could please **RSVP** to the above email address or phone number by **Wednesday 14 November**.

We look forward to seeing you at the open evening.

Yours sincerely,



Louisa Gatland  
COMMUNICATIONS POTENTIAL

Awards, accolades and achievements so far:

- 1 Michelin star
- Best New Restaurant – Square Meal
- Best Kitchen – Tatler
- Best Restaurant – London Food Festival
- Best Newcomer – Food and Travel
- 5/5 review – Andy Lynes – Metro
- 5/5 review – Fay Maschler – Evening Standard
- 5/5 review – A A Gill – Sunday Times

Directors:  
Helen Cuthbert BSocSc (Hons) MA MRTPI  
Stuart Slatter B-Tech TRP(SA) MRTPI  
Claire Temple BA (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

