

Tottenham Court Road/Goodge Street London

Statement of Community Involvement

March 2011



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1.0 Executive summary

1.1 Overview

The Applicant acquired 62-63 Tottenham Court Road and 1-7 Goodge Street – properties forming a prominent corner in the Charlotte Street Conservation Area – during 2009. Conscious of the detail of earlier refused planning applications, the Applicant wanted to engage with stakeholders and the local community before any new application was submitted.

The Applicant made a careful study of the earlier applications and drew up initial proposals that it hoped would meet its aspirations for the site and address the main concerns from earlier refusals. First testing the principle of those proposals with the Council's planning and conservation team, it then consulted with ward councillors and the Charlotte Street Association. It has now met twice with both those groups who have been very helpful and influential in the proposals and in evolving the scheme for redevelopment.

How the new building should turn the corner, its height, points of access to the upper residences, what should be preserved and the types of materials to be used have all been influenced by these discussions. Pre-application consultations have ranged over several months and the Applicant, with its architects and the professional team have found the process genuinely valuable.

Although, in the grand scheme of things, this is not a big development – the site represents a prominent corner and needs to make a visual transition between two different streetscapes. Discussions with local residents have helped reinforce the developer's thinking that smaller shop units should be retained and that a modern design needs to compliment and not compete with its neighbours.

This iterative process has led to the application now submitted, and whereas it has not been possible to address the detail of every issue, we are nevertheless confident that the scheme answers all the main points raised by local residents and businesses as well as their representatives and those of the planners and the inspectorate.

The Applicant will continue to communicate with local stakeholders and the wider community throughout the planning process and are pleased to engage closely with local residents and their elected representatives.

The Applicant is confident that the scheme that has emerged from this collaborative process can now meet with approval and will deliver a regeneration of this prominent site, part of which has remained unimproved since the Second World War, that the local community can be proud of.

1.2 Key consultation meetings

Activities as part of the consultation programme have included:

- **29 November 2010:** A preliminary meeting with two of the three Bloomsbury Ward councillors – Cllr Adam Harrison and Cllr Abdul Quadir – to outline the scheme
- **21 December 2010:** An initial meeting with four representatives of the Charlotte Street Association to discuss outline thoughts and designs
- **19 January 2011:** Second meeting with representatives of the Charlotte Street Association to update on design progress and more detailed thinking on the scheme's evolution
- **23 February 2011:** Second meeting with Cllr Adam Harrison and Cllr Abdul Quadir to update on design progress, consultations and the evolution of the scheme

A pre-application meeting has been offered to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee, who cover the Charlotte Street Conservation Area, but as yet it has not proved possible to arrange a date.

Throughout five months of the pre-application process the Applicant has remained in telephone and email contact with the principle stakeholders in the area. Input and comments have been welcomed and the proposals have evolved as a direct result of this consultation. Additional information will be provided to residents, businesses and other stakeholders during the planning process and all comments received will be considered and answered.

2.0 New scheme consultations and pre-application briefings

2.1 Background

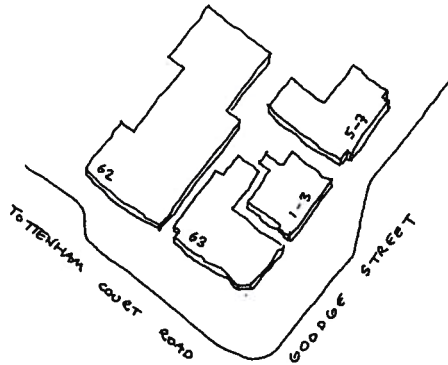
When the corner properties were in previous hands, an earlier planning application for this site was recommended for approval but refused permission in 2006 and the application was also dismissed at appeal in 2007. The Applicant wanted to learn from that recent experience before it submitted a new application and its development team therefore undertook extensive research into the decisions, the various opinions that were expressed at that time and the options now available. The architects drew up some initial ideas based on the research and, in the late autumn of 2010, those were tested in consultation with the Council's planners and community representatives.



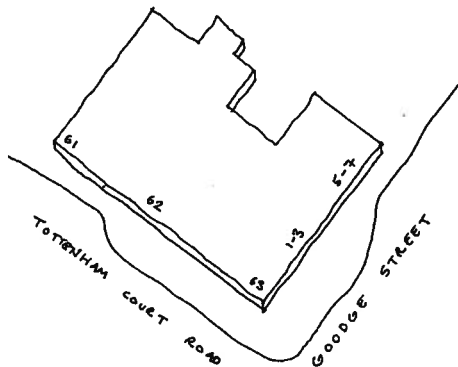
2006 Application made by former owner – refused at Appeal.

The main issues that have been addressed and changes from the earlier planning and appeal process include:

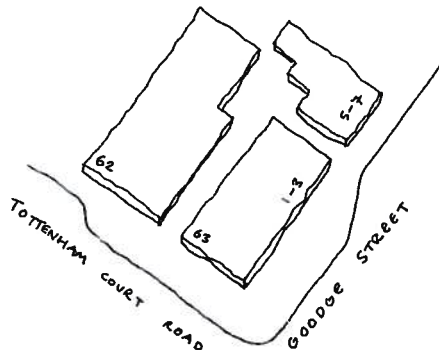
- Remove earlier proposals to demolish 1-3 Goodge Street
- Not seek to create one large retail space and retain as much as possible in individual shop units
- Removal of retail space from the first floor
- Refrain from taking the corner Tottenham Court Road retail unit too far down Goodge Street
- Support Inspector's view that a 'tower' element will reinforce the corner with quality design



Existing Shop Units



Layout of Shop Units as Refused in 2006



Shop Units as Proposed in this Application

Initial and follow up meetings were held with community groups, politicians and other local stakeholders, prior to the submission of this planning application. These consultations and discussion have taken place over a five month period from the autumn of 2010 to the spring of 2011.

The Applicant is particularly grateful to the members of the Charlotte Street Association who, despite some initial concerns, have worked with us to evolve the scheme to the present proposals. The Applicant is also very grateful to Camden's planning, design and conservation officers who have helped guide it through the pre-application process.

2.2 Stakeholder consultation

29 November 2010 (evening): A preliminary meeting was held with two of the three Bloomsbury Ward councillors – Cllr Adam Harrison and Cllr Abdul Quadir. The third ward member, Cllr Milena Nuti, had decided not to take part in any discussions regarding the scheme and potential application in order to preserve her impartiality. This initial meeting, attended by Richard Leslie, Dukelease Chief Executive, and Paul Cook, Projects Director, discussed the history of the site and the outline of the proposed scheme and the sketched ideas that had been developed at that stage.

The councillors were helpful in providing feedback on the initial design ideas, the content of the scheme and further consultations.

21 December 2010 (evening): An initial meeting with four representatives of the Charlotte Street Association (CSA) was held to discuss the developing outline thoughts and designs for the scheme. The CSA members were very engaged and helpful with their comments and we were able to cover a number of issues and ideas. The particular points that were raised by CSA representatives included:

- Integrity of the early 19th century building (1-3 Goodge Street) and need to keep small shops in the area
- 1-3 is not a listed building, but may be one of the oldest buildings in Goodge Street – features said to include:
 - Unique staircase
 - Original shutters
 - A number of other original features
- A main issue was whether 1-3 is to be fully conserved or façaded. Dukelease explained that in order to meet modern building standards, which include level access within dwellings, the floors and staircase would have to be changed out of all recognition regardless of the issues of structural integrity
- Views on the design and height on the corner:
 - corner building could be higher – but it all depends on the design
 - won't miss existing building
 - how will the new building turn the corner and respect the materials of its neighbours?
 - materials used and their colour also counts for a lot
- Reactions to initial design
 - “very assertive” design
 - the design is in danger of competing with the opposite corner
 - Should be a “quieter” building and still turn the corner
 - Still emphasise the corner and add character
 - Needs to be more sympathetic to its surroundings though need not copy them
 - Nature of neighbouring buildings is vertical at present
 - Emphasis of the current design is horizontal – need to bring back a vertical feel

- Brick would be a good material and colour to turn the corner and unite the new with the existing
- What about the shop fronts? Can a rhythm and consistency be introduced to the street scene by helping the shop fronts match?

The Applicant's team listened carefully to these thoughts and then fed them into the design and planning process which led, together with the ongoing feedback from the Council, to the further evolution of the scheme that was presented back to the CSA members a month later.

19 January 2011 (evening): Second meeting with representatives of the Charlotte Street Association to update on design progress and to discuss in more detail the various aspects of the scheme's evolution. Particular comments and feedback from the CSA members included:

- Generally positive feedback on the latest design for the corner building and the materials and colours to help turn the corner and relate to its neighbours in both Tottenham Court Road and Goodge Street
- CSA members had mixed views on the proposals for 1-3 Goodge Street ranging from the purist view that only full conservation is acceptable even if that negates development, through to a more pragmatic opinion that façading the building is preferable to demolition and that a modern copy at 5-7 was acceptable
- CSA members would have preferred to see a setback roof as opposed to a traditional mansard to 1-3 Goodge Street but we explained that the Council's design officer insisted otherwise
- Servicing arrangements were discussed along with residential access points

Following CSA comments, the Applicant pointed out that although it was not possible to meet all the requests of local residents, specifically the fact that much of the fabric of 1-3 Goodge Street meant it had to be replaced to fulfil a viable role in the development, it viewed the pre-application consultation process as definitely beneficial to its own thinking and to the evolution of the scheme.

23 February 2011 (evening): Second meeting with Cllr Adam Harrison and Cllr Abdul Quadir to update on design progress, consultation feedback and the evolution of the scheme prior to submission. This was a relatively brief meeting, but both councillors expressed their gratitude for being kept informed on progress and seemed content with the proposals that the exercise had produced.

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Proposed Corner Before Consultation



Proposed Corner After Consultation



Proposed Goodge Street Elevation

2.2 Other consultations

Although it has not been possible, as yet to arrange a meeting with the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee, who cover the Charlotte Street Conservation Area, they have been informed of the proposals in written format and we will continue to offer a dialogue should that be required.

The Applicant has also informed businesses neighbouring the site of the its proposals for redevelopment but very little feedback has been received.

The Applicant will continue to stay in touch with local stakeholders including, community groups, ward councillors, planning and other council officers during the post-application planning process. All comments received will be carefully considered and replied to. If appropriate, the Applicant will hold further meetings with local stakeholders before the determination of the application.

3.0 Ongoing consultation

The Applicant and its development team are fully committed to ongoing consultation with the local community and will ensure that all stakeholders are kept appropriately informed throughout the formal consultation process and as the applications approaches a committee date and beyond.

The Applicant is willing to hold further meetings with local stakeholders and representatives and distribute further information as appropriate during the post-application planning process.

4.0 Conclusion

Our consultation approach has sought to engage with local residents, community groups and local politicians, including presentations and meetings. The feedback gained from this process has been very informative and has guided the Applicant to learn from previous applications for the site and to evolve the scheme through an iterative process. We hope the proposals that have emerged are now both in keeping with local stakeholders' main aspirations for the site and in line with Council officers' guidance.

The Applicant is now confident that a good solution has been found for the redevelopment of this corner site. The scale of the development is in keeping with its neighbours in both Tottenham Court Road and Goodge Street; the design turns the corner well and respects the different streetscapes without competing for attention; and proposals have been produced in consultation with the Charlotte Street Association, elected representatives and the professional planners. The redevelopment of this site will help regenerate a prominent corner in this busy part of town and provide improved retail facilities and much needed accommodation. It will also remove an out of place corner building and help repair Second World War bomb damage that has remained for over 60 years. After several months of consultation and an evolving proposal, the Applicant sincerely hopes that it has found a working solution for the site that meets the requirements of local stakeholders and also addresses the needs of the council and planning inspectorate. In particular:

- Façade retention of 1-3 Goodge Street
- Repairing the street scene by replacing 5-7 Goodge Street
- Removal of retail space from the first floor and retention of smaller shop units
- Support Inspector's view that a 'tower' element will reinforce the corner with quality design
- Integrate the materials with the design to help the development turn the corner

The pre-application consultation process has enabled the development team to address personally the issues of local stakeholders. The Applicant remains committed to consultation with local residents and other stakeholders and will continue to ensure that they are kept informed throughout the remaining planning process.