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TK/DM/P2970  
13 September 2006

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Dear Mr Wilson

**60 Charlotte Street, London, W1: Planning Application 2006/3177/P**

We refer to our recent conversation with regards to the above planning application and comments received from the Council in relation to the design approach for the external treatment of the office building. Please find enclosed a Cladding Report and supporting technical details that further details the benefits of the approach being adopted.

*Our client has taken a holistic approach with regards to the refurbishment of the office building, addressing both the internal and the entire external treatment of the building. As detailed in the accompanying report, the aesthetics of the proposed external treatment are intrinsically linked to both its enhanced environmental performance and also to its structural constraints. We are of the opinion that the design of the external treatment cannot be viewed in isolation without also considering its performance in sustainability terms, as well as its practical implementation where an existing building is concerned.*

The existing building does not in our view make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Charlotte Street Conservation Area; it is not listed nor is it identified as a building of local interest; and there is no mention of it within the Conservation Area Statement. The building does not relate particularly well to the character and appearance of the area, however as with the other contemporary buildings within the area, it contributes to the diversity of the architectural styles and has the potential to become a high quality modern development. We consider that the proposal achieves this, whilst also greatly improving the environmental performance of the building.

When considering the previous application for the alterations to the podium granted in 2005, it was acknowledged in the officer's report that the building does not relate to the architectural or urban design context and language of the surrounding conservation area, and was described as a "tired and moribund building". Furthermore any improvements to enhance the buildings appearance would be welcomed by the Council. The podium and the proposed choice of modern lightweight material consisting of metal cladding, glazed units and metal units were considered acceptable as was the podium extension.

**2006 / 3177 / PR1**

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Mr G Wilson  
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The Council welcomed and recently approved these partial improvements to the building that involved a modern treatment to the podium whilst retaining the 1970's tower. It would therefore be assumed that a similar proposal that seeks to re-clad and make full improvements to the building with a consistent and comprehensive modern design treatment would also be welcomed by the Council, in particular where there has been minimal departure from the permitted scheme.

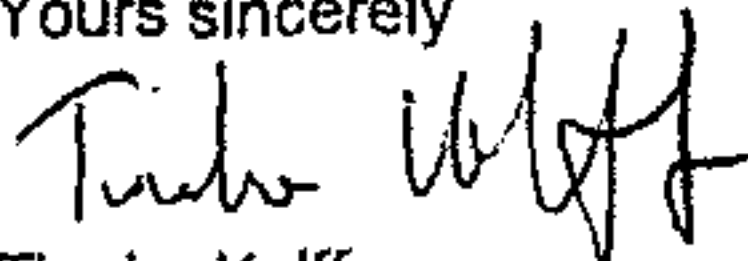
When considering whether to permit an application in a conservation area, special attention should be paid as to whether it preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the area. As outlined in PPG15, the Courts have held (*South Lakeland DC v Secretary of State for the Environment* 1992) that the objective of preservation can be achieved either by development which makes a positive contribution to an area's character or appearance, or by development which leaves character and appearance unharmed. Should the Council not concur with us that the proposal will enhance the character and appearance of the Charlotte Street Conservation Area, it would need to be demonstrated that it would be harmful instead. Given the Council's recent observations on the architectural merit of the building in relation to the conservation area and its tired condition, we consider that this would be a difficult task.

PPG15 also emphasises that development should not directly imitate earlier styles, but should be carried out with respect for context, as part of a larger whole which has a well-established character and appearance of its own. The choice of materials for the podium includes the core materials of concrete and glazing consistent with the existing building, and the fenestration pattern for the tower re-clad also replicates the existing building, maintaining the building's existing aesthetics but within a more contemporary, high quality design approach.

Fundamentally, the proposal seeks to extend the life of the existing building whilst vastly improving its aesthetics, thermal efficiency and overall sustainability and we hold the view that it is entirely consistent with the Council's policies. The proposals in our opinion will serve to enhance the building and arguably the area as a whole, but if not, the area's character and appearance will in no material or adverse way be affected by the proposed works.

We trust that the additional information enclosed is of assistance, however we feel that it would be of great benefit to be able to discuss the material with you at the site to assist you in reaching a positive conclusion on this application. We will be in contact shortly to arrange a time at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely



Tineke Kolff  
Rolfe Judd Planning

Encl.

cc.	Ray Riley	-	PPG
	Jonathan Hall	-	Greenhall Estates
	Daniel Fitzwater	-	Cube

2006 / 3177 / PR1