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FAO: Chris Heather / Neil McDonald

8 December 2014

Our ref: LJW/ANE/HBR/J6936

Your ref: 2014/5946/P

Dear Sir

**21-31 New Oxford Street, London
Amendments to Application Ref. 2014/5946/P**

We write on behalf of our client, New Oxford Street Limited, to submit amendments to planning application reference 2014/5946/P at 21-31 New Oxford Street, London.

A planning application for the refurbishment, alteration and extension of 21-31 New Oxford Street, was submitted in September 2014 (application ref. 2014/5946/P). Since the application was submitted, consultation responses from local amenity groups and residents have been received. In response to the consultation we have made several amendments to the proposed scheme which have been discussed and agreed with Camden Planning Officers.

The amendments proposed are as follows:

- Provision of a doctors' surgery with a minimum area of 300sqm at ground and mezzanine floors with access from High Holborn capable of supporting 2-3 GPs and capable of treating over 4,000 patients;
- A designated area of no less than 350sqm for the provision of several, small independent retail units no larger than 75 sq m each, at ground and mezzanine floors with a frontage on High Holborn;
- Provision of a public roof terrace and ancillary facilities including a small kiosk with dedicated access and lift off the corner of Dunn's Passage and New Oxford Street;
- Alterations to the roofline relieving the corner elevations and reducing the visible roof top;
- Alterations at ground floor to the corner of Museum Street and High Holborn and the corner of High Holborn and Dunn's Passage to ease pedestrian flow and improve the public realm;
- Refined architecture to the residential elevation reflecting the change in use between offices and homes; and
- Amendment to the red line boundary.

As discussed and agreed with Officers, the following addendum reports have been submitted to support the amendments to the scheme. As requested by Officers, we enclose one hard copy and two CD copies of the following documents:

- Covering letter;
- Application forms;

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- CIL forms;
- Red line site location plan;
- Design and Access Statement Addendum;
- Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment Addendum;
- Transport Statement Addendum;
- Daylight and Sunlight Report Addendum;
- Landscape Statement Addendum; and
- Updated and amended proposed plans, elevations and sections.

Doctors' Surgery

A doctors' surgery (Class D1) with a minimum area of 300sqm is proposed at ground and mezzanine levels with access from High Holborn.

A doctors' surgery is defined in the Core Strategy as a community facility. Policy CS10 states that the Council will require development that increases demand for community facilities and services to make appropriate contributions towards providing new facilities or improving existing facilities. This is reiterated in Policy DP15 of the Camden Development Policies DPD which states that the Council will expect developments that result in any additional need for community or leisure facilities to contribute towards supporting existing facilities or providing for new facilities.

The supporting text to Policy DP15 sets out the points that the Council will consider when assessing the impact of new development as:

- existing community facilities accessible to the development and their available capacity;
- the likely number of future occupants;
- the needs of community service providers operating in the area (public and community) and their accommodation requirements;
- whether community or leisure facilities are proposed within the new development.

To ensure any short-fall in provision created by the development is addressed, the Council will seek, as appropriate:

- the provision of a new facility on the development site;
- improvements to an existing facility close to the development;
- contributions towards the running costs and maintenance of nearby facilities.

As the proposal is predominantly an office and retail development it is not considered that this would lead to an increase in demand for new health care provision or put pressure on existing facilities. Office workers tend to use health care facilities where they live rather than where they work. As set out in CPG8, obligations and contributions will not generally be sought for developments of less than 50 residential units but local circumstances will need to be assessed.

Notwithstanding the policy position, it has been brought to our attention through consultation with local groups and residents that there is a need for a new doctors' surgery in the area. This follows the closure of the Bedford Square Medical Centre and existing poor facilities and accessibility at the Museum Practice on Great Russell Street.

It is therefore proposed to provide a modern, fully accessible surgery of a similar size to the former Bedford Square Medical Centre at ground and mezzanine levels with access from High Holborn. The exact size and location of the surgery are unknown at this stage and will be subject to discussions with a proposed operator. Nevertheless, it has been agreed with Camden that a

minimum size of 300sqm and general location on the High Holborn frontage will form part of the S106 Agreement. A doctors' surgery of this size could accommodate 2-3 doctors with a patient list of just over 4,200.

Small, Independent Retail

A designated area of 350sqm for the provision of small independent retail units is proposed at ground and mezzanine levels on the High Holborn frontage.

The site is not located within a designated centre or retail frontage; however Policy CS7 states that Camden will support limited provision of small shops outside centres to meet local needs.

Small and independent shops contribute to the character and diversity of Camden's centres by adding to the choice and variety of shopping facilities available, and avoiding centres being dominated by national multiple retailers. The contribution of small and independent shops to the character and attractiveness of many of Camden's centres is highlighted in the Camden Retail Study. The Council seek to promote the provision of small units where appropriate and independent shops where possible.

Policy DP10 states that the Council will encourage the provision of small shop premises suitable for small and independent businesses by:

- a) expecting large retail development to include a proportion of smaller units;
- b) attaching conditions to planning permissions for retail development to remove their ability to combine units into larger premises, where appropriate;
- c) encouraging the occupation of shops by independent businesses and the provision of affordable premises.

The supporting text to Policy DP10 refers to retail developments in town centres and states that Camden will consider the need for the provision of small units for schemes involving 1,000 square metres of retail and generally expect such provision for schemes of 5,000 square metres of retail or more.

Although technically this policy does not apply because the site is not within a centre or a retail frontage, a number of the consultation responses received during the determination period have emphasised a desire for small, independent retail units. The applicant has taken these comments on board and now proposes to include a designated area of 350sqm on High Holborn specifically for the provision of small, independent retail units. Independent retailers will be businesses with no more than 5 stores in Camden in accordance with the definition in the Camden Development Policies DPD. Small retail units are considered to be those that are less than 100 square metres gross floorspace also as defined in the Camden Development Policies DPD. However, the applicant is proposing that the units are conditioned in the S106 Agreement to be less than 75 square metres. It is considered that this area could accommodate up to 10 small retail units. As with the doctors' surgery, it has been agreed with Camden that the detail and restrictions will be set out in the Section 106 Agreement.

Public Roof Terrace

A public roof garden of approximately 700 square metres and accessed from a dedicated public entrance and lift off New Oxford Street is also proposed. The public roof garden will include ancillary facilities including a small kiosk and toilets. The roof garden will provide fantastic views across London.

Although there is no policy requirement for the development to provide an open space contribution on site, a strong theme voiced by local residents and groups during the consultation period has been the lack of publically accessible open space in the area. As such the applicant has decided to provide 700 square metres of space on the roof as a public roof garden. The images shown in the Design and Access Statement addendum and Landscape Statement addendum are indicative at this stage and the details will be conditioned, however the space will be extensively landscaped incorporating planting, outdoor seating, toilets and a small kiosk

Rooftop Alterations

At roof level, the eastern elevation has been stepped back and a set of terraced seats are created that provide views towards the City. This reduces the visible rooftop in the view from the east towards Commonwealth House.

The terraced area behind the north west and south west corners has also been stepped back in a similar manner to the east elevation better relieving the corner elevations.

Refined Architecture to the Residential Elevation

The infill panels proposed for the residential elevation have been amended to accommodate a high quality masonry finish. It is considered that this will provide a better response to the neighbouring architecture of Commonwealth House and signify the change in land use.

Site Location Plan

The extent of the red line boundary has been amended whilst we wait for Camden to confirm the extent of adopted highway on Museum Street. This does not have an impact on the delivery of the new landscaped public realm on Museum Street and the applicant remains committed to working with Camden to deliver an exciting and engaging piece of reimagined open space.

Financial Viability

We have received the Council's initial independent review of the financial viability of the proposed development as originally submitted. LBC's financial viability consultants state that, "We have reached the conclusion that the Applicant's advisers have thoroughly and methodically explored many different ways of providing the full housing requirement on site. We consequently agree with the view that full housing provision on-site is not feasible for a combination of architectural and viability reasons. It is therefore in our view appropriate for the shortfall in housing provision to not be delivered on-site, and it is appropriate for this provision to be in the form of a commuted sum rather than off-site provision, as, despite a detailed search, the Applicant has not been able to secure an appropriate site nearby on which to deliver the off-site housing."

An updated Financial Viability Assessment is being prepared by Gerald Eve LLP to assess the impact of the amendments outlined in this letter on the development. All of the amendments proposed have a neutral or negative impact on the financial viability of the development and therefore the initial conclusions that the proposed level of on-site housing (which provides 100% of the affordable housing policy requirement) is the maximum that can reasonably be provided still stand.

Conclusions

As a result of this application, the existing poor quality, vacant building which sits above the complex network of the Mail Rail tunnels and platform will be adaptively regenerated and the revised proposals present an improved opportunity to reinvigorate this important part of Central London.

The amendments proposed are in direct response to consultation responses received on the submitted application and awareness of an identified need for local facilities.

This scheme offers a considerable number of benefits to this part of Camden. In particular:

- **Regeneration and transformation** of the existing area;
- **Sustainable reuse** and regeneration of a building which has been vacant for the past 20 years;
- Provision of **21 much needed affordable homes** (100% of Camden's affordable housing requirement);
- Provision of approximately **3,000 new jobs**, equating to 60% of the Tottenham Court Road Opportunity Area target;
- Provision of **535 cycle spaces** for commercial occupiers, residential occupiers and visitors to the building;
- Provision of new active public uses at ground and lower ground floor levels to **reactivate 205m of street frontage** with a mix of uses such as shops, galleries, cafes and restaurants;
- Provision of a **GP Surgery** for use by local residents and occupiers of the new affordable homes capable of **supporting 2-3 GPs and capable of treating over 4,000 patients**;
- Allocation of an area of **350 sq m for small independent retail units**;
- **High quality and attractive design**, embracing the principles of sustainable design and construction;
- **Better building energy use** through installation of modern and efficient facilities and systems;
- **Improvement to the surrounding public realm**, in particular Museum Street, **re-opening and re-imagining of Dunn's Passage** in partnership with the owners of Commonwealth House and improvements to surrounding pavements;
- Contributions towards **junction improvement works** at Museum Street/New Oxford Street junction and Museum Street/High Holborn junction;
- Provision of a **public roof terrace** and ancillary facilities including a small kiosk with **dedicated public access and lift** for use by local employees, residents and visitors to the area;

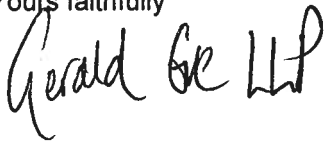
- Creation of a **safe and secure environment** for existing and future residents, employees and visitors;
- **Payment in Lieu** of private housing of **c.£4.2 million to Camden's affordable housing fund.**

In this context it is considered that the development will make a significant contribution to both Camden and to London.

We trust that Officers have everything required to determine the application and would now encourage London Borough of Camden Planning Officers to take this planning application to the next available Development Control Committee.

In the meantime, should you have any queries or questions, please do not hesitate to contact Lisa Webb or Alex Neal of this office.

Yours faithfully



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