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Your ref: 2014/5946/P

Christopher Heather
-by email only-

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Group Planning

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23rd October 2014

Dear Christopher

Re: 21-31 New Oxford Street – TfL's initial comments

The following comments represent the views of Transport for London officers and are made on a “without prejudice” basis. They should not be taken to represent an indication of any subsequent Mayoral decision in relation to a planning application based on the proposed scheme. These comments also do not necessarily represent the views of the Greater London Authority.

To the north of the site is New Oxford Street and to the south is High Holborn, which forms part of TfL's Strategic Road Network (SRN). The nearest part of Transport for London's Road Network (TLRN) is the Victoria Embankment, 1km to the south.

The site is served by 26 bus routes, accessible within walking distance of the site. The nearest bus stop is located at Bloomsbury Way/New Oxford Street and provides access to bus routes 98, 25, 55, 8, 38, 19, 242, 171 and 1. Holborn London Underground station, served by the Central line and Piccadilly line is located approximately 500m from the site. On this basis, the site has a high Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 6b (out of a range of 1 to 6, where 1 is low). The nearest cycle hire docking station is High Holborn, Covent Garden which is on the southern boundary of the site.

Car Parking

The applicant is proposing one residential Blue Badge space and one commercial Blue Badge space located on site and accessed from High Holborn. The car free nature of the scheme is supported by TfL in accordance with London Plan policy 6.13 'Parking'. However, TfL would expect to see a blue badge space to be provided for each wheelchair accessible unit, this equates to two blue badge spaces. The applicant should give justification as to why only one space has been provided.

TfL would recommend that future occupiers of the development be prevented from obtaining a residents/ business parking permit for any existing or proposed controlled parking zone (CPZ) and that such a requirement is secured through the s106 agreement.

Cycle Parking

TfL is satisfied with the provision of 535 cycle parking spaces proposed by the applicant because it conforms to table 6.3 of the Further Alterations of the London Plan (FALP). The long stay cycle parking is accessed using a lift from New Oxford Street down to the basement and short stay is distributed at grade around the building. TfL welcomes the provision of showers and changing facilities in line with policy 6.9 of the FALP.

Impact on Public Transport

Having reviewed the trip generation provided in the Transport Assessment, TfL can confirm that the development will not cause a detrimental impact on bus or underground capacity.

Cycle Hire

As part of the public realm improvements to High Holborn, the applicant proposes to relocate the adjacent High Holborn, Covent Garden docking station, TfL has no objection to the relocation of the docking station however the full cost will need to be met by the applicant. The indicative relocation cost for moving the station is £55,000. The applicant would also be expected to meet all costs incurred through loss of revenue following the closure of the existing station. TfL has estimated these costs to amount to approximately £30,000 however this is subject to the length of closure required.

The local area experiences high levels of cycle hire demand and therefore in accordance with London Plan policy 6.9 'Cycling' TfL requests that the relocated docking station is also expanded by an additional eight docking points. TfL would expect this to cost approximately £50,000.

As it is not possible to determine at this stage the loss of revenue TfL requests that the section 106 agreement incorporates an appropriate mechanism that will ensure that TfL is sufficiently compensated for the duration of suspension for the existing docking station. It should also reflect the £50,000 cost of extension and £55,000 cost of relocation. TfL would also require assurances from both the applicant and Council that a suitable location has been agreed to before the existing docking station has been suspended.

Walking and Public Realm

TfL welcomes the applicant's PERS audit as part of the application. The PERS audit includes 5 routes: New Oxford Street (west), Bloomsbury Way (north), New Oxford Street to High Holborn (east), High Holborn (immediately south) and Museum Street to Covent Garden station (south).

The audit recommends improvements of the waiting areas for the bus stops on Bloomsbury Way and High Holborn. TfL therefore requests that the developer provide a contribution towards the upgrade of these stops. Another recommendation is to introduce more way-finding maps to the south of the site, in order to assist pedestrians. TfL therefore deem it appropriate for the applicant to fund the provision of additional Legible London wayfinding in accordance with London Plan Policy 6.10 'Walking'

Travel Plan

TfL welcome the submission of the Framework Travel Plan, which passed the ATTrBuTE assessment, and recommend that a full Travel Plan is secured as part of a Section 106 agreement.

Freight

TfL understand that all loading and unloading of delivery and servicing vehicles will occur from the access on High Holborn. TfL recommend that a Delivery and Servicing Plan (DSP) is provided as a condition along with a full Construction Logistics Plan (CLP).

Crossrail

In accordance with the Mayor's Crossrail SPG, where development involves a net increase in chargeable floorspace of more than 500sqm (Gross Internal Area – GIA), a contribution of £140 per sqm for offices and £90 per sqm for retail is required. On the basis, that TfL understands the site to have been vacant for a number of years and have therefore a theoretical existing floor space of zero the contribution required will be £5,252,070. This should be secured within the Section 106 agreement.

CIL

The Mayor has introduced a London-wide Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to help implement the London Plan, particularly policies 6.5 and 8.3. The charging rate for Camden is £50 per sq m.

Summary

The scheme is not expected to cause a negative impact on TfL's Bus and London Underground network. Further discussion is required between the applicant, council and TfL to establish an appropriate Section 106 clause to alleviate TfL's concerns regarding the cycle hire docking station. A full Travel Plan should be secured by Section 106. Also, a DSP and CLP should be secured by condition. The applicant should provide contributions towards a Legible London sign and improvements to the bus stops on Bloomsbury Way and High Holborn.

Provided the development is mitigated to TfL's satisfaction following the advice provided, then TfL considers this development could accord with transport policies in the London Plan.

If you have any questions regarding the above information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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