

Sent: 26 January 2015 17:15
To: McDonald, Neil
Subject: Re Old Sorting Office - 2014/5946/P

Dear Mr McDonald

I previously submitted my objections to this development on behalf of Tavistock Chambers Residents' Association as we feel it is a poor proposal for this site with such potential opposite our building. The subsequent revisions by the developers seem however to offer little more than window-dressing and fail to address the fundamental concerns that local residents have with the proposed scheme.

In particular:-

1) Virtually no concession has been made with regards to the height and bulk, the most significant objection that we have. The minor stepping back at the upper levels is almost imperceptible when looking at the drawings before and after and does not mitigate the almost 3 floor increase in height and building out of the upper levels.

This increased bulk means the development towers over local heritage sites, blocks light along Museum Street, ruins views of St George's Church from the south and Centrepoint from the East and discourages visitors from the British Museum from heading south to Covent Garden by acting as a visual full stop as you look South.

2) The recent concessions offered are grossly inadequate:-

- an NHS surgery but with no rental guarantee to ensure it remains affordable for an NHS practice
- a roof terrace open for limited hours making it impractical for working residents. This seems almost designed to fail to ensure that future owners could close it and expand the building by adding further floors.
- an arcade of smaller retail outlets, while welcome, does not compensate for the distinct lack of D1 use which was recommended for the site by Camden's own planning brief.

3) The Camden Planning brief called for cultural and housing use. The housing provision is the bare minimum and the cultural use is non-existent.

As this site is sui generis, there is no presumption of office use and so this is one site where Camden could insist on a truly imaginative scheme that would enhance this historic area at the gateway between Bloomsbury and Covent Garden. With the Outernet building just along the road offering a live music venue and other novel attractions, a further cultural development could provide a real identity for this area distinct from the West End and City.

Yours sincerely
Adam Lester