

17-29 HAWLEY CRESCENT

OFFICE EXPANSION PROJECT

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

MARCH 2015



PREPARED BY YOUR SHOUT
ON BEHALF OF
VIACOM CAMDEN LOCK LTD



17-29 HAWLEY CRESENT

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
POLICY CONTEXT	2
SUMMARY OF PROPOSED APPLICATION	4
THE CONSULTATION PROCESS	5
SUMMARY AND CONTINUED CONSULTATION	8
APPENDICES	9

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This Community Involvement Report has been compiled by specialist community consultation group Your Shout, part of Thorncliffe, on behalf of Viacom Camden Lock Ltd (the Applicant). This report supports a planning application for the extension of Viacom's existing studios at 17-29 Hawley Crescent to accommodate 150 additional employees, following Viacom's acquisition of public service broadcaster Channel 5

This report details the public consultation the Applicant has undertaken in order to inform the evolution of the proposals. Consultation has been carried out in accordance with national and regional policies, as set out in the following section of this report, and exceeds the requirements of the London Borough of Camden's current Statement of Community Involvement (adopted July 2011).

Your Shout has also signed up to the Consultation Institute Charter, which sets out the best-practice principles for consultation. A copy of the charter can be found at www.consultationinstitute.org.

The key aims of the pre-application stage of public consultation, which this report documents, were:

- 1. To inform local residents, businesses, councillors and other stakeholders about the redevelopment aspirations for the site.**
- 2. To gain a full understanding of local views of the proposals, engage with the local and wider community throughout the design development stage, and use these views to identify concerns and opportunities, and where possible inform the evolving final proposals.**
- 3. To demonstrate how the Applicant has responded to the issues raised by the community and stakeholders and identify how changes have been made to the proposals to address them.**

In addition, this report demonstrates the Applicant's continued commitment to consultation and engagement throughout the statutory planning process.

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

POLICY CONTEXT

National Context

Pre-application consultation has long been seen as a positive process and a key part of ensuring local communities have a say in proposed developments. Many large scale planning applications are the subject of extensive pre-application consultation as a matter of course.

However, prior to the Localism Act 2011, there was no legal requirement for applicants to undertake any pre-application consultation with communities nearby.

The Localism Act 2011 introduced “a new requirement for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning applications for certain developments. This gives local people a chance to comment when there is still genuine scope to make changes to proposals to further strengthen the role of local communities in planning.” (A plain English guide to the Localism Act, p.13)

This amends the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and creates several obligations for potential applicants. There is a requirement to carry out pre-application consultation for all “large scale major applications”, and applicants must:

- Publicise the proposal and consult with residents in the vicinity of the site concerned.
- Give local people a chance to comment when there is still genuine scope to make changes to proposals.
- Have regard to the local planning authority about local good practice.
- Take account of responses to the consultation.

While the Government has not yet specified what the threshold is for “large scale major applications”, it is clear that there should be consultation on all significant developments before a planning application is submitted.

Additionally the Government has used the Localism Act 2011 to clarify the rules on ‘predetermination’. Previously in some cases councillors were warned off doing such things as campaigning, talking with constituents, or publicly expressing views on local issues, for fear of being accused of bias or facing legal challenge. The Localism Act 2011 makes it clear that it is proper for councillors to play an active part in discussions on developments prior to submission of a planning application, and that they should not be liable to legal challenge as a result. This will help them better represent their constituents and influence the development proposed.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in March 2012, says that local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. The NPPF adds that “early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties.” (NPPF, p. 45, 118)

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Local Context

Camden Council's Revised Statement of Community Involvement (adopted July 2011) states:

“We strongly encourage pre-application advice and pre-application consultation for major, or potentially controversial, proposals. Pre-application consultation provides an opportunity for local communities and stakeholders to raise any issues directly with the applicant and influence their proposals.

“At the beginning of the pre-application consultation process we expect the applicant / agent to agree the extent and type of pre-application consultation with us to make sure that the consultation process proposed is suitable.

“Where pre-application consultation is carried out, applicants should prepare a report summarising the type of consultation carried out, the key issues raised and how the scheme addresses these issues.”

Camden Council indicates that it expects developers to undertake pre-application consultation on planning applications that are deemed ‘major developments’ and these have helped inform the Applicant’s consultation.

Full details of the public consultation are set out in the following sections of this report.

17-29 HAWLEY CRESENT

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED APPLICATION

The proposals

The Applicant has recently acquired Channel 5, a national television broadcaster, and hopes to consolidate all of its existing and new staff in the Camden area by extending its current studios at 17-29 Hawley Crescent in Camden Town.

The proposed extension would see the courtyard in-filled with 4 levels of office space, to accommodate an additional 150 employees. The green wall coverage would be increased and repositioned to a more prominent position so that it can be enjoyed from Camden High Street. The service space would be re-provisioned under the new office space.

This would help support new jobs in the borough and increase footfall to local bussiness whilst enhancing Camden's status as a centre of excellence for the media. Additional information on the proposals is available in the Planning Statement, also submitted as part of the planning application.



STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The consultation process for this scheme is informed by the requirements of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and other consultation guidelines. Specifically, we have:

1. Made sure the consultation takes place as early as possible in the design development process, and is therefore "front-loaded".
2. Conducted appropriate engagement that fits the community's needs.
3. Used Plain English and adequate response mechanisms.

Pre-application discussions with planning officers

Prior to submitting the application, The Applicant has consulted with senior planning, design, housing and transport officers at Camden through the Council's pre-application procedure.

The proposed design and layout, has evolved and responded to the comments and feedback provided during pre-application discussions.

Pre-application discussions with Councillors

Prior to submission of the application we emailed the three ward councillors for Camden Town with Primrose Hill Ward:

- Cllr Pat Callaghan
- Cllr Richard Cotton
- Cllr Lazzaro Pietragnoli

The purpose of this email was to inform the Councillors of the proposals and to seek a meeting with them to discuss this application. As a result, a meeting with Councillors Callaghan and Cotton was arranged for 11th March 2015.

A copy of this email is available in **Appendix 1**.

In addition we emailed Cllr Phil Jones, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport & Planning in order to inform him about the application and seek a meeting to discuss the application with regards to his role as Cabinet member.

A copy of this email is available in **Appendix 2**.

17-29 HAWLEY CRESENT

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Publicising the application

We publicised the application to the homes and businesses surrounding the site by distributing an information letter. The objective of the letter was to inform the local community about the plans and provide contact information should they have any questions about the proposals. We distributed around 300 copies of the letter, which were delivered by our in-house team to ensure correct delivery.

A copy of this letter can be found in **Appendix 3**.

The leaflet was delivered to all homes and bussiness in the blue area of the map below. The red area indicates the site outline for context.

In addition, copies of the letter were posted and sent electronically to the following community groups:

- Camden Town Speaks Residents' Association
- Camden Town Unlimited
- Friends of Regents Canal
- Hawley Wharf Action Group
- Regents Canal Conservation Area Advisory Committee
- Assadep Community Advice Centre
- Camden Civic Society
- Camden History Society
- Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre
- Church of St Silas The Martyr
- North Camden Town Neighbourhood Forum



17-29 HAWLEY CRESENT

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Using appropriate response channels

The information letter contained the following mechanisms for contacting the project team to ask any questions or provide feedback on the plans:

1. A Freephone telephone hotline, staffed during office hours - 0800 458 6976
2. A bespoke email address - hawleycrescent@yourshout.com

We will continue to monitor these channels and respond to any comments, following submission of the planning application.

17-29 HAWLEY CRESENT

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SUMMARY AND CONTINUED CONSULTATION

Viacom Camden Lock Ltd has undertaken public consultation to make local stakeholders aware of the plans and give them a chance to ask questions about the proposals in line with submission, using dedicated feedback mechanisms.

A list of key stakeholders has been put together to ensure that all interested parties have been kept informed of the plans and given a chance to ask questions and give feedback. Where information has been requested, it has been supplied in an easy to understand way.

This Statement of Community Involvement demonstrates The Applicant's commitment to thorough and meaningful public consultation and is informed by the requirements set out by the local planning authority. The submission of the planning application does not mark the end of this consultation and The Applicant will continue to meet with local groups and individuals as appropriate throughout this process.

**YOUR SHOUT
MARCH 2015**

APPENDIX 1

Dear Councillors

I am writing on behalf of Viacom to inform you that they are submitting a planning application to extend their existing site at 17-29 Hawley Crescent.

Viacom has recently acquired Channel 5, the national television broadcaster. As a result, the existing building at Hawley Crescent, which houses networks including MTV, Comedy Central and Nickelodeon, will be insufficient to accommodate those members of staff necessary to the programming operation.

Viacom hope to extend their existing building near Camden Lock in order to consolidate their operations in one location. This will bring new opportunities and jobs to Camden and enhance the borough's status as a centre of excellence for the media.

The proposed extension would see the current courtyard in-filled with 4 levels of office space, to accommodate an additional 150 employees. The current green wall would be repositioned and increased in size to a more prominent position so that it can be enjoyed from Camden High Street.

As the ward members for Camden Town with Primrose Hill we would be very keen to meet with you and discuss the plans in more detail. Please do let us know if there are any suitable times as soon as possible. I can be reached on 0800 458 6976 or by reply to this email.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes

Mark Allison

Mark Allison
Your Shout

F 0800 458 6976 | S 020 7587 3049
yourshout.com

[Email disclaimer](#)

APPENDIX 2

Dear Cllr Jones

I am writing on behalf of Viacom to inform you that they are submitting a planning application to extend their existing site at 17-29 Hawley Crescent.

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Viacom hope to extend their existing building near Camden Lock in order to consolidate their operations in one location. This will bring new opportunities and jobs to Camden and enhance the borough's status as a centre of excellence for the media.

The proposed extension would see the current courtyard in-filled with 4 levels of office space, to accommodate an additional 150 employees. The current green wall would be repositioned and increased in size to a more prominent position so that it can be enjoyed from Camden High Street.

As the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport & Planning we would be very keen to meet with you to discuss the plans in more detail and our plans for bringing new jobs and investment to Camden Town.

Please do let us know if there are any times suitable in the coming weeks. I can be reached on 0800 458 6976 or by reply to this email.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Mark Allison

Mark Allison
Your Shout

F 0800 458 6976 | S 020 7587 3049
yourshout.com

[Email disclaimer](#)

APPENDIX 3



Dear Resident

I am writing to inform you that Viacom is planning to submit a planning application to extend their existing building at 17-29 Hawley Crescent.

Viacom has recently acquired Channel 5, a national television broadcaster, and hopes to consolidate all staff in the Camden area. The existing building at Hawley Crescent, which currently houses networks including MTV, Comedy Central and Nickelodeon, will no longer be capable of accommodating all its employees.

Viacom hope to extend their existing accommodation near Camden Lock in order to consolidate their operations into one borough location. This will bring new opportunities and jobs to Camden and enhance the borough's status as a centre of excellence for the media.

The proposed extension would see the current courtyard in-filled with 4 levels of office space, to accommodate an additional 150 employees. The current green wall would be repositioned to a more prominent position so that it can be enjoyed from Camden High Street.

Key Facts about the plans:

- Expansion of the existing site at Hawley Crescent to accommodate 150 additional employees.
- In-filling the current courtyard from first to fourth floors with the re-provision of service space under the new offices.
- Repositioning and increasing coverage of the green wall to face Camden High Street, in addition to increasing the coverage of the green roof.
- Supporting new jobs in the borough and increased footfall to surrounding retail and food outlets.



If you have any questions about the plans please feel free to get in touch with me by phone on 0800 458 6976 or by email at hawleycrescent@yourshout.com

Best Wishes

Patrick Christie
Your Shout

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17-29 HAWLEY CRESCENT