



Criterion Capital, 112a Great Russell Street Consultation Report

Introduction

Your Shout, the consultation arm of Thorncliffe Communications Ltd, has been commissioned to conduct community consultation and engagement on the 112a Great Russell Street scheme on behalf of Criterion Capital. This consultation report provides a summary of the consultation and engagement activities. On behalf of Criterion Capital, Your Shout:

1. Produced site-specific information for the local community.
2. Conducted appropriate engagement that fits the community's needs.
3. Used Plain English and adequate response mechanisms.
4. Taken extra steps to engage with local residents groups.

The current site

The site is levels -4 and -5 of the NCP car park on Great Russell Street in Bloomsbury, located underneath the St Giles Hotel.



Image of the site today

The proposals

The proposed development involves the change of use of the basement levels -4 and -5 of what is presently used as a car park, to provide a hotel (Use Class C1), providing 166 bedrooms.



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.

Discussions with Councillors

Following submission of the application we sent a letter to the three ward councillors for Bloomsbury:

- Cllr Adam Harrison
- Cllr Rishi Madlani
- Cllr Sabrina Francis



The purpose of this email was to inform the Councillors of the proposals and to offer to meet with them to discuss this application.

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

Publicising the application

We publicised the application to local stakeholders 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. In addition to the letter we sent out an Information Leaflet setting out in more details the plans submitted by the applicant.

A copy of this letter can be found in **Appendix 1** and a copy of the Information leaflet can be found in **Appendix 2**.

Copies of the letter and leaflet were posted to the following community groups and individuals:

Ward Councillors

- Cllr Adam Harrison
- Cllr Rishi Madlani
- Cllr Sabrina Francis

Development Control Committee

- Councillor Heather Johnson (Chair)
- Councillor Nasim Ali OBE
- Councillor Danny Beales
- Councillor Julian Fulbrook
- Councillor Adam Harrison
- Councillor Phil Jones
- Councillor Richard Olszewski
- Councillor Lazzaro Pietragnoli
- Councillor Sue Vincent
- Councillor Abi Wood
- Councillor Phil Rosenberg
- Councillor James Yarde
- Councillor Flick Rea
- Councillor Roger Freeman (Vice Chair)
- Councillor Claire-Louise Leyland
- Councillor Stephen Stark



Greater London Authority

Andrew Dismore, Labour AM for Barnet and Camden.

Member of Parliament

- Kier Starmer, Labour MP for Holborn and St Pancras

Local Groups

- Bloomsbury Association
- Bloomsbury Improvement Group
- Fitzrovia Business Improvement District
- Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association
- Fitzrovia Partnership
- Fitzrovia Trust
- Friends of Russell Square
- Howard House and Cleveland Street (North)
- Inmidtown
- New West End Company
- One Alfred Place
- St Giles in The Fields United Charity
- Hanway Place Residents Association
- School of Architecture
- St Giles Hotel

Residents Associations

- Bedford Court Mansions Residents

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 – gtrussellst@yourshout.com

We will continue to monitor these channels and respond to any comments as the application continues.



Further community engagement

The applicant's representatives have met with the Chair of the **Bloomsbury Association** to discuss the application in detail, and hear their concerns around the redevelopment. This led to the applicant producing an Information leaflet on the proposed development answering the queries raised by the **Bloomsbury Association (Appendix 2)**.

The applicants have also engaged significantly with the **Bedford Court Mansions** residents: they have given detailed responses to and engaged with the resident's contractors and surveyors.

The applicant arranged a revised Noise Impact Assessment at the request of the **Bedford Court Mansions'** residents: throughout the process the applicant liaised with the surveyor chosen by **Bedford Court Mansions'** residents to observe and report on the process of the Noise Impact Assessment.

In addition, the applicant engaged a community outreach team from Your Shout to call on local residents and businesses, to raise awareness of the proposals, answer questions and invite participation in the consultation.

The applicant has attempted at every stage of the application to accommodate the concerns and requests of the local stakeholders.



Appendix 1: Notice Letter



[Address Block]

[Greeting Line]

I am writing to you on behalf of Criterion Capital who have submitted an application for a 166 room hotel at 112a Great Russell Street, application no. **2015/3605/P**.

Please find enclosed FAQ which we have prepared to help explain the proposed development and answer any questions you may have regarding the scheme.

The proposed Hotel development intends to provide an innovative response to the increasing shortage of Hotel accommodation in central London through the reinvigoration of the underused carpark. Whilst the concept of building a hotel underground is relatively new, there are examples of windowless hotels across the UK and through consultation with Camden and expert advice from our consultant team we have created a solution that will be both safe and enjoyable for future guests.

In addition to providing much needed hotel accommodation, the hotel does not propose any additional amenity services within the development. Instead it is intended that guests will enjoy the already extensive food and entertainment options in the surrounding area bringing significant economic and community benefits to the Bloomsbury Area. The Hotel will also provide approximately 24 new jobs for the operation of the hotel in addition to apprenticeship opportunities during the construction phase.

As the proposal is an unconventional approach for a Hotel development, we appreciate that local stakeholders will have a number of questions regarding the hotels operation and construction and trust that the attached FAQ will help explain the proposal and answer any questions you may have.

We would like to thank you for taking the time to read the enclosed leaflet, if you have any questions or queries you can contact me on 0800 458 6976 or at jacob.lister@yourshout.org

Yours sincerely,



Jacob Lister



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Appendix 2: Information Leaflet

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Won't more people mean more crime?

We take our duty as members of the community very seriously and do not wish to be the cause of any negative impact on the amenity of surrounding residents. With this in mind the development has been designed according to the Secured by Design principles.

Bloomsbury is a historic area that needs preserving, won't the hotel affect the look and feel of the area?

Although the site is not within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, we are conscious that it is adjacent to it. Accordingly we are making minimal alterations to the exterior of the property and as such preserving the visual environment of the area.

The public footpaths and crossings already need to be repaired, won't more people only make this worse?

The introduction of new hotel will increase the footfall around the area, which will produce significant benefits to the surrounding businesses. However we are also aware that the increase in footfall will have a detrimental impact on the condition on the already worn footpaths. After the site has been redeveloped we will enhance the pedestrian environment on Adeline Place by removing the existing ramp and reinstating the footpath.

Keeping you updated

Over the coming months, as part of our commitment to being a good neighbour we will be keeping the local community updated on the progress of the development. In the meantime, if you have any queries please do get in touch with a member of our community relations team:

Phone: 0800 955 1042 | Email: gtrussellst@yours shout.org

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112a Great Russell Street Information Pack



Criterion Capital have submitted an application to convert levels -4 and -5 of the Car Park beneath the YMCA on Great Russell Street into a new hotel. You can view the application by going to tinyurl.com/gtrussellst and searching for application number 2015/3605/P.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will you sell the hotel once it is built?

No. Once the hotel is built it will be managed under the LDN hotel brand. Hotels are an important part of our business with a number of other hotels currently under development in Westminster along with various hotels already operating around Greater London. We are not interested in building it and then selling it off, we want to build a business that will become part of the local community and economy.

How many staff will the hotel employ?

We expect the hotel will provide around 24 new jobs for the Camden area. Part of our strategy is to train up new talent, and help provide young people with new and exciting opportunities. As such there will not only be jobs once the hotel is built, but we will also be taking on several apprentices throughout the build process.

Where will the coaches park?

The hotel will have a strict policy against taking group bookings, as such we will not accept coach parking and do not expect any need to provide coach parking. This policy will be maintained throughout the booking process with maximum booking sizes to be enforced through the online booking system.

Will the hotel have a bar or an entertainment space?

There is no provision for a bar or entertainment space, in addition to this we will not be providing any food service at the hotel. Consequently we will not be applying for either an entertainment licence or an alcohol licence. We believe the lack of amenity at the Hotel will greatly benefit the surrounding businesses and contribute to the overall economic benefit of the local area.

What about the servicing?

As the hotel will not provide any food service and will not have a bar the hotel will require limited servicing, as such we expect an average of one delivery per day for an average time of 10 minutes. Servicing would take place on-street from Adeline Place.

What impact will there be on noise levels of the surrounding area?

We take the amenity of our neighbours incredibly seriously, and we understand that neighbours already have concerns about the current noise levels. We have undertaken a noise impact assessment and we believe that with the reduction in vehicular traffic and the installation of a top of the range ventilation system, along with the appropriate noise reduction measures, there will be no further detrimental impact on the sound levels in the surrounding area.

What impact will there be on the air quality in the surrounding area?

The reduction in vehicular movements will result in improved air quality and reduced pollution levels in the area. As part of our application we have submitted an air quality assessment.

What consideration has been given to environmental sustainability?

Criterion Capital are committed to achieving the highest environmental and sustainability criteria. The environmental performance of all of our properties is important to us, as such we have ensured that the proposed plans would achieve a 'Very Good' BREEAM rating.

How long will the construction take?

As a part of the application we have submitted a draft Construction Management Plan to the Council. This plan suggests the overall construction period would be approximately 50 weeks and would include an on-site community relations officer. Once the development has been approved and prior to commencement on site, we will submit a full construction management plan to the Council for approval. We welcome your input to create a management plan that not only meets our commercial needs but also is acceptable to the members of the local community.

How will the guests get fresh air?

We will install a state of the art ventilation system to ensure all of the rooms are well ventilated. The ventilation system will be tested to the highest standards including testing of ambient noise levels from the system.

Why do we need another hotel in Bloomsbury?

We believe that our hotel will not be in direct competition with the existing Hotels in the Bloomsbury area as we are seeking to attract a different market to the current Hotel stock. In addition to this the London Plan Policy 4.5 (London's Visitor Infrastructure) seeks to achieve 40,000 net additional hotel bedrooms by 2031. Our proposal will help achieve this aim.

Why get rid of the Car Park?

Over recent years, the reduction in use of private cars in central London, due to the congestion charge and inner city traffic, has led to the car park becoming under used. We expect that this decline will only continue, given TfL's improvements to the travel network around the area. Furthermore, the proposed removal of the car park is in line with the aspirations of the Camden Council's West End Project which focuses on reducing traffic in the area and improving access for pedestrians and cyclists.