

125 Shaftesbury Avenue

Statement of Community Involvement

SEPTEMBER 2016



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Statement of Community Involvement forms part of a suite of documents submitted in support of a planning application for the refurbishment and extension of 125 Shaftesbury Avenue, Camden, London WC2H 8HR ('The Proposed Development').
- 1.2. The Proposed Development by Almacantar Shaftesbury S.a.r.l. (henceforth known as the Applicant) is for the remodeling, refurbishment and extension of existing office and retail building (Class B1/A1/A3/Sui Generis), including terraces, a new public route, a relocated office entrance (Charing Cross Road), rooftop plant and flexible retail uses (Classes A1/A3), along with associated highway, landscaping and public realm improvements.
- 1.3. The development would feature more efficient and high quality office space, a more attractive retail offer at ground level, and an attractive new front door, all whilst retaining the core structure of the building.
- 1.4. The proposals include a new pedestrian route through the building to re-link Old and New Compton Streets. This medieval through way had existed until 1982 when the current building was constructed, and will be of significant benefit.
- 1.5. The Proposed Development also includes improvements to the public realm along Stacey Street adjacent to Phoenix Gardens and on Charing Cross Road, helping to deliver the objectives of the West End Project.
- 1.6. The development includes the retention of the six lower floors of the building, with the top four floors removed and reconstructed. The plans include a proposed increase of one additional storey. In height terms it is worth noting that the proposed building would be around 5.7m taller because the rebuilt upper storeys will have extended floor to ceiling heights compared to the current building. The overall proposed increase in height is from approximately 64.3m to 70m.
- 1.7. The current building is 22,773.5 sq m GIA and the proposed would be 30,912 sq m GIA – an increase of 8,138.5 sq m.
- 1.8. The Applicant has worked in close partnership with the London Borough of Camden on the design of the Proposed Development to update the building to create a modern workplace with attractive retail space and an improved public realm.
- 1.9. The Applicant has made a commitment to consult with local communities throughout the design process, ensuring a sympathetic and high-quality proposal for the area.
- 1.10. Consultation with communities and with key stakeholders has been an integral part of the development strategy. Meetings with community groups, a public exhibition and focused presentations to identified stakeholders have all ensured that local people have been kept up-to-date during the pre-application process. A design review with Design South East also provided feedback to help shape the proposals.
- 1.11. Through the extensive consultation process, changes have been made to the Proposed Development prior to submission. These are detailed in Section 7.
- 1.12. The Applicant appointed London Communications Agency (LCA) to assist in creating and delivering a programme of community and stakeholder consultation. This SCI, prepared by



LCA, summarises the programme as well as the key findings and outcomes. All consultation activities outlined in this document were undertaken by the Applicant and the Applicant's representatives, including LCA; architects DSDHA; planning consultant Gerald Eve; and heritage and townscape consultant Peter Stewart Consultancy.



2. Consultation strategy/objectives

- 2.1. This SCI demonstrates the Applicant's comprehensive approach to pre-application consultation which began with a series of meetings with the London Borough of Camden officers from March 2015 and meetings with local people, amenity groups and other stakeholders between June 2015 and August 2016. Due to the site location near the borough boundary with Westminster, planning officers at Westminster Council were also contacted regarding the proposals and provided feedback.
- 2.2. The community consultation timeline below shows how a four-stage engagement approach has been developed and demonstrates how the Applicant has engaged with the key local communities and amenity groups and with local politicians, as well as providing opportunities for local people to view and comment on the Proposed Development. The four stages, which were implemented following discussions with London Borough of Camden, are detailed in the table below:

Stage	Activities
1	Early engagement with key local stakeholders and politicians to present emerging thinking and ideas for the building, test concepts and acquire feedback.
2	A public exhibition over five days on-site to explain the scheme and collate feedback.
3	Engaging with politicians and local communities through the London Borough of Camden, including presenting emerging proposals at a Development Management Forum, Developers' Briefing and submitting the proposals for a Design South East design review.
4	Prior to the submission of the planning application, further time was allowed for additional meetings with local stakeholders and ward councillors.

- 2.3. Community stakeholders and ward councillors were approached and met with at an early stage to brief them and get their feedback on the early ideas and concepts. The project team ensured that they remained available for any follow-ups and approaches from other interested parties. Particular care was taken to engage with those local stakeholders with a known interest in planning and development issues, such as the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee, the Seven Dials Trust and the Covent Garden Community Association. A meeting with Cllr Sue Vincent, Holborn & Covent Garden ward, was also arranged early in the process; Cllr Vincent declined an invitation to a follow up meeting and advised us to contact her fellow ward councillors, one of whom has responded to request information about the housing element of the proposals, but who have not taken up offers to meet. Contact was also made with Cllrs Jonathan Glanz, Paul Church and Glenys Roberts, of the nearby West End ward in Westminster, including an offer to meet. Whilst the councillors did not take up the offer of a meeting, Cllr Church requested further information about the proposals, which was supplied to him.
- 2.4. The Applicant undertook a range of activities as part of the community consultation programme.
- The Applicant and development team met with a key councillor from the London Borough of Camden.



- The Applicant and development team met with local residents, amenity and business groups.
 - Meetings were held with identified stakeholders, including representatives of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory committee, the Covent Garden Community Association, the Seven Dials Trust, Soho Society, The Phoenix Garden, Trentishoe Mansions Residents' Association, Lindsay House Residents' Association, Phoenix Theatre and Artists' Club, the Odeon Cinema and Soho Housing (who manage The Alcazar in Phoenix Street and Pendrell House in New Compton Street) between June 2015 and August 2016.
 - A consultation website was set up including a dedicated email address and Freephone telephone number. The website, phone number and email were all highlighted in all promotional material.
 - A public exhibition was held over five days in March and April 2016 and was well-publicised in advance, with flyers distributed on two occasions to 2,540 residential/business addresses in the vicinity of the site and colour adverts placed in local newspapers the Camden New Journal and the West End Extra.
 - The team took the decision to undertake a review of the design by Design South East in April 2016 and a summary of feedback and subsequent responses is available in the Design and Access Statement.
- 2.5. The emerging proposals were presented at a Camden Development Management Forum on 19 April 2016, which was attended by 10 members of the public.
- 2.6. They were presented to the Covent Garden Community Association (CGCA)'s Planning Committee on 25 July.
- 2.7. They were then presented to the London Borough of Camden's Development Control Committee, local ward councillors and planning officers at a Developers' Briefing on 27 July 2016, which was chaired by Cllr Heather Johnson, and attended by Cllr Phil Jones and Cllr Danny Beales.
- 2.8. Consultation with local stakeholders is ongoing and will continue throughout planning submission and subsequent phases.
- 2.9. The main aim of this consultation was twofold – to introduce local residents and stakeholders to the emerging proposals for the site and to receive their feedback on aspects of the project, from design to proposed usage. This is in line with the London Borough of Camden's own Statement of Community Involvement and with *Camden Together*, the Borough's community strategy.
- 2.10. The strategy also reflects the principles outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) that encourages early and proactive community consultation. Paragraph 66 of the NPPF document reads:
- “Applicants will be expected to work closely with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Proposals that can demonstrate this in developing the design of the new development should be looked on more favourably.”*
- 2.11. To this end, the Applicant has undertaken extensive community and stakeholder involvement.



2.12. To ensure a comprehensive community consultation, LCA and the Applicant developed the following carefully-considered approach:

- Keeping local councillors and officers at London Borough of Camden were kept well-informed through regular correspondence and, where possible, meetings.
- Publicising and holding a public exhibition detailing the scheme, with representatives of the Applicant’s design team on hand to answer queries, thereby allowing members of the public to review proposals and give their feedback.
- Setting up a dedicated website at www.125sa.co.uk to provide a platform for information and feedback alongside a dedicated email, freepost and phone line.

3. Early stakeholder engagement (Stage 1: June 2015 – April 2016)

3.1. An extensive, detailed stakeholder mapping and research exercise was carried out at an early stage, establishing the community/amenity groups, local stakeholders and other bodies who would be interested in or affected by the Proposed Development.

3.2. Community groups and local stakeholders approached were:

- Dragon Hall Trust
- Great Malvern Holdings
- Inmidtown BID
- Lindsay House Residents Association
- Odeon Covent Garden
- Phoenix Artists Club
- Phoenix Theatre
- Phoenix Gardens
- Trentishoe Mansions Residents’ Association
- All residents of Trentishoe Mansions, Lindsay House, The Alcazar, Pendrell House
- Soho Housing (managers of The Alcazar and Pendrell House)
- St Giles-in-the-Fields Church
- The Bloomsbury Association
- The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee
- The Covent Garden Community Association
- The Seven Dials Trust
- The Soho Society

3.3. The section below is a record of the specific consultation with local stakeholders during Stage 1 of the consultation. Please note that members of the project team were on hand to present the proposals on all occasions unless otherwise specified.

DATE/VENUE	ATTENDEES
1 June 2015	Phoenix Gardens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Ryley, Chair of the Management Committee
29 July 2015	Bloomsbury Association <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Murray, Chair



	<p>Jim noted that the building was outside of the Bloomsbury Association's area and said that he would be happy to see Seven Dials Trust and Covent Garden Community Association take the lead</p>
8 September 2015	<p>Seven Dials Trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• David Bieda, Chair• Kim Pimlott, Coordinator
10 September 2015	<p>St Giles-in-the-Fields Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alan Carr, Rector
12 October 2015	<p>Ward councillors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cllr Sue Vincent, Holborn and Covent Garden ward councillor and Director of Dragon Hall Trust <p>Note: the other ward councillors, Awale Olad and Julian Fulbrook, did not take up the offer of a meeting</p> <p>Dragon Hall Trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nicky Furre, Director
28 January 2016	<p>St Giles-in-the-Fields Church (2nd meeting)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alan Carr, Rector
3 March 2016	<p>Phoenix Artists Club</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ken Wright, Owner <p>Phoenix Theatre (Ambassador Theatre Group)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jaime Brent, Theatre Manager <p>Great Malvern Holdings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allan Cooper
8 March 2016	<p>Soho Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jeremy Eveleigh, Managing Director• David Morrow, Finance Director
14 March 2016	<p>Covent Garden Community Association (CGCA) Planning Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jo Weir, Chair• Elizabeth Bax, Honorary Secretary and Chair of the planning committee• Meredith Whitten, Planning Adviser



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kester Robinson • Shirley Gray • Jane Palm-Gold, CGCA member and Treasurer of Phoenix Gardens • David Bieda, Chair of the Seven Dials Trust • Christina Smith, member of CGCA and Seven Dials Trust
17 March 2016	<p>Trentishoe Mansions Residents' Association</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lisa Gregory • Jackie Gregory • Mark Quinlan • William Bishop
12 April 2016	<p>Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hugh Cullum, Chair • Anthony Jennings, Member
12 April 2016	<p>Odeon Covent Garden</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom Canessa, General Manager

3.4 People attending the meetings were supportive of a number of aspects:

- There was overwhelming support for the new pedestrian route through the building to re-link Old and New Compton Streets.
- Many believed that the proposals would help to tackle some of the existing anti-social behaviour, particularly on Caxton Walk and in Stacey Street.
- The existing building is considered as 'ugly' by some and most people welcomed the principle of change.
- There was split opinion on the proposed design of the building, with some supportive and others believing it not to be in keeping with the surrounding buildings.

3.5 There were also a number of concerns raised:

- Height, bulk and building materials were issues raised by some groups and residents.
- Residents in the immediate vicinity of the building were also concerned about a loss of light to their properties.
- There was split opinion on the proposed design of the building, with some supportive and others believing it not to be in keeping with the surrounding buildings.
- Some people believed that there should be more affordable housing.

4. Public Exhibition (Stage 2: March & April 2016)

4.1. The Applicant held a public exhibition over five days in March and April 2016 at The Bloomsbury Hotel, 16-22 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3NN. The objective of this exhibition was to explain the emerging design solution to local residents, businesses and



other stakeholders and to capture their comments and feedback. Across the five days of exhibition 44 people viewed the proposals. Around two thirds of those who left addresses were residents of the surrounding streets, while six attendees were current tenants of 125 Shaftesbury Avenue.

4.2. To enable the greatest possible number of attendees, the exhibition was open to all and fully staffed by members of the project team at the following times:

- Monday 21 March: 4pm - 7.30pm
- Tuesday 22 March: 4pm - 7.30pm
- Thursday 31 March: 4pm - 7.30pm
- Friday 1 April: 10am - 2pm
- Saturday 2 April: 10am - 2pm

4.3. The location of the exhibition – The Bloomsbury Hotel – was deemed appropriate given its excellent transport links and its position near to those local residents who might express an interest in the development.

4.4. To publicise the exhibition, flyers including a map of the exhibition location and details of the opening hours were distributed on two occasions to 2,540 residential and commercial properties in the area surrounding the Proposed Development. The flyer also contained details of the dedicated consultation email address and phone line as well as the address of the consultation website. An example of the flyer can be found at Appendix 1 and a map showing the flyer distribution area can be found at Appendix 3. The exhibition was also promoted in the following ways:

- Advert in Camden New Journal (10 March 2016 and 17 March 2016). (See Appendix 2).
- Advert in West End Extra (11 March 2016 and 18 March 2016). (See Appendix 2).
- Consultation website featuring details of exhibition and contact details (See Appendix 4).
- Via personal emails to those the project team had engaged with to date.
- Through community groups via word-of-mouth.

4.5. The dedicated website (www.125sa.co.uk), email address (125sa@londoncommunications.co.uk) and freephone number (0800 307 7565) were managed by LCA.

4.6. Exhibition boards were created by the architects DSDHA in partnership with the Applicant and other key consultants. The boards detailed different aspects of the scheme and guided attendees through the design process and emerging proposals. Representatives from the Applicant, Gerald Eve, DSDHA and LCA were on hand throughout the exhibition to answer any questions attendees might have about the board content, as well as explaining the context of the emerging proposals. Feedback forms were also available for attendees to leave comments (See Appendix 5). The public exhibition boards can be viewed in Appendix 6 and a summary of the content is set out below.

BOARD	CONTENT
Welcome and Introduction	Welcome to the exhibition, gives high-level overview of the development's aims
Site History	Outlines the history of the site and ambition of the proposal to reaffirm the historic identity of St. Giles Quarter, enhance the public realm, and promote stronger connections to St



	Giles-in-the-Fields Church
Site Context	Places the site within the area's wider architectural context, being next to residential buildings and between three Conservation Areas
The Existing Building (1)	Notes several challenges posed by the existing building which makes it unfit for purpose, and an early study which concluded that comprehensive redevelopment is not possible
The Existing Building (2)	Shows photographs of the interior and exterior of the site and surrounding area
Our Vision	Outlines the design brief and displays concept sketches of the proposal as viewed from Charing Cross Road, Shaftesbury Avenue and New Compton Street.
Design Development	Displays further sketches of the proposal as viewed from Cambridge Circus and Charing Cross Road, and 3D models of the site displaying key new elements of the proposal
Design Proposal	Shows 3D concepts for site superimposed on photos of the site from Charing Cross Road, Old Compton Street and Shaftesbury Avenue, and sketches of the proposed floor layout
Public Realm Improvements / New Pedestrian Route	Shows 3D artists renditions and aerial-view sketches of proposal for new pedestrian route linking New and Old Compton Streets
Selected Floorplates	Outlines aerial-view sketches of floor plans for office and retail space and early proposals for new housing
Contact Us and Next Steps	How to provide feedback; proposed date of submission



Attendees are led through the boards at two separate public consultation event

4.7. Visitors were invited (but not required) to sign in at the exhibition and give their address details so that they could be added to the Applicant's database for future correspondence Over the course of the public exhibition 44 people attended and viewed the plans. Attendees



included local residents, businesses and other interested parties. No political stakeholders attended any of the exhibitions but Ed Jarvis, Principal Urban Designer at London Borough of Camden, did attend.

4.8. A feedback form was designed to encourage comments on the overall scheme, or any particular aspect of the development of which attendees had particular concerns over. A dedicated Freephone number and email address was also set up for people to contact the project team and give their views or ask any questions. Every person who made a written comment at the exhibition and left their contact details received an email or letter thanking them for attending, and detailing the next steps. All those who emailed their feedback with questions received a personalised response specifically addressing the issue they had raised.

4.9. Of the 44 people who attended the exhibition, 17 filled out and returned feedback forms. Most comments received were broadly positive. Of the 17 feedback forms, seven noted full support for the proposals, nine noted support for some aspects of the scheme but raised concerns about others, and one noted a full objection.

Support was noted for:

- The proposed new pedestrian route through the building to re-link Old and New Compton Streets.
- The proposed design and height of the building.
- The proposed retail reactivating street frontages.
- The positive impact of the proposals on existing antisocial behavior.
- The proposed public realm improvements.

Positive comments included:

"I have worked for 50 years in the area. I did not like the original 125 building, as it closed Little Compton Street. It is absolutely great that the new development is to reopen this small road. I also think the new shape and design of the building is complementary to the road front; and particularly like the new height of the building and its new shape. Well done."

"I like the light design, the improved public realm and the linkage of the Old and New Compton streets, the fluid lines of the floors."

"I like, correction, I love all the aspects of Almacantar/DSDHA proposals for 125 Shaftesbury Avenue. The website and the public exhibition are excellent and greatly informative. I would like to bullet point all the changes Almacantar/DSDHA proposal but there are so many and all excellent."

"Very interesting plans for the building. I personally agree with the need for regenerations and I think that if the plans works to ahead it will look much nicer and serve the tenants and local community much better!"

Concerns raised included:

- The height, bulk and mass of the proposals.
- The impact on light to surrounding properties.
- The perceived lack of affordable homes included in the proposals.



- An “unappealing” design.
- The proposed larger windows and external staircase overlooking Trentishoe Mansions.

Comments noting concerns included:

“The plans appear to bring more tidiness and attractiveness to the area. I think offices are the right thing to have more than residential units. The reinstatement of New Compton Street is great. However they will overwhelm Phoenix Gardens. It will no longer be a secret lunchtime retreated sadly. Although this quarter is currently neglected it is pleasant - tidying it up will bring changes and these won't be welcomed by everyone.”

“I like the idea of the cut through to Stacey Street from Charing Cross Road but I am concerned that the additional height is a) cutting out light locally, and b) aesthetically unappealing.”

“The proposals are too big. Not enough residential units on the site. Suggestions that residential contribution will be offered on a site elsewhere (which is unlikely to be in Covent Garden for the need of local residents). Some design arguments are specious and well designed to enable you to get away with massing. The lighter coloured facades are an improvement on the existing brickwork.”

“My principal concerns relate to the proposed large lateral extensions of multiple existing floors and adding an extra floor which will reduce the amount of light in my flat and to the communal hallway/staircase areas of Trentishoe Mansions. The exhibition at the Bloomsbury Hotel lacked any information regarding the reduction in light that will be experienced by Trentishoe Mansions residents. Light is important to me and I would feel more comfortable if the plans do not alter the existing external dimensions of the building.”

5. Development Management Forum, Design South East Review and Developers’ Briefing (Stage 3: April - July 2016)

5.1. The Applicant presented the scheme at a Development Management Forum on 19 April 2016 and a Developers’ Briefing on 27 July 2016. 10 members of the public attended the Development Management Forum, representing a range of local businesses, bodies and residents associations.

5.2. Below are two tables showing those who attended the Development Management Forum and those who attended the Developers’ Briefing. Please note that Council Camden took a full list of attendees for the Development Management Forum but we have not had sight of this.

Development Management Forum

DATE/VENUE	ATTENDEES
<p>Tuesday 19 April 2016 7pm</p> <p>Venue: Dragon Hall Trust, 17 Stukeley Street, London, WC2B 5LT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lisa Gregory, Trentishoe Mansions resident • Jackie Gregory, Trentishoe Mansions resident • David Kaner, Covent Garden Community Association



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elizabeth Bax, Covent Garden Community Association • Robert Smid, Phoenix Street resident • Blair Sparrow, Phoenix Street resident
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Design South East (DSE) Review

DATE/VENUE	ATTENDEES
<p>Thursday 28 April 2016 1.30pm</p> <p>Venue: LCA, 168 – 173 High Holborn, London WC1V 7AA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Studdert (Chair), Architect/Planner/Urban Designer • Steven Bee, Historic Environment/Planner • Richard Portchmouth, Architect • Ian Turkington, Landscape Architect/Urban Designer • Richard Warwick, Architect • Chris Lamb, Design South East • Geoff Noble, Design South East • Edward Jarvis, Principal Urban Designer, Camden Council • David Fowler, Principal Planning Officer, Camden Council • Richard Wilson, Regeneration and Place Manager, Camden Council

5.3. The DSE panel provided feedback on the proposals including:

- Emphasis on the design team to show how the proposed extra volume would enhance, or at least not harm, the conservation area.
- The affordable housing could be problematic to access and live in, especially for families.
- The new through route connecting Old and New Compton Streets was welcomed.
- The architectural treatment of the building up to shoulder height was considered sophisticated and well proportioned with the modelling and rhythm of the bay well handled.

5.4. Following the Development Management Forum and ahead of the Developers' Briefing there were a series of meetings with London Borough of Camden planning officers and, as noted above, the review of the scheme by Design South East. Through this further engagement it was established that, given the small number of homes that could be delivered on site, and the comparatively poor quality of housing that was possible through the re-arrangement of the existing office floor plates, housing on site was not practical.

Developers' Briefing

DATE/VENUE	ATTENDEES
<p>Wednesday 27 July 2016 6.45pm</p> <p>Venue: Camden Town Hall, Judd Street, WC1H 9JE</p>	<p>Development Control Committee Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Heather Johnson • Cllr Phil Jones • Cllr Danny Beales <p>Camden officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Fowler (Planning Officer) • Ed Jarvis (Principal Urban Designer)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Matthey Dempsey (Planning Technician)• Neil McDonald (Team Leader)• Elizabeth Beaumont-Jones (Interim Head of Development Management)
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6. Further stakeholder engagement (Stage 4: July - submission)

Prior to the submission of the planning application, further time was allowed for additional meetings with local stakeholders.

During this period, the Applicant presented the updated scheme proposals to the Covent Garden Community Association (CGCA) Planning Committee on 25 July.

The meeting was chaired by Elizabeth Bax and in addition to members of the CGCA's Planning Committee the meeting was also attended by David Bieda from Seven Dials Trust.

At the time of submission, no feedback from the CGCA had been received.



7. Engagement with London Borough of Camden planning officers and statutory stakeholders (August 2015 – August 2016)

7.1 The table below is a record of the specific consultation with Camden officers and statutory stakeholders:

DATE	ATTENDEES
04 August 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LBC Planning Officers
19 August 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LBC Planning Officers
02 September 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LBC Planning Officers
13 October 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LBC Planning and Design Officers
10 November 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LBC Planning and Design Officers
16 December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LBC Planning and Design Officers
27 May 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LBC Planning and Housing Officers
29 June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LBC Planning and Design Officers
28 July 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LBC Highways Officers
02 August 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LBC Highways Officers

7.2 These meetings have helped to inform the design throughout the consultation process.

8. Summary of feedback and Applicant’s response (please see the Design and Access Statement for more information)

8.1. The table below outlines the issues raised by local stakeholders throughout the consultation process and the Applicant’s response.

FEEDBACK	OUR RESPONSE
1. Concern surrounding the proposed height and bulk. Massing should be reduced and redistributed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Height of building reduced and mass redistributed. Form of upper floors redesigned significantly to better address the geometry of Cambridge Circus.
2. The proposed building appears overly prominent from Seven Dials / Old Compton Street / Cambridge Circus, impacting on townscape views.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The form of the new floors at the top of the building has been developed to address concerns about the perceived bulk and mass of the building in these views. The top office floor of the building has been greatly reduced in size, allowing the plant enclosure to be lowered by one floor. As noted, the form of the building now responds more directly to the geometry of Cambridge Circus. The cantilevered balconies have been omitted and replaced with inset loggias.
3. Whilst a number of people liked the lighter tones, there was some concern that the building is too light, increasing its visual impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Applicant has introduced materials with a warmer tone to the top floors of the building to reflect the tone of neighbouring buildings. Whilst pre-cast stone is still proposed for the lower floors, vertical brass coloured fins, window frames and balustrades have been incorporated in the ‘rooftop’ architecture to help distinguish this element of the building. This material is now also drawn down to the lower floors of the building at either end of the route to identify its presence.
4. There was support for the reopening of the historic route through the building.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposals look to reinstate the old route through the site by creating a new pedestrian route linking Old and New Compton Street.
5. Whilst this was not LBC’s view, there was general consensus among amenity / resident groups that through-route should be gated to help to combat anti-social behaviour, which is already a problem in the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gates have been added at each end of the proposed new pedestrian through-route. The Applicant anticipates that these gates would be shut overnight at times agreed with LBC.
6. The planting on the terraces was supported. The design team was asked if it could complement the existing greenery in Phoenix Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The terraces will be generously planted to provide outdoor space for tenants and a pleasant visual aspect at street level. The Applicant has agreed to work closely with Phoenix Gardens on the choice of planting.
7. Concern was raised about the impact of the proposals on daylight and sunlight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A daylight and sunlight assessment is being prepared by GIA and will be shared with residents and the Council.
8. The general need for affordable housing was raised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have explored the potential to integrate residential into the development. Due to various restrictions as discussed with Camden Officers, including resulting amenity of the residential units and possible impact of the proposed office floorspace as well as viability, it is



	<p>not considered to be possible to provide housing on this site. The team is still working to find an off-site solution, however, if one is not found, the Applicant will make a payment in lieu.</p>
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8. Website, email and Freephone

- 8.1 A consultation website, www.125sa.co.uk, was set up to provide the local communities and interested parties with a further opportunity to view details of the Proposed Development and to provide further feedback throughout the consultation process. All the boards shown at the public exhibition were made available to view on the website.
- 8.2 The website includes the dedicated 125 Shaftesbury Avenue email address and telephone numbers, allowing members of the public to contact the development team should they have any questions or comments on the proposals. Visitors were also able to leave their contact details should they wish to be contacted with further information.
- 8.3 The website address and designated community consultation Freephone and email addresses were set up and advertised on the following materials:
- The flyer advertising the public exhibition, distributed to the 2,540 addresses within the vicinity of the proposed site.
 - Adverts for the public exhibition in the Camden New Journal and West End Extra.
 - Comments cards supplied at the public exhibition.
 - The exhibition boards on display during the public exhibition.
- 8.4 The designated community consultation email address and phone number went live in April 2014 before the launch of the public exhibition. There have, as yet, been four emails received, which have been responded to as appropriate, and no responses via Freephone. The Applicant will continue to respond to feedback via both mediums in the run up to the planning application submission.



9. Conclusion

- 9.1 The Proposed Development by Almacantar Shaftesbury S.a.r.l. (henceforth known as the Applicant) is for the remodeling, refurbishment and extension of existing office and retail building (Class B1/A1/A3/Sui Generis), including terraces, a new public route, a relocated office entrance (Charing Cross Road), rooftop plant and flexible retail uses (Classes A1/A3), along with associated highway, landscaping and public realm improvements.
- 9.2 The development would feature more efficient and high quality office space, a more attractive retail offer at ground level, and an attractive new front door, all whilst retaining the core structure of the building.
- 9.3 The proposals include a new pedestrian route through the building to re-link Old and New Compton Streets. This medieval through way had existed until 1982 when the current building was constructed, and will be of significant benefit.
- 9.4 The Proposed Development also includes improvements to the public realm along Stacey Street adjacent to Phoenix Gardens and on Charing Cross Road, helping to deliver the objectives of the West End Project.
- 9.5 The consultation process for the Proposed Development of 125 Shaftesbury Avenue has lasted for more than a year and has provided local community groups, local residents and stakeholders and politicians with the opportunity to comment on and input into the development proposals at every opportunity as they have evolved.
- 9.6 The Applicant has engaged positively and regularly with local community groups and local politicians through letters, emails, presentations, meetings and a public exhibition. The Applicant has ensured that all requests for meetings and briefings have been adequately accommodated.
- 9.7 The consultation process has included a well-publicised public exhibition, attended by 44 people, as well as a series of meetings and presentations to key stakeholders.
- 9.8 The Applicant has taken on board comments from local residents, politicians and stakeholders and has formed the proposals to best reflect the character and concerns of the local area.
- 9.9 Amendments to the scheme which have been made following the public consultation and subsequent feedback received comprise:
- Height of building reduced and mass redistributed. Form of upper floors redesigned significantly to better address the geometry of Cambridge Circus.
 - The form of the new floors at the top of the building has been developed to address concerns about the perceived bulk and mass of the building in these views. The top office floor of the building has been greatly reduced in size, allowing the plant enclosure to be lowered by one floor. As noted, the form of the building now responds more directly to the geometry of Cambridge Circus. The cantilevered balconies have been omitted and replaced with inset loggias.
 - The Applicant has introduced materials with a warmer tone to the top floors of the building to reflect the tone of neighbouring buildings. Whilst pre-cast stone is still proposed for the lower floors, vertical brass coloured fins, window frames and balustrades have been incorporated in the 'rooftop' architecture to help distinguish this element of the building. This material is now also drawn down to the lower floors of the building at either end of the route to identify its presence.
 - The proposals look to reinstate the route through the site by creating a new pedestrian route linking Old and New Compton Street.



- Gates have been added at each end of the proposed new pedestrian through-route. The Applicant anticipates that these gates would be shut overnight at times agreed with LBC.
- The terraces will be generously planted to provide outdoor space for tenants and a pleasant visual aspect at street level. The Applicant has agreed to work closely with Phoenix Gardens on the choice of planting.

9.10 Stakeholder consultation is ongoing and the Applicant will continue to ensure the local communities and key stakeholders are kept informed up to, during and following the submission of the planning application.



10. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Exhibition flyer



Invitation to a public exhibition

of proposals for 125 Shaftesbury Avenue

Almacantar is holding a public exhibition to present our emerging proposals for the refurbishment and extension of the building to improve the office and shopping environment and surrounding public realm.

We would like to hear your feedback on our proposals and members of the development team will be on hand at the exhibition to answer any questions.

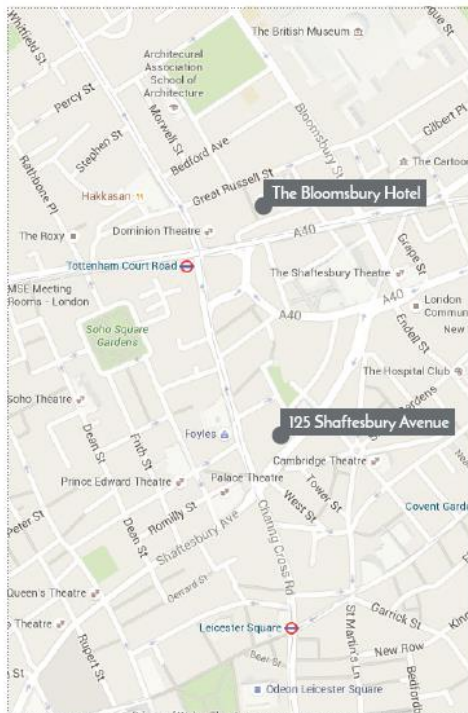
The plans will be on display:

- Monday 21 March: 4pm – 7.30pm
- Tuesday 22 March: 4pm – 7.30pm
- Thursday 31 March: 4pm – 7.30pm
- Friday 1 April: 10am – 2pm
- Saturday 2 April: 10am – 2pm

Please feel free to drop in at any time at:

The Bloomsbury Hotel, 16-22 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3NN

almacantar



For further information please:

Email : 125sa@londoncommunications.co.uk
Call : 0800 307 7565

Visit www.125sa.co.uk, where the proposals will also be available to view from Monday 21 March



almacantar



Appendix 2 – colour advert



Invitation to a public exhibition

of proposals for 125 Shaftesbury Avenue

Almacantar is holding a public exhibition to present our emerging proposals for the sensitive refurbishment and possible extension of the building to improve the office and shopping environment and surrounding public realm.

We would like to hear your feedback on our proposals and members of the development team will be on hand at the exhibition to answer any questions.

The plans will be on display:

- Monday 21 March: 4pm – 8pm
- Tuesday 22 March: 4pm – 8pm
- Thursday 31 March: 4pm – 8pm
- Friday 1 April: 10am – 2pm
- Saturday 2 April: 10am – 2pm

Please feel free to drop in at any time at:

St Giles in the Field, 60 St Giles High St, London WC2H 8LG – leave blank until venue secured

For further information please:

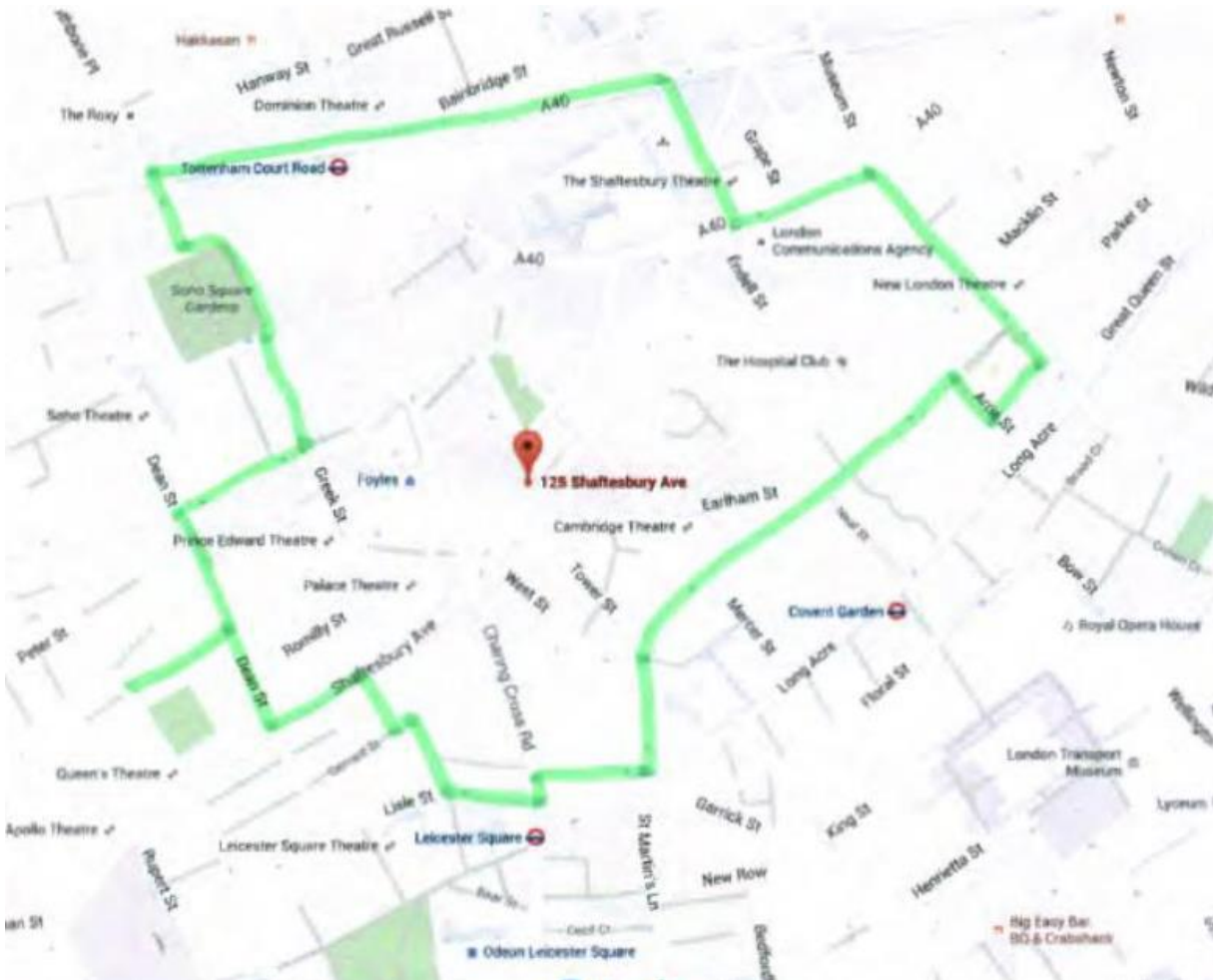
Email: 125sa@londoncommunications.co.uk
Call: [insert Freephone when secured]

Visit www.125sa.com.uk, where the proposals will also be available to view from Monday 21 March





Appendix 3 – Flyer distribution area





Appendix 4 – Website with exhibition details and link to exhibition boards

125sa.co.uk

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16-22 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3NN

For further information please:
Email: 125sa@londoncommunications.co.uk
Call: 0800 307 7565

The proposals being shown at the exhibition can be viewed [here](#)



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Appendix 6 – Exhibition boards

Welcome and Introduction

The Proposed Refurbishment of 125 Shaftesbury Avenue



Aerial view of 125 Shaftesbury Avenue in the center of the surrounding area

The refurbishment of 125 Shaftesbury Avenue March/April 2016

Welcome and thank you for coming to this public exhibition which shows our emerging proposals for 125 Shaftesbury Avenue.

Architect DSDHA has prepared designs for the refurbishment and extension of the building to improve the office and shopping environment and surrounding public realm.

This exhibition is your opportunity to:

- Find out more about the emerging proposals for the site
- Meet the project team and ask them any questions
- Tell us what you think about our ideas as we shape the scheme prior to submitting a planning application to Camden Council.

Almacantar

Almacantar is a property investment and development group which specialises in complex developments in central London.

DSDHA

DSDHA has an extensive working knowledge of London having designed proposals in different areas, including Somers Town Masterplan, Charlotte Street, and Southwark House. The practice is also working with Camden Council on the West End Project to transform the public realm in the Tottenham Court Road area.

Examples of recent DSDHA projects in Camden



The West End Project



Somers Town Masterplan



Charlotte Street



Southwark House

almacantar DSDHA

125 Shaftesbury Avenue Public Exhibition



Site History

Historical emergence of St Giles Quadrant

125 Shaftesbury Avenue sits at the southern tip of a historic quadrant in the West End that has included a church of St Giles at its centre since the 12th Century. The western and eastern parts of the quadrant are currently anchored by Centre Point and Central St Giles.

The quadrant of St Giles has a vivid and dramatic history; historical maps and archive material tells us that a hospital for lepers was founded here in the 12th century by Queen Matilda.

Currently there is a lack of identity and urban legibility for the St Giles quadrant with 92%* of people interviewed on the site not knowing they were in St Giles.

The ambition of the proposal is to help reaffirm the historic identity of the forgotten quarter of St Giles, and to promote stronger connections to St Giles-in-the-Field church as the key landmark of this emerging quarter.



Old Leper Hospital 1570



1704



1650



1600



Present

History of connection between Old and New Compton Streets

Until the development of 125 Shaftesbury Avenue in the early 1980s, Old Compton and New Compton Street was connected via Little Compton Street (as shown on the adjacent historic maps).

Extensive bomb damage during World War II led to the demolition of many of the Georgian houses and businesses on New Compton Street, leading to extensive redevelopment. The site of 125 Shaftesbury Avenue remained largely clear (it was used as car park) until the development of the current building in the early 1980s.

When the building was first developed, it featured a shopping arcade at ground floor level providing pedestrian access through the building. This was later closed due to the poor performance of the retail units within the arcade.

The proposal aims to reinstate this historic route (shown on the historic maps opposite) to increase permeability, to enhance the public realm surrounding the buildings and to improve access to St Giles-in-the-Field Church.



1710



1600-1645



1704



1600



1800



1800

*Interviews of 100 passers-by of those in the area.



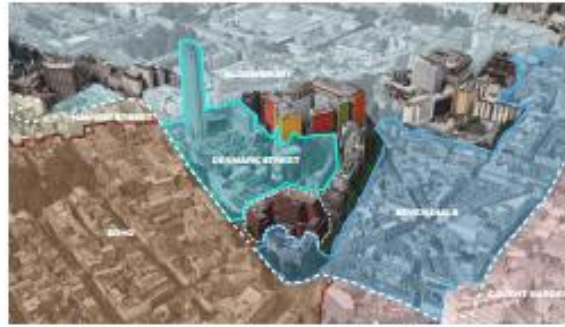
Site Context

Local Infrastructure



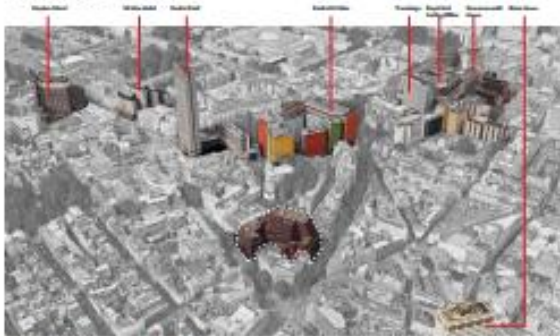
Aerial view showing key local transport hubs and the boundary between Camden and Westminster

Conservation Areas



The site is in the central of local Conservation Areas

Local Large Buildings



Proximity of other prominent local buildings

Listed Buildings



Listed buildings in the surrounding area

Existing Streetscape Analysis



Charing Cross Road (East)



Shaftesbury Avenue (West)

Please note drawings are illustrative not accurate visual representations

Located between Phoenix Street, Stacey Street, Shaftesbury Avenue and Charing Cross Road, 125 Shaftesbury Avenue currently provides approximately 24,000 square meters of office and shopping space across basement, ground floor and nine upper levels.

The building was completed in 1982. Now more than thirty years later, it no longer provides the high quality modern office environments or retail spaces that fit its location in the heart of the West End.

The site is not in a Conservation Area but sits between the Denmark Street, Soho and Seven Dials Conservation Areas.

In addition to the Phoenix Theatre and Phoenix Artist Club, the site is located close to residential buildings including Trentishoe Mansions and Phoenix House on Charing Cross Road / Phoenix Street, Pendrell House and the Alcazar on Stacey Street, and the residential buildings along New Compton Street.

Whilst situated in the London Borough of Camden, the site adjacent to the City of Westminster border.

Here we show the site within the context of these local Conservation Areas, key transport hubs, and nearby prominent buildings.

This local context has informed the evolution of the design proposals.



The Existing Building



Existing view from Cambridge Circus



Existing view looking east on Old Compton Street

Challenges with the existing building include:

- Negative contribution to the urban character of the area
- Inactive frontages to neighbouring streets, in particular Phoenix Street
- A poor relationship to surrounding public realm including Caston Walk and Phoenix Gardens
- Confusing urban legibility in the context of surrounding buildings
- Inefficient and narrow floorplates and poor environmental performance which no longer meet the standards required of modern offices
- A deteriorating façade in need of remedial work
- An inability to address the needs of an area that will see increased activity and demand in coming years, particularly with the introduction of Crossrail in 2018
- Generating employment use

Despite all of these challenges, and the fact that the declining state of the building means that a 'do nothing' scenario is not an option, early studies show that a comprehensive redevelopment is not possible, as this would require a very substantial increase in height.



View looking north on Charing Cross Road



Existing view looking east on Shaftesbury Avenue

almacantar DSDHA

125 Shaftesbury Avenue Public Exhibition



The Existing Building



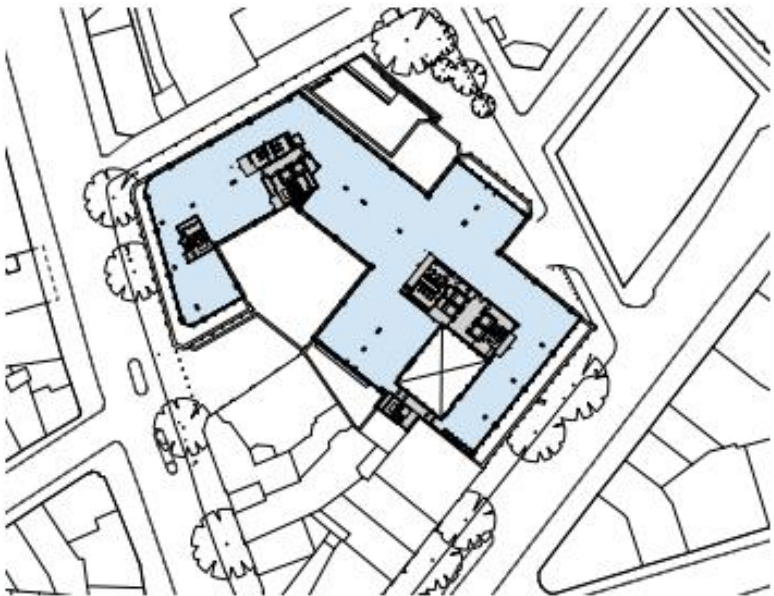
Existing View from New Compton Street



Existing View from Old Compton Street



Existing View from Charing Cross looking South



Existing Typical Floor Plan



Views of current office interiors



View of existing public realm on Liberty Street



View of existing public realm on Collier Walk

Views of condition of existing signage

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125 Shaftesbury Avenue Public Exhibition



Our Vision

The emerging proposals for 125 Shaftesbury Avenue have been informed by analysis of the challenges of the existing building and how these can be addressed within the new proposals. The brief is to:

- Transform an outdated 1980's office block into a building which responds into its surroundings in a more appropriate manner.
- Create more efficient and high quality office space, including an attractive new front door, whilst retaining the core structure of the building.
- Reinstale the historic route of Little Compton Street to deliver a friendly pedestrian route through the building, rinking New and Old Compton streets.

- Improve the public realm and accessibility at street level, particularly in relation to Phoenix Gardens and on Charing Cross Road, benefiting close residents and visitors to the area, and in line with the objectives of the West End Project.
- Deliver a more attractive retail offer at ground level to create more active street frontages.
- Help to tackle existing anti-social behaviour, particularly on Carlton Walk and Phoenix Street, through better natural surveillance and public realm improvements.

We are exploring the potential for up to six new affordable homes for Camden residents. The emerging proposals envisage an increase in height of the equivalent of two storeys.



Existing and Proposed views looking south on Charing Cross Road



Existing and Proposed views looking west on Shaftesbury Avenue



Existing and Proposed views looking west on New Compton Street
Please note drawings are illustrative not accurate visual representations



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125 Shaftesbury Avenue Public Exhibition



Design Development

The designs have been informed by analysis of the challenges of the existing building and how these can be addressed within the new proposals.



Existing and Proposed street frontage on Cambridge Green



- 1. Create a new 'active' street frontage with a mix of uses.
- 2. The building facade will be a mix of brick and stone.
- 3. Create a new 'active' street frontage with a mix of uses.
- 4. Create a new 'active' street frontage with a mix of uses.
- 5. Create a new 'active' street frontage with a mix of uses.
- 6. Create a new 'active' street frontage with a mix of uses.



Existing and Proposed street frontage on Colton Walk

- 1. The building facade will be a mix of brick and stone.
- 2. The building facade will be a mix of brick and stone.
- 3. The building facade will be a mix of brick and stone.
- 4. The building facade will be a mix of brick and stone.
- 5. The building facade will be a mix of brick and stone.
- 6. The building facade will be a mix of brick and stone.



Design Concepts

The proposal is to create a highly sustainable, convivial and environmentally responsive refurbished building, with high quality office space, active street frontages, improved public realm, increased greening, external amenity spaces, and exemplary energy performance.



Biophilic Design - Access to Amenity for All Tenants



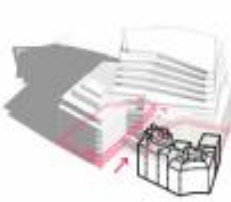
Sustainable, Low-Energy & Responsive



Floorplate benefit from Natural Ventilation & Daylight



More Active Frontage - Creating positive overlooking



Pedestrian Little Compton Street through the creation of a New Pedestrian Route



An existing building re-imagined - with new elements added to retrofit it sustainably adding length its life and avoiding demolition

These new drawings are illustrative not accurate visual representations
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125 Shaftesbury Avenue Public Exhibition



Design Proposal



Proposed view from Cambridge Circus



Proposed view looking east on Old Compton Street



Proposed section through Cobden Walk and proposed pedestrian route



Proposed ground floor plan

Please note drawings are illustration not accurate visual representations

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Proposed view looking north on Charing Cross Road



Proposed view looking north on Shaftesbury Avenue

125 Shaftesbury Avenue Public Exhibition



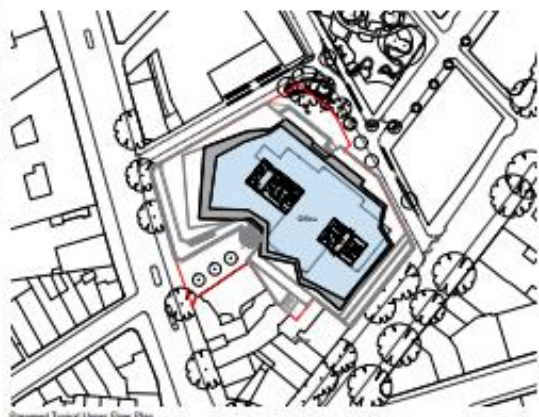
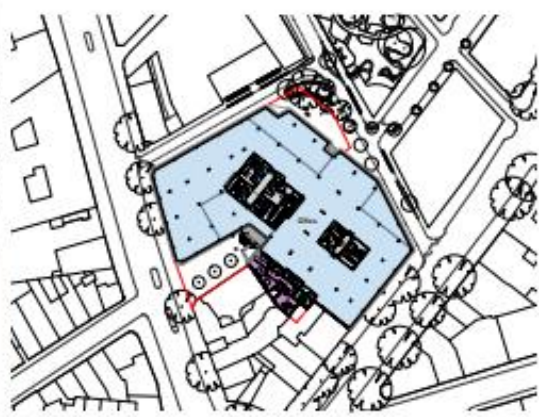
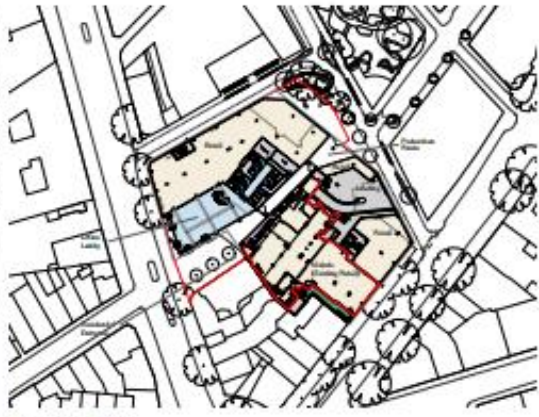
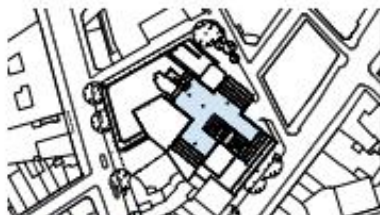
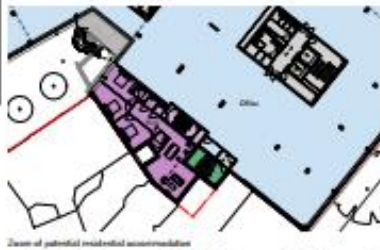
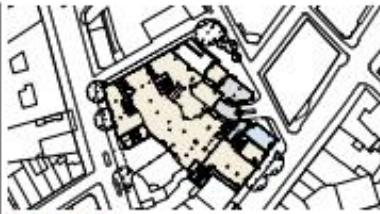
Selected Floorplates

The diagrams below show the opportunity to create high quality environments for the new retail and office accommodation. They also show how new homes could be integrated within the scheme.

Potential for new homes

We are exploring with Camden Council the potential to deliver new affordable homes within the development. However, serious constraints exist around accessibility, the availability of natural light and the outlook for the residents of the new flats. These constraints restrict the number of new homes that can be included within the scheme, and there is the potential that they may make office and retail-only development more suitable for the site.

Should we deliver new affordable homes on site, we recognise that the six homes proposed would make up only part of the required provision under the borough's policy. In which case, the remainder of the policy requirement would be made up of an off-site and/or financial contribution to affordable homes elsewhere in the borough.



Please note drawings are illustrative not accurate visual representations

almacantar DSDHA

125 Shaftesbury Avenue Public Exhibition



Contact Us and Next Steps



Existing



Proposed

We hope you have found this public exhibition of our emerging thinking interesting and informative.

We would like to know your thoughts on the proposals, which are also available online at: www.125sa.co.uk, so please do fill out one of the comments cards provided.

You can also give us your feedback by emailing 125sa@londoncommunications.co.uk

We will now be working up the proposals in more detail and holding further meetings with residents and local groups before submitting a planning application to Camden Council.



N.B. Drawings are illustration not accurate visual representations

Managing disruption during construction

We understand the sensitivity around building works. A construction management plan will be submitted with the planning application. This will detail how works will be managed to minimise disruption – including working hours and transport access to maintain vehicle flows and ensure pedestrians and cyclists are able to get around easily.

The project team will consult with Camden Council's Environmental Health and Highways representatives as the construction management plan is developed. Meetings with local groups will also be arranged to keep the local community informed.

These site drawings are illustration not accurate visual representations

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125 Shaftesbury Avenue Public Exhibition