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Re: 27-29 Whitfield Street, London – 2016/6495 P

“Change of use of basement, ground and first floor to flexible uses (Class use A1/ B1/ D1), second floor to B1 office, and new single-storey roof extension to create additional B1 office space, rooftop plant enclosure, facade alterations including new front entrance, replacement windows, and infill of light-well at basement level.”

Dear Ms Skelli-Yaoz,

I write to object to the above planning application.

Roof Extension – Incongruous and Out of Place



Photo 1

The proposed roof extension is incongruous and completely out of place. 27/29 Whitfield forms an important end to Colville Place and any extension on top of the building would detract both from

the Conservation Area street and block context and from the neighbouring listed building at 1 Colville Place. The above **Photo 1** evidences this objection. Both the southern and eastern elevations of 27/29 Whitfield clearly belong to the Colville Place block, whilst Nos 19 Goodge Street belongs to the Goodge Street block and context. This “architectural street ownership” is further evidenced as you look north from 27/29 Whitfield, at 18-20 Goodge Street and its relationship to the higher buildings to its north along Whitfield Street – again this can be seen in **Photo 1** above. This “street and block ownership” is fundamental to good urban design and to understanding cityscapes and opportunities for development and change.



Photo 2



Photo 3

Photos 2 and 3 further shows the relationship and “ownership” of 27/29 Whitfield to heights, and block shape to Colville Place.

There is another critical “urban design characteristic” that supports no further height extensions to 27/29 Whitfield. Looking south, see **Photo 3** illustrates the importance of the “tree gap” at the corner of Whitfield/Colville Conservation Area. Here the semi ground and 3 floor 27/29 Whitfield building allows strong views of the tree gap before buildings to the south of the tree gap, step up to a fourth storey as Whitfield meets Windmill Street. This relationship of building to street space and height is what really defines the Conservation Area and make good street design.

There is a clear break between the height and block shape that belongs to Goodge Street south side – i.e. 19 Goodge Street, and the Colville Place ownership – 27/29 Whitfield. It is in urban design, planning and architectural terms very easy to see this distinction. No further extension, including terraces should be allowed in order to respect the Conservation Area character and the cherished architectural merits of 1 Colville Place.

Colville Place Elevation

The proposed changes to the fenestration and Colville Place frontage of 27/29 Whitfield would detract from the adjacent subtle Listed Building at 1 Colville Place. The Colville Place block needs a calm ending to support the street's character and listed building. The proposal "inappropriately opens up and proclaims" this bookend building and wrongly, in design terms, draws attention away from the strong and simple corner street form and listed building context.

Proposed Terraces

The proposal to create full height opening doors and terraces to the rear of the eastern ends of Colville Place and Goodge Street is completely unacceptable on the grounds of loss of residential amenity and privacy and an increase in potential crime. The proximity of the proposed door openings and rear terraces would significantly impact on residential privacy and amenity. It would also be contrary to "secure by design" principles. The applicant's argument that it is needed for maintenance is spurious – they are designed for amenity. There is no need for such amenity since the building sits next to a public park.

I would be most grateful if this comments letter could be acknowledged, and if I could be told when a decision will be made – and if I could be told of the result. Many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

Marc Dorfman

Town Planner

Marc Dorfman Consulting Ltd

(Ex- chief planner Ealing, Redbridge and Haringey – currently the Chief Planner of Worcester City)