

Dear Sirs,

2019/0910/P

Kentish Town Neighbourhood Forum (KTNF) have carefully studied the planning Application for the Car Wash site, paying particular attention to the Design and Access Statement. Over the course of the last eighteen months, the developer and his design team have asked KTNF to meet them to seek advice on how best to respond to local concerns and ambitions for the redevelopment of this important site. At our first meeting with them KTNF explained the process we had undertaken over five years working with the local community writing the Kentish Town Neighbourhood Plan and talked them through the ambitions KTNF had set out for the redevelopment of the Regis Road and Murphy sites, and the ultimate creation of a new Kentish Town square. We pointed out that the adopted plan made specific reference to the need to eliminate the eyesore of the existing car wash site and the importance KTNF attach to its redevelopment. We note that the application scheme reflects the important intentions set out in the Neighbourhood Plan; specifically, the access onto the Murphy site, the prominent design of the building, and its response as a marker for the future Kentish Town square, and the provision of a wider pavement to accommodate those queuing for buses on Highgate Road,

Over a series of half a dozen meetings KTNF were encouraged by the way in which the development team grew to understand the intentions presented in the Neighbourhood Plan, and their enthusiasm to fulfil our ambitions. Due to the importance KTNF have always attached to the redevelopment of the site we approached Camden Council to seek relaxation of their initial intention to refuse determination of any application on this site until the Framework Plan for the Regis Road and Murphy sites are complete. KTNF expressed concern that should the car wash site development be restricted it may not reach fruition for over a decade. We were very pleased when Camden Council relaxed their initial restriction.

KTNF have read with great interest the summary of the report of Camden's Design Review Panel (DRP) held in January 2019, which is contained in 5.1 of the Design and Access Statement and which reflects our thoughts and feelings about the Car Wash site. The summary states that the DRP is supportive of the design approach, care and detailing; of the high-quality design and materiality; and, with a qualification, of the building's height. KTNF will explain their understanding of this qualification and how it was addressed. As the drawings accompanying this application appear not to incorporate the comments made by the DRP about the height of the building at its northernmost end, KTNF sought an explanation from the developer. We have been told that the developer's design team responded to the DRP's comments by reducing the height including the lift core; creating set back corners at the northern end; redesigning the arrangement of the fins at the northern flank; and introducing a small window into the lift core. These changes were subsequently seen by Camden planners as a reasonable response to the comments of the DRP.

In consultation with KTNF committee members there have inevitably been individual aesthetic views about the details of the design of the façades, individual comments on height and massing, design treatment of the top two floors, and the relationship to the adjoining terrace. However, these comments are those of individuals and do not represent a collective view that warrants a comprehensive objection.

KTNF is very concerned to see this application succeed. We recognise that the development of the small triangular site next to a deep and busy railway cutting is particularly challenging to make financially viable, and from the the extensive documentation supporting this application and the amount of time KTNF have spent with the development team, we know how seriously they have

worked to produce an excellent solution despite so many difficult limitations. We would not wish to see this application fall at the current time when it is probable that any refusal would result not only in the loss of this particular proposal but also an extremely long delay before any alternative solution for the site emerges. KTNF supports this application.

22 March 2019

KTNF