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London Borough of Camden
5 Pancras Square
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FAO Gavin Sexton

9 November 2020

Our ref: J10381/LJW/ANE/KHU

Your ref: 2020/3880/P

Dear Sir,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Acorn House, London
Amendments to Application Ref: 2020/3880/P

We write on behalf of Precis Advisory and Access Self Storage Limited to submit amendments to planning application reference 2020/3880/P at Acorn House. These amendments respond to feedback received during the consultation period.

The planning application was submitted and registered on 1st September 2020 and the statutory consultation period expired on the 16th October 2020. The application seeks planning permission for:

‘Redevelopment of Acorn House as a part 6, part 10 storey mixed-use storey with 33 affordable homes (with external playspace at level 6, a community room and terrace at level 9), affordable office space and retail unit at ground and basement level; together with cycle parking facilities and associated ancillary uses.’

Background and Consultation

Following the end of the consultation period we have now received most statutory consultation responses expected inclusive of the GLA (Greater London Authority) Stage 1 report, in addition to a limited number of public consultation responses. The applicant and the design team have undertaken a number of design workshops with officers in respect of revisions to the proposals that have arisen in response to further design workshops held with officers, and as a result of design development of the proposals.

The Proposals

The series of refinements to the design are outlined below:

1. Rooftop Pavilion

The top floor of the building contains a community room and communal roof terrace, as well as space for plant and equipment. The footprint is smaller than the floors below and has been reconfigured to accentuate the contrast with the floors below, enhancing its position as a 'special' floor. In particular, this has the effect of minimising its impact from Swinton Street and when viewed from points to the east in particular. The form of the windows has been simplified and the corners of the pavilion are now rounded to soften the building when viewed against the sky.

2. Children's Playspace

The children's play space is located at Level 6 on the Swinton Street side of the building. It is protected by a full height screen, open to the sky. Previously this screen was expressed as a separate element, with its own treatment. The material of the screen has now been changed to match the adjacent patterned metal panels used to articulate the residential floors in between the two-storey brickwork blocks. This serves to better incorporate the play space into the overall architecture of the building. The impact of this change can be best seen in the Swinton Street views.

3. East Elevation Balcony Position

At the south party wall of the building, adjoining the existing office building directly to the south, is located a run of projecting balconies. The position of the balconies has been moved a small distance to the north, away from the boundary. This change has been made in recognition of the possibility that the adjoining building may be redeveloped and the future boundary condition is unknown.

4. Expression of Core on East Elevation

Where the building steps down on Swinton Street, windows to the circulation corridor are revealed on the upper part of the east elevation. Previously, these windows were separated by the same patterned metal panels used to express the residential units. This has been changed to brickwork to better identify this element as circulation rather than residential accommodation. This change also has the benefit of helping to visually differentiate the rooftop pavilion as described above.

5. Entrance to Retail Unit at Ground Floor

The entrance to the retail unit is located on the corner of Swinton Street and Gray's Inn Road. Previously the entrance was recessed to create a small sheltered area beneath the residential accommodation above. This configuration has now been simplified to provide an entrance screen at a 45-degree angle in order to aid pedestrian flow around this corner.

A drawing schedule has been included within the submission which details the originally submitted [and now superseded] drawing references and the proposed drawing references.

In heritage terms, in respect of the design considered in its own right and the relationship between the Proposed Development and its surroundings, the effect will be positive. The Proposed Development will enhance the quality of the townscape of the area. In respect of design and built heritage considerations, the Proposed Development is in line with the policies and guidance set out in national, regional and local documents.

Documentation:

The formal submission of the design revisions set out above comprises:

- This Covering Letter, prepared by Gerald Eve;
- Superseded plans and drawings, prepared by AHMM; and
- Addendum to the Townscape, Heritage and Visual Impact Assessment (inclusive of updated views); prepared by Peter Stewart Consultancy and Miller Hare

I'd be grateful if you could include this submission in the suite of application documentation available on the public domain and would supersede the original plans and drawings submitted with the application as set out above. Please do not hesitate to contact Katie Hughes of this office (020 3486 3494) should you have any queries.

Yours faithfully,

Gerald Eve LLP

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