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Planning and Regeneration
London Borough of Camden
2nd Floor
5 Pancras Square
London
N1C 4AG

27th August 2021

VIA E-MAIL

Dear Sir / Madam,

5 St Cross Street, Johnson Gardens, London

APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION FOR AN AMENITY ROOF TERRACE

We write on behalf of our client, Johnson Hatton Office Unit Trust / Arax Properties ('the Applicant') to formally submit an application for full planning permission for an amenity roof terrace at 5 St Cross Street, London EC1N 8UB ('the Site').

The application seeks planning permission for the following development:

"Amenity roof terrace at fourth floor level".

In support of this application, we provide the following documentation:

- This Planning Covering Letter prepared by Iceni Projects
- Application forms, prepared by Iceni Projects via the Planning Portal
- Existing and Proposed Drawings, prepared by JRA
- Site Location Plan, prepared by JRA
- Design and Access Statement, prepared by JRA

a. Rationale

This planning application is being sought to improve the amenity space provided at 5 St Cross Street. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a shift in working patterns that has seen many businesses vacate commercial office spaces within central locations. Consequently, the Applicant is seeking to attract workers back to the office with high quality amenity facilities.

This proposal will be one of a number of interventions the Applicant will be pursuing over the next 12 month. This proposal has been submitted following pre-application discussion with Camden Council in June / July 2021.

b. The Site / Background

5 St Cross Street, also known as Langdales, comprises five floors from lower ground to third floor. The Site is within Johnson Gardens which lies to the west side of Hatton Gardens. Access to the Site is gained from St Cross Street.

The Site is located within the London Borough of Camden and does not contain any statutory listed buildings, it is located within the Hatton Cross Conservation Area.

In terms of planning designations, the site is located within the Hatton Garden Area which has been designated due to its special character and renowned jewellery manufacturing and trading. The frontage along Hatton Gardens is designated as a protect frontage (secondary).

The Site benefits from a public transport accessibility level (PTAL) of 6B, indicating excellent access to public transport. Numerous bus routes operate from Farringdon Road and Clerkenwell Road, and Farringdon Overground and Underground Station is located within close proximity of the Site.

c. Relevant Planning History

A review of the Council's online planning register has not identified any relevant planning history for the Site.

d. The Proposed Development

The proposed development seeks full planning permission to use the existing level 4 roof terrace as an amenity space. A new decking would be provided with a metal balustrade along the St Cross Street frontage. Access would be provided through a new door from the Johnson Building.

The proposed amenity terrace would provide 98m² of high quality amenity space. Plant and seating would be provided, enhancing the facilities for the occupiers of the Johnson Building.

e. Planning Policy Considerations

Although the Government's NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) are important material considerations to be taken into account in determining planning applications, the planning Acts confirm that the 'Statutory Development Plan' should be the starting point for such decisions. In this respect, Section 38(6) of the 'Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004' (the Act) states:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

The Development Plan for the London Borough of Camden consists of:

- The London Plan (2021)
- Camden Local Plan (2017)

Camden Council also have a number of supplementary planning documents / guidance (SPDs/ SPGs) which form material considerations for this application.

An assessment of the relevant planning considerations for the development are provided below:

Principle of Development

Policy E1 'Offices' of the London Plan (2021) supports improvements to the quality, flexibility and adaptability of office space of different sizes (for micro, small, medium-sized and larger enterprises).

At local level, Camden Local Plan (2017) Policy E2 'Employment premises and sites' seeks to protect existing premises and encourages the provision of employment premises and sites in the borough.

The Site is situated within a location where office use is directed. The proposal seeks to enhance the existing facilities by providing outdoor amenity facilities at the Site. The provision of a roof terrace is considered appropriate in this central location, which is predominantly in commercial use. There would be no harm to residential amenity, and the terrace would provide high quality, private outdoor amenity space, improving the accommodation available to the occupiers.

Design and Heritage

Good design is a central objective of the London Plan (2021), Policy D1 'Design' outlines that new development should deliver high quality design in developments.

The proposed development seeks to provide an amenity roof terrace comprising 98m², utilising the existing roof space.

The proposed balustrade would be set back from the parapet line to reduce the visual impact on the street scene and the Hatton Garden Conservation Area. As per the existing balustrade, the proposed balustrade will be black, and as shown in the submitted street views the dark design results in the balustrade being barely visible when viewing the building from the east as it blends in with adjacent buildings dark brickwork.

Overall, the extension to the roof terrace would enhance the outdoor amenity provision of the building, improving the facilities for the building occupiers. The terrace has been designed to minimise the impact on the conservation area, by setting back the balustrade and providing landscaping, and although there would be a visual change to the street scene, the improvements to the amenity facilities at the Site are considered to outweigh the visual impact of the proposals.

Amenity

Camden Local Plan (2017) Policy A1 'Managing the impact of development' seeks to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by granting permission for development that do not cause unacceptable harm to amenity. This includes protecting visual privacy and outlook.

The roof terrace will front onto St Cross Street and the design of the terrace has considered the relationship with the neighbouring properties, specifically that of the properties on the opposite side of St Cross Street at 25 St Cross Street and 22 – 23 St Cross Street. The separation distance of 12m will be maintained and the balustrade has been stepped back to increase this separation distance. The terrace would also include landscaping to provide screening and soften the visual appearance of the terrace.

Overall, the proposal would not cause an amenity harm on the adjacent buildings.

f. Conclusion

The proposal for an amenity roof terrace would enhance the outdoor amenity facilities for occupiers, creating a high-quality working environment.

Although there would be a small visual impact upon the Hatton Garden Conservation Area, measures have been taken to reduce this and to protect neighbouring amenity, and the overall benefits to the Site are considered to outweigh any harm to the street scene.

We trust the enclosed is sufficient for your current purposes and we look forward to receiving confirmation that the application has been registered and validated. In the meantime, please contact Lewis Westhoff (lwesthoff@iceniprojects.com 07557 678 587) or Tasha Bullen (tbullen@iceniprojects.com 07881 490 480).

Yours faithfully,

ICeni Projects Ltd.

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