

# SQUIRE & PARTNERS

# **13 Fitzroy Street**

# Minor Material Amendment

For DWS

May 2022

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### 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose of this document

- 1.1.1 This brochure explains the minor material amendments to planning permission granted on 10th July 2020 (Application ref: 2019/2198/P as amended by NMA ref. 2021/0056/P)
- 1.1.2 Sections 4.0 to 10.0 explain the proposed amendments to the planning permission, with an area summary in section 11.
- 1.1.3 The certified views have been updated and submitted as part of the MMA application (refer to Appendix 11.2). As we are unable to define the type of plant species that will be provided on the roof terraces at the time of updating the certified view, the images only show the balustrades and the planters without any plants at the perimeter of the roof terraces.

### 1.2 Pre-application advice

- 1.2.1 A pre-application brochure was submitted to London Borough of Camden (LBC) to explain the proposed amendments to the planning permission granted on 10th July 2020 (Application ref: 2019/2198/P as amended by NMA ref. 2021/0056/P).
- 1.2.2 A pre-application meeting was held on 3rd February 2022 and a pre-application response letter from LBC ref: 2021/5867/PRE was received on 14th March 2022.
- 1.2.3 The pre-application response was supportive of the proposed changes and LBC requested further details on the proposed amendments to cycle parking provision and the size, form, design and scale of the roof plant enclosures. Both items are addressed in this report. LBC confirmed that both the internal changes and the change of colour to the external ductwork and the 'bug' do not require planning permission.
- 1.2.4 The LBC pre-application response letter is included in Appendix 11.3.

# 2.0 Site Analysis

### 2.1 Site Location

- 2.1.1 The site sits at the heart of central London district known as Fitzrovia. Fitzrovia itself lies partly within the London Borough of Camden (to the east) and partly in the City of Westminster (to the west), although the site is solely within Camden.
- 2.1.2 Located to the south of Fitzroy Square, the site itself is bounded by the key roads of Fitzroy Street and Howland Street and forms the vast majority of the urban block that is also bordered by Cleveland Mews and The BT tower to the west and Maple Street to the north.





Fig. 2.2- Site Location within Fitzrovia

### 2.2 Conservation Areas

- 2.2.1 Whilst the site is not located within a conservation area it is almost entirely surrounded on four sides by several conservation areas. To the north lies Fitzroy Square Conservation Area with Charlotte Road Conservation Area to the south. Bloomsbury and East Marlybone Conservation Areas lies to the east and west respectively.
- 2.2.2 As demonstrated by the map, the site's proximity to the areas to Fitzroy Square and Charlotte Road conservation areas mean that the site and its context are still somewhat influenced by the architecture to the north and south, and both conservation areas are excellent examples of traditional Georgian fabric, although for somewhat differing reasons.
- 2.2.3 The Fitzroy Conservation area was developed over a relatively short period of time during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, creating a fairly homogenous and quite typical example of Georgian town planning. This ensured the grandest buildings overlooked the square whilst the smallest were located within the surrounding Mews roads.
- 2.2.4 On the other hand, the Charlotte Road Conservation Area was formed in order to consolidate several existing Georgian plots located in Fitzrovia as part of larger scale post WWII development.



Regents Park Conservation Area



Fig. 2.3 - Conservation Areas Map

#### **Design Development** 3.0

#### 3.1 History

- 3.1.1 The current building is the result of a refurbishment (planning permission ref. PSX0104058) that took place in 2001 of the original building, dating back to 1951.
- 3.1.2 The refurbished facade offered an increased level of glazing and integrated a series of externally mounted ventilation ductwork hidden within the facade's external metal panel cladding system. In addition to this, a new external feature "bug"' was added onto the Howland Street elevation, as part of the ventilation system.

#### 3.2 Brief

- Following the grant of planning permission for the 3.2.1 refurbishment of the building (10th July 2020 (Application ref: 2019/2198/P as amended by NMA ref. 2021/0056/P) ), the new owner instructed the design team to review the scheme again and look at the way the building could be improved further into a more modern and sustainable multi tenant offering. To achieve this the arrival experience needed to be improved.
- 3.2.2 A new building appearance, the introduction of a more distinctive/level access entrance, the creation of more efficient internal communal areas, and the introduction of an additional roof terrace for the office tenants.

#### 3.3 Context

- 3.3.1 The design evolution process carefully considered the interesting role of a corner building interacting with the junction between Fitzroy Street and Howland street. The building needs to communicate with its surrounding and the corner plays a big role in providing a high quality arrival experience. Introducing a new street level access would also further enhance accessibility.
- 3.3.2 The existing facade has external ducts and "the bug" provide a unique design and character in line with the previous tenant (engineering company). These ducts and "bug" are a clashing green colour that creates an unusual contrast with the existing context. The new proposal seeks to align the building with the current/emerging context.

Concept 3.4



Fig. 3.1 - Existing View - North West Facade Corner, Intersection Fitzroy and Howland Street

3.4.1 The design process looked at improving the look and feel of the facades, with a limited palette of materials, recognisable throughout the building. The intent is to move away from the green and repaint the existing ducts and the "bug".

3.4.2 We would like to attract tenants from diverse sectors, yet believe it is crucial to keep the existing features of the building, such as the ventilation ducts and the "bug", embracing them and rebranding the building with a more neutral and elegant treatment, that would be favourable to a wider market.

### 4.0 Facade materiality improvements

### 4.1 Change of colour

- 4.1.1 The intent for the facade materiality improvements is to limit the amendments just to the colour of the ducts and the "bug".
- 4.1.2 It is proposed to repaint the existing ducts and the "bug" in black, to align the external appearance with the new contemporary interior concept of the building. The works will be carried directly in situ making sure the integrity of the facade is retained during work.
- 4.1.3 Even though the proposed change of colour to the external ductwork and 'bug' do not require planning permission, details have been included in this brochure for information and illustrative purposes only.
- 4.1.4 We believe black will have a better connection to the consented black portal entrance (see image below), the interior design proposed and stand comfortably among the neighbouring buildings and emerging context.



Fig. 4.1 - Consented View - Corner of Fitzroy Street and Howland Street

Fig. 4.2 - Proposed View - Corner of Fitzroy Street and Howland Street



- 4.1.5 Depending on how the light hits the surface, black would manifest as different shades of grey and reflect surrounding tones whilst remaining neutral and contemporary. The sample images in Fig. 4.4 show how daylight hitting the surface can vary the tones of its surface.
- 4.1.6 The design aims to introduce a limited palette of materials recognisable throughout the building. We believe that the green, or any other particular colour, will clash with the new design concept.
- 4.1.7 We are not proposing to remove the ventilation ducts that already stand out in mass and form, rather to refresh the design with a new colour that will uplift the existing ducts, providing them with a contemporary appearance.
- 4.1.8 Coming from Fitzroy Square, the proposed black colour will allow the façade to stand comfortably among the neighbouring buildings and emerging context.
- 4.1.9 The improvement of the arrival experience is really important in order to rebrand the building. Our intent for the external appearance aligns with the new interior concept of the building, such as the black colour of the main entrance portal, the columns of the reception and metalwork inside the atrium, that sit well with the glazed elements within the building.





Fig. 4.4 - Photos of the same black aluminium sample.



Fig. 4.5 - Proposed Reception View Illustrating Interior Material Palette

### Removal of combustible material to "bug" 4.2

4.2.1 At the pre-application meeting, LBC had no objections to the removal of the combustible insulation to the inside of the "bug". In addition to removing the combustible insulation, there will be elements of repair and maintenance to the "bug" cladding.

> A facade condition survey of the "bug" was commissioned following the pre-application meeting which has found that the external Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) skin and roof lights are both in poor condition. Therefore it is proposed to re-coat the external finish and replace the roof lights. The adjacent images show the current state of the "bug".



Fig. 4.6 - External photo of the old roof lights to the "bug"



Fig. 4.7 - Internal photo of the combustible material to the "bug"

## 4.3 Elevations

4.3.1 The adjacent coloured elevations illustrate the changes in the above sections 4.1 and 4.2.









Fig. 4.10 - Consented South Elevation



Fig. 4.11 - Proposed South Elevation

### Fitzroy Street ground floor facade 5.0

#### 5.1 Ground floor office glazing

- 5.1.1 The consented scheme has an office unit at ground floor that is accessed from the main reception. There were no changes to the existing facade to this office unit.
- 5.1.2 To maximise the flexibility of the office units provided, we propose to provide street level access into the corner office unit on Fitzroy Street and Howland Street.
- 5.1.3 The entrance to this unit will be on Fitzroy Street, adjacent to the main building's reception. The slab to this unit will be lowered to facilitate this change (this is the same strategy as the consented building's reception).
- 5.1.4 The facade to this corner of the building will be greatly improved with full height glazing on both Fitzroy Street and to the first two bays on Howland Street, which will help to animate and provide active frontage to the ground floor of this corner of the building.
- 5.1.5 The lowering of the slab affects the glazing within the lower ground floor light well along Howland Street. Refer to Section 6.2 for details.

#### Increased Reception portal width 5.2

The overall width of the Reception portal has increased to 5.2.1 align with the glazing and ductwork above.









Fig. 5.2 - Consented Ground Floor Plan

Fig. 5.3 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan

Additional Office Entrance



Fig. 5.4 - Consented East Elevation

Fig. 5.6 - Proposed East Elevation





Fig. 5.5- Consented South Elevation

Fig. 5.7 - Proposed Elevation

Proposed Entrance Portal Width

Revised GF Elevation

### Corner unit relationship to public realm 5.3

- 5.3.1 Fig. 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10 illustrate the relationship of the corner unit with the surrounding pavement, pedestrian crossing and highway.
- 5.3.2 The entrance has been located away from the pedestrian crossing, with inward opening doors into the office.



Fig. 5.9 - Corner Unit Elevation



Fig. 5.8 - Corner Unit Section

Fig. 5.10 - Corner Unit Plan Diagram

|       | Primary Pedestrian Flow   |
|-------|---------------------------|
| ••••• | Secondary Pedestrian Flow |
|       | Office Unit Entrance      |

## 6.0 Lower ground floor facade

### 6.1 Glazing within lightwell on Fitzroy Street

- 6.1.1 The consented scheme proposed no changes to the glazing within the lower ground floor light well.
- 6.1.2 There have been various changes to the proposed scheme at the lower ground floor, which have had a knock on effect to the facade at this level. Both the male and female changing rooms are now located along the glazing to the lightwell on Fitzroy Street. An opaque film will be applied to the internal face of the existing glazing in these areas to conceal the new internal walls of the changing rooms, showers and WCs.
- 6.1.3 Furthermore, four panels of glazing will be replaced with louvred panels for the ventilation requirements of the changing rooms and facilities management rooms. These facade changes within the lightwell will have little impact on the view at street level and will not affect the overall appearance of the building.



Fig. 6.1 - Consented East Elevation



Fig. 6.3 - Proposed lower ground floor plan

#### Louvred door for access to manholes 6.2

- 6.2.1 The consented scheme did not alter the glazing at the lower ground floor in the lightwell on Howland Street. There are two existing manhole covers that require access in the southwest corner of the building. In the existing building, these are accessed at lower ground floor level within the building.
- 6.2.2 To avoid having to have access panels within the floor of the office corner unit, a new louvred door is provided to access the manholes from the outside. The door is louvred to provide ventilation to the access corridor and has an upstand at the base of the door to prevent water ingress.
- 6.2.3 As mentioned in Section 5.1, the lowering of the ground floor slab to the corner office unit affects the glazing in the lower ground floor within the light well on Howland Street. The proposal removes one bay of glazing at lower ground floor to create full height glazing at ground floor level. This also reduces the overall size of the lightwell. Consequently, the existing metal access stair into the lightwell is relocated.



Fig. 6.4 - Consented South Elevation



Fig. 6.6 - Proposed lower ground floor plan

### 6.3 New louvres to Blocks B & C on Cleveland Mews

- 6.3.1 The consented scheme looked to retain the existing louvres and roller shutter at lower ground floor along Cleveland Mews.
- 6.3.2 The proposed scheme has plant rooms along the facade to Cleveland Mews which require increased ventilation that the existing louvres are unable to provide. Therefore, we propose to replace the louvres with new louvres that have a greater free area to meet the performance requirements of the building's plant.
- 6.3.3 The existing roller shutter is removed and replaced with a new mesh gate that allows the passage of free air to the louvres behind. The gate will have an escape door and a fixed metal panel, all of which are covered in a small mesh.
- 6.3.4 The proposal also looks to replace the existing louvres to the base of Block C to the generator room and UKPN substation so that they look the same as the new louvres to Block B. This will require UKPN approval and is not yet confirmed.



Fig. 6.6 - Consented West Elevation

### 6.4 New loading bay entrance gate

- 6.4.1 The consented scheme retained the existing gate to the loading bay.
- 6.4.2 The proposal replaces the existing gate to allow for the new segregated cycle entrance into the loading bay, and to accommodate the relocated vehicle parking within the loading bay.



Fig. 6.7 - Proposed West Elevation

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## 7.0 Block B extension cladding

### 7.1 Design development

- 7.1.1 The consented scheme introduced a two story extension on top of Block B, along Cleveland Mews, with grey vertical profiled cladding and set back windows with chamfered cladding at the head of the glazing.
- 7.1.2 The proposed design has been developed to simplify the glazing detail by removing the chamfered panels above the glazing and substitute them with a continuation of the grey vertical profiled cladding. The windows are recessed and have expressed external mullions.
- 7.1.3 The parapet at the top of the extension has also been amended to accommodate the metal balustrades to the new roof terrace on the Block B roof.
- 7.1.4 The adjacent images show the consented and proposed elevations.



Fig. 7.2 - Consented West Elevation





Fig. 7.1 - Vertical profiled cladding precedents

Fig. 7.3 - Proposed West Elevation

7.1.5 The view below (highlighted in red) shows the CGI presented during the Pre-application meeting held on the 3rd February 2022. The adjacent images show the consented and new proposed CGI. As we are unable to define the type of plant species that will be provided on the roof terraces at the time of updating the certified view, the proposed rear elevation only show the balustrades and the planters without any plants at the perimeter of the roof terraces.



Fig. 7.4 - Proposed Rear Elevation (Presented at the Pre-App meeting on the 03.02.22)



Fig. 7.5 - Consented Rear Elevation

Fig. 7.6 - Proposed Rear Elevation