

Selkirk House, 166 High Holborn

1 Museum Street

10-12 Museum Street

35-41 New Oxford Street

**16A-18 West Central Street,
London WC1A 1JR**

HCPT AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMENTS (AJ 24.10.22)

Introduction

(Reconsultation, due to amendments)

Redevelopment of 1 Selkirk House, 166 High Holborn and 1 Museum Street, to provide mixed use scheme. Demolition, remodelling and extension to 10-12 Museum Street, 35-41 New Oxford Street and 16A-18 West Central Street to provide further town centre ground floor uses and residential floorspace including affordable housing provision. Scheme also includes provision of public realm/pedestrian route and relocation of cycle hire docking stations on High Holborn. **Revisions** refer to reduction in height of proposed tower by two storeys, widening of floor plates of proposed tower, changes to elevations and entrances, change of Vine Lane block from co-working to residential, increase in affordable housing to 51% of residential uplift. Affordable Housing to be located at the building on West Central Street.

Tenure

It is noted that the required policy compliant 60/40% split between London Affordable Rent and Intermediate Rent is proposed across the affordable housing provision.

Mix Proposals:

London Affordable Rent (9)

4 x 2b3p (inc 3 x fully accessible wheelchair units)

4 x 3b4p

1 x 5b7p

Intermediate Rent (9)

4 x 1b2p

4 x 2b3p

1 x 2b4p

We note that whilst the overall provision of 2 bed homes provides more than the policy compliant 30%, preference would be for less 2b3p size units and more 2b4p size homes.

The current mix proposal is for 8 x 2b3p homes and only 1 x 2b4p home. 2b4p size homes are generally considered more suitable for families (in the London Affordable Rent element of the scheme), but can also provide homes for sharers, as well as families when located within the intermediate rent part of schemes. Therefore, a more balanced mix of sizes for the 2 bed homes would be preferred, with less 2b3p homes, and a higher number of 2b4p homes provided if possible.

Intermediate Rent

Intermediate Rent is the preferred intermediate tenure for the Council. This is based on information contained in the Intermediate Housing Strategy, which targets a majority of rents within this tenure at those on incomes of £30-40k. Based on this, (as a general rule), Intermediate Rent homes should not be larger than 2 bed units. This is because the larger 3 and 4 bed homes would be unaffordable to people on this income band. However, recognising that this can represent significant challenge in terms of viability, *2b4p sharer units can be considered, where two separate incomes can contribute to the rent of a unit, up to a cap of £60k. Sharer units could include 2 bathrooms if/where possible.

Separate Cores

Desirable for Affordable Housing units to be located in a separate core from the Private Sale units, as this makes management of affordable housing easier for the Registered Provider. It is noted that all Affordable Housing in this case will be located within the West Central Building on floors 1 – 3. If a separate core is not possible, then a separate entrance for the affordable housing would be required.

Service Charges

General advice is always to keep service charges as low as possible. Social/London Affordable Rents are exclusive of service charge, but Intermediate Rents will include service charges.

Inclusion of lifestyle features such as Gym, Concierge services and Lifts are likely to impact service charge costs and could make rental costs too high in some cases.

Wheelchair Housing

In line with policy, 10% wheelchair housing is proposed across the whole development. In this case 3 x wheelchair units are provided, which will be located within the London Affordable Rent element of the scheme. All 3 wheelchair units will be fully accessible (M4(3)(2)(b)).

Other considerations for wheelchair housing provision as follows :

There is a preference for double bedrooms in wheelchair accommodation as often as is possible, (due to wheelchair turning circles). So preferred sizes for wheelchair units would be : 1b2p, 2b/4p, 3b/5p, 4b/6p or 4b/7p homes (units where there would be more than one double bedroom). Wheelchair unit sizes, 2b3p, 3b4p and 4b5p are therefore less desirable.

HCPT support this application