

**Chief executive's department**

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Mr Graham Allison
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
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 XXXXX

Your Ref:

Our Ref: 16/EQ/0200
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Dear Mr Allison

Date: 08/03/2017

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (as amended) PRE-APPLICATION ENQUIRY

At: 176-178 BERMONDSEY STREET, LONDON, SE1 3TQ
Proposal: Demolition of the existing building and provision of a new building, comprising part 4 storey, part 3 storey part 2 storey and part single building together with basement for the use as a hotel with ancillary restaurant and wine bar at ground and basement level together with associated plant, high level extract duct, refuse and cycle storage

I write in connection with your pre-application enquiry received on 20/06/2016 regarding a scheme to redevelop the site above. This letter summarises the council's written advice on your proposal and whether, based on the details submitted, it meets local planning requirements

Planning Policy

The statutory development plan for the borough comprises The London Plan consolidated with further alterations (March 2015); The Core Strategy (2011) and saved policies from the Southwark Plan (2007).

The site is located within the:

- Central Activities Zone
- Air Quality Management Area
- Archaeological Priority Zone
- Bermondsey Street Conservation area
- Bankside, Borough and London Bridge Opportunity Area
- Flood Zone
- Controlled Parking Zone

Other key material considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework

Site and surroundings

The site is a three storey terraced building fronting the west side of Bermondsey Street stepping down to a single storey warehouse type structure behind of varying heights. The frontage elevation comprises stock brick and uniform rectangular window openings, with green window frames (retrospectively fitted). The building is currently in use as a bakery, with 3 people employed. Access and servicing is from the Bermondsey Street frontage only. There is no vehicular access.

The existing building has been identified by the Council as making a positive contribution to the Bermondsey Street Conservation Area. There are heritage assets in the wider context of the site, principally a Listed Building (former cloth factory) on the opposite side of Bermondsey Street (no.173). The site is abutted by Elm Court, a residential building, to the north. To the south it abuts a small courtyard immediately adjacent to the south side of the site accessed via a gate from Bermondsey Street. This is used by people accessing office space (ground

floor) and flats in the building fronting the courtyard, Gemini House (no. 180/182).

Planning history

No pertinent planning history for site or adjacent sites.

Land Use

Saved Policy 1.4 relates to employment sites outside Preferred Industrial Locations and Preferred Office Locations, and seeks to retain the existing amount of existing B Class floorspace except where (amongst other things): *“c) The site is located within a town or local centre, in which case in accordance with policy 1.7, suitable Class A or other town centre uses will be permitted in place of Class B uses.”* The site is not located in a designated town or local centre and therefore the proposed change of use from bakery (B1) to hotel use (C1) with ancillary restaurant is not in accord with the specific requirements of this policy. However Bermondsey Street is identified as a “shopping area” in the Core Strategy and Bermondsey Street provides a range of small shops and services and is therefore not dissimilar from an area defined as a 'local centre'. Moreover the narrow frontage of the site and lack of rear access restricts servicing options, provision for self containment of uses and separate fire escapes for multiple uses, hence the building is argued to be only suitable for a limited number of single uses.

Saved policy 1.12 supports hotels in areas of high public transport accessibility; the site has a PTAL rating of '6b'. Strategic policy 10 of the Core Strategy also supports development of hotels within the town centres, the strategic cultural areas, and *places with good access to public transport services*, providing that these do not harm the local character. On balance, and taking into account the limited existing employment provided by the bakery and the opportunity to provide an active frontage onto Bermondsey Street, it is considered that the proposed change of use would be acceptable in this instance.

Access and site layout

There is no proposed vehicular access. Access to the hotel would be solely from the Bermondsey Street frontage via a well illuminated, covered and level access. The proposed site layout is logical and is considered appropriate to the site. Refuse will be stored at basement floor level within separate stores for both the hotel and restaurant uses; it is not clear at this stage if sufficient space has been provided. Ground floor elevations would interact and address the street appropriately, providing a welcome active frontage.

Design and conservation

The proposal is located at the southern end of the Bermondsey Street Conservation Area close to the St Mary Magdalen precinct. It is on the western side of the road and facing it are a number of listed buildings including the Grade II listed Nos 171-173 and 187 -191 Bermondsey Street and the Grade II* Listed St Mary Magdalen Church. To the south, 180-182 Bermondsey Street includes a central 'yard' accessed via a covered underpass. To the north, Elm Court is arranged in two buildings with a central court which is screened from the site by an opaque glazed screen.

The proposal involves the demolition and replacement of a building within a conservation area. In this case the building has been annotated in the adopted Conservation Area Appraisal as making a positive contribution to the conservation area. This is mainly due to its modest scale simple brick cladding and distinctive externally mounted hoist. The building itself is of no historic value. It appears to be of early to mid 20th century construction with brick faced, steel frame and modern windows.

The council's policies reiterate the principles of the NPPF and require that development within conservation areas seeks to conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. In respect of demolitions the council's policies specifically resist the demolition of buildings that are identified as making a positive contribution to a conservation area. In this case, the building is of no historic value, but it complements the historic townscape. This was evident on a visit to the site on carried out by Officers on 19 August 2016. The hoist appears to be an older feature mounted onto its modern 20th Century façade. The proposed demolition is considered to cause less than substantial harm to the conservation and will require justification in the application. The application should therefore be accompanied by a heritage statement that justifies the proposed demolition and demonstrates how the proposal and benefits of the development will meet the requirements of paragraph 134 of the NPPF (2012)

Scale, height and massing

The proposal involves the replacement of the existing 3-storey building with a new building set at 4 storeys with a set-back 5th floor. This rise in scale is appropriate and reflects the parapet line of the neighbouring 180-182 Bermondsey Street and Elm Court which flank it on either side. The strong parapet line and vertical articulation of the Bermondsey Street frontage are noted in the conservation area appraisal and contribute positively to the

character and appearance of this distinctive urban conservation area. With its narrow plot-width and by respecting the existing adjacent parapet heights, the proposal reinforces the character and appearance of the conservation area and is considered acceptable in this context.

To the rear the development extends to the easternmost edge of the site with a basement and ground floor. Above that the proposal includes a partial first floor and terraced second storey rear extension which enclose the courtyard to the north. This has been designed as a feature wall with engaged arches at every floor to complement the warehouse character of 180-182 Bermondsey Street. This is appropriate and could enhance this characterful space, a characteristic of the area.

Detailed design

The architectural design is for a crisp and modern narrow block, clad in a pale brick with deep stepped window reveals and a polished concrete base and top. The composition is calm and ordered and displays a hierarchy that reflects the historic context. The ground floor is set back and glazed to ensure active uses and ensure that the proposal engages with the street. The design is considered acceptable. The quality of design will rely to a great degree on the choice of materials and the architectural detailing. In such a historic context both the materials and the detailed architectural design is likely to be reserved by condition unless they are included in the application. The applicant is encouraged to include samples or a specification of the proposed cladding materials and a detailed bay study of the main façade of the building to a scale of 1:20 in the application.

Consideration could also be given to reinstating the external hoist on the new building. This is a distinctive feature of the existing building and is typical of the Bermondsey Street Conservation Area.

Amenity impacts

The proposed site layout and massing could potentially have a harmful impact on neighbouring occupiers in terms of daylight/sunlight and outlook. Elm Court to the north of the site and Gemini House to the south are potentially impacted residential properties. Elm Court has blank flank walls abutting the site and an opaque/frosted screen enclosing the walkway's serving the front and rear blocks that prevents any views from over the site. However Gemini House has a number of windows looking onto the site in the flank walls abutting the site and looking over the courtyard. The ground floor is in commercial use but upper floors are flats. An initial daylight and sunlight assessment has been submitted highlighting the key windows on Gemini House that need to be safeguarded; it indicates that the proposals presented have been designed with setbacks and terracing to maintain the profile of the development within the "shadow" of Elm Court's flank elevation when viewed from Gemini House to minimise any obstruction of direct sky visibility and that a material impact on the daylight amenity enjoyed by the occupiers of Gemini House is unlikely. This was broadly confirmed by the site visit. However further detailed analysis is required, including consideration of the impact of the proposed flue to the rear of the site.

A full daylight, sunlight and overshadowing study should be carried out and submitted with any formal application. Cross section drawings should also be submitted showing the existing rear single storey pitched roof rear element and the proposed two storey rear element to enable a better appreciation of the change in height and massing and the consequent impacts of the proposal on the daylight amenity enjoyed by the residential occupiers of Gemini House.

Transport and servicing issues

Trip generation and car parking

The submitted transport statement indicates limited taxi generation for visitors to the hotel (which is limited to 8 rooms) and restaurant (the latter is projected to generate more trips than the former). The proposal does not provide any car parking spaces; the site is located in a CPZ.

Cycle parking

In line with the London Plan cycle parking standards the applicant has calculated that 3 long-stay spaces and 8 to 9 short-stay spaces are required. The 3 long stay parking spaces will be provided for within the basement. Further information would be required as part of any planning applications explaining how cycles could be moved easily to and from this location to the street. Given the site constraints the applicant considers it unviable to provide for short-stay cycle parking within the site boundary, but states a willingness to contribute towards additional on-street cycle parking in the area; this is considered acceptable in principle.

Servicing

The information provided indicates that servicing would take place from Bermondsey Street (as currently happens for the bakery). There is a loading bay currently in place on the site frontage (though road markings are faded and there is no signage). The single yellow line allows continuous loading for up to 40 minutes between 08:00 and 18:30 Monday to Saturday. The applicant argues the implementation of the proposed

development will offer the opportunity to control the hours when delivery vehicles can service the site which will result in a positive impact on local residents and the community in terms of the removal of late night/early morning delivery traffic and noise from the bakery. The applicant is willing to implement a Delivery & Servicing Management Plan (DSMP), which could be secured by Southwark via a planning condition on any planning approval. Taking into consideration this mitigation measure it is considered that these servicing arrangements are acceptable.

Sustainable development implications

Air Quality

The site is in an Air Quality Management Area and potential air quality impacts may arise as a result of demolition, excavation of the basement and construction on nearby sensitive receptors. Details of appropriate mitigation should be provided with any formal application to demonstrate that the effects of demolition, excavation and construction on air quality would not be significant and would be in accordance with the Mayors guidance.

Flood risk

The site is situated in Flood Risk Zone 3. A summary flood statement has been submitted which indicates that breach flood waters would stop just short of the site, that the land use proposed is compatible with the flood zone and that the site is at a low risk from surface water flooding. A full Flood Risk Assessment should be provided as part of any formal submission.

Archaeology

The proposed construction of a basement across the site would entirely remove any surviving archaeological remains within its footprint.

In keeping with the current policy and guidance, and consistent with recent advice nearby, it is necessary to better establish the significance of the remains at risk, so that an informed judgement may be made over the proposed impact on them, and appropriate steps taken to mitigate any harm. In this instance, given the archaeological potential of the area, it is recommended that the applicant submits an archaeological desk based assessment in support of any planning application, in accordance with best practice as set out in the NPPF and the Council's own policies. This should be supported by archaeological predetermination evaluation of the areas of the site impacted by the new proposal (where logistically possible). This could take the form of archaeological test pits. There is good evidence that archaeological remains can survive beneath buildings fronting onto Bermondsey Street, although archaeological survival may be higher towards the rear of the site in the bakery area, where previous developmental impacts are possibly less.

If archaeological safeguards do prove necessary, these could involve design measures to preserve remains *in situ* or where that is not feasible archaeological investigation prior to development.

The applicant has already amassed a great deal of the required information in the Hall McKnight 'Design Appearance and Access Statement' and this could be used to form the basis of an archaeological desk based assessment prepared by a professional archaeological contractor. The assessment will conform to current archaeological standards and guidance, but should particularly focus on further map regression work (particularly incorporating the Goad Insurance map series), an analysis of the archaeological investigations in the Bermondsey Street area and an assessment of the existing and proposed impacts on the archaeological resource.

On present evidence it remains possible that the site could contain archaeological remains which will inform recognised national and local archaeological research objectives – that is non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest in NPPF terminology. Moreover, we cannot at this time rule out the possibility of finding assets demonstrably of equivalent significance to a scheduled monument.

Any archaeological work would need to be undertaken in consultation with the local authority archaeological advisor, Gillian King, and in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).

Community Infrastructure Levy

The site is located in CIL zone 2 and is creating more than 100sqm of non-residential floorspace. A formal submission would be liable to pay the Mayoral and Southwark Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which is charged on the basis of £35 per sqm and £125 per sqm respectively (both subject to indexation).

It is necessary to complete a 'Planning Application Additional Information Requirement Form' to determine the amount of chargeable floorspace on the site and submit this with any formal planning application on the site. The amount to be paid is calculated when planning permission is granted and it is paid when development starts. Further details about the CIL can be found using the links below.

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/applications/howtoapply/whattosubmit/cil>

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/communityinfrastructurelevymay11>

Other matters

It is advised that prior to the submission of an application discussions should be had with the Council's Highway Development Control Team regarding any works on or adjacent to the Highway. Regard should be had to the material palette set out in the Council's SSDM (Southwark Street Design Manual). All development will be required to incorporate the principles of inclusive design, with suitable access provided for people with disabilities or those who are mobility impaired.

It is also advised that careful consideration be given to the methods used for excavating and constructing the basement in order to address potential impacts on flooding, groundwater and structural stability (including of adjacent properties) and neighbours' amenity. Suitable mitigation measures should be put in place.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered to be appropriate in land use terms. The proposed hotel and ancillary restaurant is considered to be of an acceptable standard for the reasons set out above. The proposal will also have an acceptable impact on transport issues. Further details will need to be submitted with any planning application to allow a full assessment of the proposal on neighbouring occupiers' amenity, particularly in terms of daylight/sunlight and outlook for occupiers of Gemini House.

For the above reasons the proposal is worth submitting as a planning application in its current form.

This advice is given to assist you but is not a decision of the Council. Further issues may arise following a formal planning application, where a site visit and public consultation and consultation with statutory consultees would be undertaken.

Please accept this letter as the closure of your current enquiry.

Yours sincerely

Simon Bevan
Director of Planning