

GREATER **LONDON** AUTHORITY
Development, Enterprise and Environment

Hugh Morgan
DP9 Ltd
100 Pall Mall
London
SW1Y 5NQ

Our ref: D&P/4308/01

Date: 23 April 2018

Dear Hugh,

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended); Greater London Authority Act 1999 & 2007; Town & Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008
Site: New City Court, Southwark
LPA: Southwark
Our reference: GLA/4308/01

Further to the pre-planning application meetings held on 30 August 2017 and 8 February 2018, I enclose a copy of the pre-application report GLA/4308/01 which comprises the GLA's assessment and sets out our advice and matters which will need to be fully addressed by the future planning application.

I apologise for the lateness of this advice note which was caused by unforeseen staff absences.

The advice given by officers does not constitute a formal response or decision by the Mayor with regard to future planning applications. Any views or opinions expressed are without prejudice to the Mayor's formal consideration of the application.

Yours sincerely



 Juliemma McLoughlin
Chief Planner

cc Lucinda Turner, TfL

New City Court

in the London borough of Southwark

The proposal

Redevelopment comprising a new commercial building of 35 storeys containing offices, retail and new public spaces and routes.

The applicant

The applicant is **Great Portland Estates Limited**, and the architect is **AHMM**.

Background

1. On the 20 June 2017, a request was made for a pre-application meeting with the Greater London Authority on a proposal to develop the above site for the above uses. Two meetings were subsequently held with GLA officers and officers from Southwark Council on 30 August 2017 and 8 February 2018 with the following attendees:

GLA

- Samantha Wells - Principal Strategic Planner
- Matt Christie – Senior Strategic Planner (Case Officer)
- James Keogh – Senior Strategic Planner (Design)

Southwark Council

- Michael Tsoukaris – Group Manager Design and Conservation

Applicant

- James Shipton – Great Portland Estates
- Haydn Thomas – Allford Hall Monaghan Morris
- Robert Romanis – Allford Hall Monaghan Morris
- Natalia Maslennikova – Allford Hall Monaghan Morris
- Hugh Morgan – Dp9
- Harry Manley – Dp9

2. The advice given by GLA officers does not constitute a formal response or decision by the Mayor with regard to future planning applications. Any views or opinions expressed are also without prejudice to the Mayor's formal consideration of any such application.

Site description

3. The site is located within a courtyard to the east of the main frontage of Borough High Street, between St. Thomas Street and King's Head Yard. The site is within the London Bridge and Bankside Opportunity Area, as identified by the London Plan and draft London Plan and currently consists of:

- New City Court, a late 20th Century office building set within the courtyard.
- Keats House, an unlisted 19th Century residential building.
- 4-8 and 12-16 St. Thomas Street, Grade II listed early 19th century terraced houses.
- 9-11 St. Thomas Street, 1930's infill building.

4. The site is within the Borough High Street Conservation Area and there are a number of other conservation areas and listed buildings in the wider area, most notably the Grade I listed Southwark Cathedral.

5. The site has a PTAL of 6 where 6 is the most accessible on a scale of 1-6, and is served by London Underground and mainline rail services at London Bridge station, with an entrance immediately adjacent to the site on Borough High Street.

Details of the proposal

6. The applicant proposes demolition of the late 20th century office building and construction of a new office building, including conferencing facilities and with a publicly accessible garden space at fourth floor level. The existing 19th century terrace would be refurbished to provide a mixture of small offices and retail units, and Keats House, which will continue to house office accommodation, would be moved to the east to provide access to the courtyard. A new public open space would be created by the buildings at ground floor level, in front of the existing Kings Head pub. The applicant also proposes to create a new access point into the existing entrance to London bridge underground station on Borough High Street.

- The application would likely be referable under the following categories of the Schedule to the Order 2008:
 - Category 1B *"Development which comprises the erection of a building or buildings with a total floorspace of more than 15,000 square metres;*
 - Category 1C *"Development which comprises or includes the erection of a building that is more than 30 metres in height"*

Relevant history

7. The site has no strategic planning history.

Strategic planning issues and relevant policies and guidance

8. For the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the development plan in force for the area is the Southwark Core Strategy (2011) and Saved Southwark Plan Policies (2007), and the 2016 London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2011).

9. The following are relevant material considerations:

- The National Planning Policy Framework, Technical Guide to the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance.
- The draft London Plan (consultation draft December 2017).
- Central Activities Zone SPG (adopted March 2016).
- Draft Bankside, Borough and London Bridge SPD (consultation draft January 2010).

10. The relevant issues and corresponding policies are as follows:

- Mix of uses *London Plan; CAZ SPG;*
- Urban design and heritage *London Plan; Shaping Neighbourhoods: Character and Context SPG; Housing SPG; Historic Environment London Plan; World Heritage Sites SPG; London View Management Framework SPG;*
- Sustainable development *London Plan; Sustainable Design and Construction SPG; Mayor's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy; Mayor's Climate Change Mitigation and Energy Strategy; Mayor's Water Strategy;*
- Transport *London Plan; the Mayor's Transport Strategy; Land for Industry and Transport SPG; Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy; Use of planning obligations in the funding of Crossrail and the Mayoral Community infrastructure levy SPG.*

Summary of meeting discussion

11. Meeting discussions covered strategic issues with respect to the proposed land uses and principle of development, urban design, heritage and transport. Advice with respect to these matters, as well as energy and flood risk, is provided under the associated sections below.

Proposed land uses and principle of development

12. The site is within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ) and the London Bridge and Bankside Opportunity Area, which has an identified development capacity to accommodate 5,500 new jobs and a minimum of 4,000 new homes.

13. London Plan Policies 2.10 and 2.11, and draft London Plan Policy SD4 set out the general policy expectations for proposals within the CAZ and the CAZ SPG gives further detail in relation to the implementation of these policies. Draft London Plan Policy SD5 provides that offices should be given greater weight than residential development in the core commercial areas of the CAZ, such as London Bridge and Bankside. London Plan Policy 2.13 and draft London Plan Policy SD1 provide that proposals in opportunity areas should seek to maximise density and contain a mix of uses.

14. The proposal for an office-led mixed-use development would significantly contribute towards meeting and potentially exceeding the objectives for the opportunity area set out in the London Plan and draft London Plan. The proposals would enhance and promote the unique London-wide roles of the CAZ, bring forward development capacity and supporting infrastructure and services to sustain and enhance the CAZ's varied strategic functions without compromising the attractions of nearby residential neighbourhoods. Furthermore the proposals would help to sustain and enhance the nearby City of London by providing additional office capacity and supporting facilities. As such the proposed land uses accord with London Plan Policies 2.10, 2.11 and 2.13 and draft London Plan Policies SD1, SD4 and SD5.

Office use

15. London Plan Policy 4.2 deals with office proposals and sets out support for office provision where it can improve London's competitiveness and enhance its varied attraction to businesses of different types and sizes. The CAZ SPG seeks to ensure the supply of sufficient office floorspace, in terms of type, size and cost within the CAZ to meet the growing demand which is central to London's economic success.

16. Draft London Plan Policy E1 supports increases in London's office stock where there is evidence of sustained demand, whereas draft London Plan Table 6.1 demonstrates that demand for offices will remain highest in the CAZ, with 59% growth in demand expected between 2016-2041. Draft London Plan Policy E2 provides that larger office proposals should consider the scope for provision of some flexible workspace suitable for micro, small and medium sized enterprises. Furthermore draft London Plan Policy E3 sets out how planning obligations should be used to secure rents at below market rate in some circumstances, such as to support start-up businesses, charities, social enterprises or operators with a cultural value such as artists.

17. The uplift in office floorspace provision would be supported, in line with draft London Plan Policy E1 and London Plan Policy 4.2. Given the size of the proposals and the ongoing need for low threshold workspace to support startups and SMEs the Mayor would welcome some flexible, affordable workspace in line with draft London Plan Policies E2 and E3, and further discussion regarding this provision would be welcomed.

Other uses

18. The applicant proposes a 'hub' space at level 22, which would comprise a conferencing facility consisting of an auditorium with a capacity of between 150 and 200 people, reception and breakout spaces. Details should be provided at application stage, although initial designs show the potential to provide an iconic and attractive venue offering spectacular views of London as a backdrop, whilst supporting businesses in the new development and wider central London area. As such, and in recognition that the hub could enhance the contribution of the proposals toward sustaining central London as a globally competitive business location, the inclusion of the hub would be supported in line with London Plan Policy 2.10, draft London Plan Policy SD4 and the CAZ SPG.

19. The applicant also envisages the provision of small retail units at ground level within the new building, as well as within the listed terrace and the relocated Keats House. This would activate the proposed new public realm and potentially provide opportunities for local businesses, independent traders and start-ups. London Plan Policy 4.9 and Draft London Plan Policy E9 address retail development and aims to support the provision of affordable retail units where there is evidence of local need. The applicant proposes that 10% of the retail floorspace is to be secured at affordable rates, to address need identified by local policy. The proposal to provide relatively limited retail provision, including small retail units at ground floor in existing and new buildings will help to activate the new public realm and support the provision of office development above. The provision of affordable retail units is welcomed in line with London Plan Policy 4.9 and draft London Plan Policy E9.

Public open space

20. London Plan Policy 2.9 recognises the need to realise the potential of inner London in ways that sustain and enhance its economic and demographic growth, including making improvements to its distinct environment and public realm. The CAZ SPG recognises that some parts of the CAZ suffer from poor existing public realm and it is noted that the substantial development in the area around the site has generated a significant increase in pedestrian activity and subsequent strain on the existing public realm.

21. The proposal to provide new public open space and public realm, whilst improving access to and through the site is strongly supported in principle, however, the final acceptability of the proposals will depend on detailed design, how the space will integrate within the surrounding network and how it will be managed and remain publicly accessible. This is considered in the urban design section of this report.

Urban design

Layout and public realm

22. As outlined above, the provision of new public realm and public open space is strongly supported in principle. London Plan Policy 7.5 and draft London Plan Policy D7 aim to ensure that public spaces are secure, accessible, inclusive, connected, easy to understand and maintain, relate to local context, and incorporate the highest quality design. The area around the site has been the subject of substantial new development in recent years, with a commensurate increase in pedestrian activity and pressure on existing public realm. Any new public space should be secure, accessible, inclusive, connected, easy to understand and maintain, relate to local context and incorporate the highest quality design, landscaping, planting, street furniture and services.

23. The proposed layout would provide a publicly accessible courtyard containing a new square fronted by the Kings Head public house and a new entrance to London Bridge underground station. An additional public open space would be created by moving Keats House east, thus linking St. Thomas Street to the courtyard and Borough High Street via the Kings Head Yard and White Hart Yard. This approach would significantly increase the permeability of the block and provide alternative pedestrian routes by connecting to the historic and underused passageways and is welcomed.

24. The new access point to London Underground station, would be created by punching through the rear of the existing access onto Borough High Street, to connect it with the new public square. This would significantly improve access to London Bridge Underground station and divert pedestrian traffic from the overused existing route along St. Thomas Street. This is strongly supported.

Roof garden

25. The applicant also proposes a fourth floor, double height roof garden which would also be publicly accessible. It is essential that new spaces provide a secure, welcoming environment that encourages visitors and tourists to linger. At the initial meeting the fourth floor garden was envisaged as being open, providing the opportunity to experience roof-top level views across the area. The applicant has since changed the design to completely enclose the garden in glass, albeit with the potential for some windows to open. It has been explained that this is to assist with environmental control, necessary to accommodate the planting envisaged in the landscaping proposals and to ensure that the space remained comfortable for the public throughout the year. This would, however, be a space that feels more enclosed than before and less of a public open space in character. Furthermore, it may also be necessary to introduce additional measures to avoid overheating during summer months. Given that there are already successful public open spaces at similar heights, that operate throughout the year, this seems an unnecessary change from what was initially proposed. The applicant should reconsider the inclusion of a less enclosed space, more akin to that originally proposed. The public realm would be expected to be free to use and fully accessible at all times, and this should be secured by s106 agreement by Southwark Council. As part of any planning application the applicant will be expected to set out how appropriate management and maintenance arrangements are in place in line with London Plan Policy 7.5 and draft London Plan Policy D7.

Inclusive design and access

26. London plan Policy 7.2 and draft London Plan Policy D3 require all new development achieves the highest standards of accessibility and inclusive design. Shaping neighbourhoods, Accessible London: Achieving an inclusive environment SPG gives further detail on implementation. Inclusive design was not discussed in detail at the meeting. A design and access statement should be submitted in support of any application. This should include a section that specifically addresses inclusive design, and successfully demonstrates that inclusive design principles have been applied to the design from the outset. It should explain the design rationale behind the proposals and demonstrate how the principles of inclusive design, including the specific access needs of disabled people, have been integrated into the proposed development, and how inclusion will be maintained and managed. Given the nature of the proposals, any submitted Design and Access Statement should specifically address level entrances to all buildings, lifts to public spaces and offices, and how the principles of inclusive design and access have been used to inform the design of the new entrance to the London Underground station.

27. In order to assist, further guidance on what is expected to be set out in the Design and Access Statement is set out in section 3.2 of Shaping neighbourhoods, Accessible London: Achieving an inclusive environment SPG, which is available at this link:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_migrate_files_destination/Accessible%20London%202014_4.pdf

Tall buildings/ Heritage

28. London Plan Policy 7.7 Policy provides that tall buildings should not have unacceptably harmful impacts on their surroundings, whereas draft London Plan Policy D8 seeks to ensure that proposals which include tall buildings are sustainably developed in appropriate locations, and are of the required design quality. The current design is a building which is simple and elegant in form. Initial indications were that there would be a clear distinction between the first four storeys and those above, but these have now been revised following discussions with Southwark Council. The building is now a simpler, more unified architecture which takes cues from existing bridge structures in the surrounding area. This approach is supported as is the applicant's commitment to use CABA design reviews as the design evolves.

29. The current proposals are for a building of 35 storeys, 137 metres AOD. As such the building would have the potential to impact the following LVMF views:

- 2A.1: Parliament Hill looking towards St. Paul's Cathedral.
- 3A.1: Kenwood: The viewing gazebo.
- 12B.1: Southward Bridge, downstream.

30. The applicant has provided a draft Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA) demonstrating the potential impact of the current proposals on these views with existing and consented (cumulative) development. This document indicates that the proposals would be visible within LVMF views 2A.1 and 3A.1, appearing in front of Guy's hospital, at a similar height. Although this would be in the backdrop of St. Paul's Cathedral, the proposals would appear as part of the cluster of tall buildings at London Bridge, which include the Shard, Guy's Hospital and the News Corp building. The building would also appear in view 12B.1, in front of Guy's Hospital and appearing taller, being closer to the view point.

31. The draft TVIA includes wireframe images to indicate that the proposed building would be unlikely to have a significant impact on LVMF views 2A.1 and 3A.1, although it would be a significant addition to view 12B.1.

32. The TVIA demonstrates that the proposed development would not be visible in views from within, or of the Tower of London World Heritage Site, however, it would likely impact upon the setting of the Grade I Listed Southwark Cathedral, as well as views of and from within the Borough Conservation Area. The draft TVIA shows how the proposed tower would be visible in several views of the cathedral, appearing behind the cathedral tower or in the space between the tower and the Shard, currently open sky. This is the most significant heritage concern, although final assessment would depend on detailed design and it would seem likely that any building of the proposed height would lead to a degree of harm to the setting of the cathedral. The current design suggests that this could be less than substantial harm.

33. The current scale and height of the proposals are broadly supported, subject to confirmation of the heritage impacts and the level of public benefit the scheme delivers. The final TVIA should include full rendered images of the proposals in order to assess the visual impact upon all relevant views. The planning application should also include a heritage impact assessment and this should comprehensively assess any potential heritage impacts and set out how any public benefits provided by the scheme weigh against these impacts. This is necessary to address the NPPF and London Plan Policy.

Transport

34. The proposal to provide additional access to the Borough High Street entrance to London Bridge Underground station is strongly supported, subject to detailed design and consultation with London underground. It is understood that the applicant is continuing to engage in pre-application discussions with Transport for London, and this is strongly encouraged. The strategic areas of concern relate to the site's constraints and the fact that there is ongoing and planned construction activity on nearby sites- each seeking to utilise St. Thomas Street for access during construction and operation phases. The applicant is also seeking to use Kings Head Yard and White Hart Yard as part of the servicing strategy, with an off-road loading bay at the south-eastern corner of the new office building. This could raise concerns around pedestrian safety and site access for construction and servicing will be a significant challenge for any proposal on this site. Given the proximity of London Bridge underground station, there may also be measures necessary for the protection of London Underground infrastructure. The applicant should prioritise these issues in their continued engagement with transport for London.

Energy

35. Energy was not discussed in detail at the meeting, however, the applicant's draft information was considered following the meeting and the following advice is provided by the GLA Energy Team.

36. Energy assessment planning guidance is available on the GLA website (March 2016) at the following link:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/WHAT-WE-DO/PLANNING/PLANNING-APPLICATIONS-AND-DECISIONS/PRE-PLANNING-APPLICATION-MEETING-SERVICE-0>

37. The developments carbon emission figures should be reported against a Part L 2013 baseline. The applicant should commit to meeting Part L 2013 by efficiency measures alone. Sample SAP BRUKL sheets including efficiency measures alone should be provided to support the savings claimed.

38. Evidence should be provided on how the demand for cooling and the overheating risk will be minimised through passive design in line with London Plan Policy 5.9 and draft London Plan Policy SI2. The applicant should particularly consider how best to mitigate any restrictions posed by, for example, local air quality or noise issues. Dynamic overheating modelling in line with CIBSE Guidance TM52 and TM49 should be undertaken. An area weighted average for the actual and notion cooling demand should be provided and the applicant should demonstrate that the actual building's cooling demand is lower than the notional (MJ/m2).

39. The applicant should investigate opportunities for, and prioritise connection to nearby district heating networks. Evidence of communication with the relevant parties (i.e. stakeholders, local authority energy officers) should be provided given that the development is located in a district heating network opportunity area and in close proximity to a number of proposed networks.

40. The site should be served by a single energy centre and the applicant should commit to providing a communal heating network suitable for connection to wider district networks now or in the future, in line with London Plan Policy 5.2 and draft London Plan Policy SI3. All uses on the site should be connected to the communal heat network, including the small retail units and any community uses proposed. A drawing/schematic indicating that all uses are connected to the network should be provided. Measures in place for district heating future proofing should also be provided.

41. A plan showing the size, internal layout and proposed location of the energy centre should be provided.

42. The applicant should follow the energy hierarchy when considering the potential for combined heat and power (CHP) and renewable energy technologies. Should a CHP be proposed, an Air Quality assessment should also be submitted and the energy assessment should confirm that the NOx emission standards set out in the SPG on Sustainable Design and Construction will be met.

43. In line with draft London Plan Policy SI3 and London Plan Policy 5.7 the applicant should investigate the inclusion of on-site renewable energy generation. If solar technologies are proposed, a plan showing the proposed location of the installation should be provided.

Flood risk

44. Flood risk was not discussed at either meeting, however, the site is a major development within flood risk zone 3 so a flood risk assessment (FRA) will be required and the proposals should comply with Draft London Plan Policy SI12 and London Plan Policy 5.12, and a full SuDS/drainage strategy will be required in line with draft London Plan Policy SI12 and London Plan Policy 5.13

45. The surface water management proposals should look to achieve greenfield runoff rates whilst maximising the use of above ground SuDS. The proposals appear to show considerable potential for the inclusion of such above ground measures within the existing design.

46. The site is defended to 1 in 1000 years protection by the Thames Tidal Defences however the FRA will need to include details on how the site will be affected should overtopping or a breach occur to those tidal defences. Given the site's proximity to the River Thames it may be located within an area at risk of flooding during overtopping or a breach in the defences so further details will be required as part of the FRA to demonstrate that the building remains safe, operational and able to recover from a flood quickly. Measures such as the following should be implemented:

- Subscription to the EA Flood Warning Service
- Drawing up a Flood Emergency Plan
- Ensuring that the building remains safe and comfortable in the event of a flood, this should include ensuring that all utility services can be maintained operational during a flood, for example by placing vital services, such as electricity supplies, lift power and control gear, in flood-proof enclosures

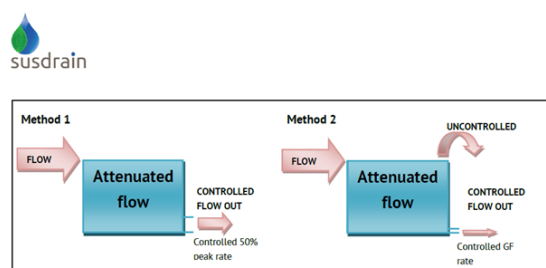
47. The site itself is shown on Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Risk mapping to be at a low risk of flooding from surface water however it does lie within a Critical Drainage Area, defined by the Southwark Lead Local Flood Authority. As such, the application of draft London Plan Policy SI13 and London Plan Policy 5.13 will be important considerations. The applicant must demonstrate how it is proposed to manage any risk of surface water flooding from external sources whilst not increasing surface water flood risk to the local area.

48. The proposals indicate the inclusion of areas of new public realm which should be designed to incorporate Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) measures. The hardstanding areas within the public realm should either be constructed using permeable surfacing or at the very least be designed to drain towards planted SuDS elements. New trees should be designed to accept and provide attenuation of surface water (SuDS Tree Pits) and there may be potential to incorporate raingardens into the public realm design as well.

49. The development proposals include the provision of an elevated garden. This should be designed to manage rainwater as close to source as possible, as per the drainage hierarchy, in the form of a green/blue roof and where possible the attenuated rainwater should be used within the building for non-potable water demands (rainwater harvesting).

50. It is evident that some of the existing buildings that are to be retained have exposed downpipes, taking rainwater directly from the roofs to the sewer. The potential to disconnect these and direct them into new attenuation planters within the public realm should also be explored.

51. If any sub surface attenuation is required, as a last resort, to enable the site to achieve greenfield run-off rates then the applicant should consider using the Method 2 attenuation tank design, taken from the CIRIA Susdrain website as shown below:



From Susdrain Factsheet "Designing attenuation storage for redeveloped sites", by Anthony McCloy
http://www.susdrain.org/files/resources/fact_sheets/01_15_fact_sheet_attenuation_for_redeveloped.pdf

Conclusion

52. GLA officers welcome the opportunity to engage with the applicant on the proposals for the redevelopment of the site.

53. The principle of development would be supported subject to further details relating to flexible and affordable office provision. The current scale and height of the proposals are broadly supported, subject to confirmation of the heritage impacts and the level of public benefit the scheme delivers. The improvements to the pedestrian network and the public realm through and around the site strongly supported, and the proposed provision of new public open space welcomed. The applicant should reconsider the design of the fourth floor open space and robustly demonstrate that the proposals would deliver substantial public benefit in order to outweigh any less than substantial harm identified to nearby heritage assets. There are a number of transport issues to be resolved and the applicant is strongly encouraged to continue engagement with TfL. Further work is also required with regards to energy and flood risk. GLA officers would welcome further meetings as the scheme evolves.

for further information, contact GLA Planning Unit (Development Management Team):

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