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LONDON
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bloomsburylives.co.uk

1st December 2019

Developers of Selkirk House / Travelodge

**Pre-application advice following the presentation held on 05/11/2019
outlining plans for the Travelodge Site and West Central Street.**

Thank you for inviting the BCAAC to a presentation detailing an outline of your plans for redevelopment at 1 Museum Street and surrounding buildings.

The BCAAC is the statutory consultee on all developments in Camden occurring within conservation areas south of Euston Road, with the exception of Hatton Garden. This development concerns the Travelodge building and some surrounding buildings on West Central Street. The Travelodge building is not within any of our conservation areas but is surrounded by and in view of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and the Seven Dials Conservation Area. The buildings on West Central Street lie within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

We are pleased by the overall flavour of the development, although we cannot say much at this early stage, and would like further information at the earliest opportunity.

We were pleased to see particular consideration given to the street environment surrounding and within the development, which is currently in a poor state, and we are particularly pleased to see that the negative effect of the car park and surrounding structures will be mitigated on West Central Street, and that negative frontages onto High Holborn will be redeveloped. We are pleased to see that consideration is being taken of important views to and from the British Museum. Especially the redevelopment on West Central Street offers a real opportunity to enhance a forgotten and dilapidated part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

As we have no detailed proposals to comment upon at this stage we will advise on how this development could enhance the relevant conservation areas.

We would recommend that the negative frontages onto High Holborn could take inspiration from the buildings on Grape Street, which were praised for their aesthetic value during the presentation. Continuing that terrace round from Grape Street onto High Holborn would be an effective and simple way to make a dated façade into an impressive positive contributor to the conservation area. It would also be beneficial for the architectural merit of the façades on Grape Street to be imitated on High Holborn as it opens up a greater audience to these forgotten buildings. Currently it is understandably rare for the public to venture down Grape Street and even less appreciate these buildings.

We would recommend that any developments on West Central Street take precedent from the existing buildings. It would be particularly pleasing if the redevelopments on

the southern and western side of West Central Street could imitate the existing buildings on the northern and eastern sides to create an interesting Italianate shopping arcade.

We would hope that as part of the development the poor quality street surfacing materials could be replaced with heritage equivalents. The widespread degraded state of the street environment in our conservation areas is a point of concern and we take the opportunity to have appropriate street surfacing reinstated whenever possible.

We would like to draw your attention to the fact that the BCAAC opposes increases in height as a matter of priority, as our conservation areas are under immense pressure for redevelopment and increases in height and volume are irreversible changes that negatively affect our conservation areas. This particularly applies to the Travelodge building.

We would also like to draw your attention to the fact that the development is occurring within the Saxon trading settlement of Ludenwic and so any excavations may be an opportunity to carry out archaeological research.

We hope to hear from you soon with more detailed plans for the development so that we can comment further on the proposals. We would also be interested in any historical research that has been done into the site.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Owen Ward', written in a cursive style.

Owen Ward

On Behalf of the BCAAC