

Southwark Council Queens Road Office
CONSULTATION PT. ONE JANUARY 2018

Consultation Activities

As part of the first phase of the consultation, the Applicant consulted formally with stakeholders and residents in January 2018. The first phase programme of consultation included:

- Emailing 131 stakeholders on 11 January 2018, introducing the proposals and inviting them to the public exhibition;
- Writing to 1,625 residents who live within a 250m radius of the site on 13 January 2018 introducing them to the proposals and inviting them to the public exhibition;
- Advertising the public exhibition in The Blackbird Bakery opposite the site;
- Knocking on the doors of residents living adjacent to the site (King's Grove, Queens Road and Asylum Road) on the evening of 10 January 2018 to introduce them to the scheme and invite them to attend a residents' meeting;
- Displaying the exhibition materials in Southwark Council's offices at 132 Queens Road between 0900 and 1700 from Monday 22 January 2018 until 5 February 2018;
- Displaying materials on a dedicated webpage (www.southwark.gov.uk/QRofficeconsultation);
- Holding a residents' meeting on 24 January 2018;
- Holding a public exhibition on 25 January 2018; and
- Ongoing engagement with residents and stakeholders via telephone and email.

13 people attended the residents' meeting. These residents lived adjacent to the site on: King's Grove; London and Brighton Apartments on Queens Road; and Asylum Road. Verbal feedback was noted down and incorporated into the feedback from this phase of consultation.

12 people attended the public exhibition. 20 people submitted written feedback, either by: completing a feedback form at the exhibition; submitting an online feedback form; or submitting feedback via email.

The feedback form was designed to garner both qualitative and quantitative feedback. The feedback from the residents' meeting and the feedback received via email has been analysed as part of the qualitative and quantitative feedback below. A summary of the feedback is as follows:

Quantitative Feedback

Respondents felt most positive about: the approach to environmental sustainability; the approach to demolition and construction; and the public exhibition. Respondents felt most negative about: the overall proposals; and the approach to screening

Six quantitative questions were asked on the feedback form. Of those who completed the form and answered the questions, the feedback was as follows:

- "Overall, I support the Queens Road Office proposals": 25% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement; 12.5% felt neutral; and 62.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- "I like the design of the building": 6.25% agreed with this statement; 43.75% felt neutral; and 37.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- "I feel that the approach to screening (overlooking) is sufficient": 26.66% agreed with this statement; 6.66% felt neutral; and 66.66% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- "I think that adequate steps have been taken to ensure the building is environmentally sustainable (friendly)": 40% agreed with this statement; 13.33% felt neutral; and 46.66% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- "I am comfortable with the approach to demolition and construction": 40% agreed with this statement; 20% felt neutral; and 40% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- "I found this public exhibition helpful and informative": 46.15% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement; 30.76% felt neutral; and 23.07% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Qualitative Feedback

The most prevalent comments made related to the building's footprint, height and massing and the impact that this would have on neighbouring residents, particularly in terms of both sunlight and overlooking. Other popular themes included: noise; the provision of trees; the design of the building; the impact on traffic and parking; and the provision of a community meeting space.

These qualitative comments were gathered through a combination of written feedback forms, emails and verbal feedback at the residents' meeting. It has been summarised under the key themes as set out in the written feedback form.

Design

- It was commented that the façades need improving, particularly the façade on Queens Road, which was felt by some respondents to be out of character with the area. One respondent said that a wooden fascia would be hard to maintain.
- Respondents felt the proposals represented an overdevelopment of the site and that the proposed height and massing lacked sensitivity to the local context. Concerns were raised about overlooking and overshadowing neighbouring properties and requests were made to lower the height of the building and reduce the massing and footprint of the building.
- One respondent requested that the sunlight survey be updated to include the impact after 4pm as well as to provide more detail on the impact on the London & Brighton Apartments; another requested they be updated to demonstrate the impact on 126a Asylum Road.
- Two respondents requested that the proposals be reconsidered based on the impact on the property at 126a Asylum Road. It was also claimed that the designs had overestimated the height of this building and that they needed to be amended to reflect the correct dimensions.
- The request was made to move the building further away from residential properties on King's Grove.
- The request was made for windows on the back of the office to be appropriately screened to ensure that users of the office could not look into neighbouring properties. The suggestion was made to use opaque film at eye level.
- In order to reduce the massing of the building, respondents requested that the Applicant review whether the building could be moved forward on Asylum Road in order to increase the distance from the King's Grove buildings.
- It was requested that white materials were not used on the side of the building adjacent to the properties of King's Grove to avoid any glare.
- A number of respondents said it was hard to respond fully on the design as they would require more detailed plans.

Environmental Impacts

- Noise was raised as a concern by respondents, particularly noise generated by the plant equipment. The location of the plant (on the roof) was questioned due to proximity to existing properties. One respondent offered to grant access for noise tests to be performed from their apartment.
- Respondents supported the use of trees for screening with one wanting to see more trees and another wanting to see larger trees used to screen the building from King's Grove. One respondent commented that mature trees on Asylum Road had already been lost and should be replaced.
- The provision of green space to the north of the site was supported, with a number of respondents supporting the provision of more open green space on site.

Environmental Sustainability

- Whilst some respondents felt that the approach to environmental sustainability was good, many felt they had not had enough detail to be able to comment.
- Rather than a modular building, one respondent wanted to see a concrete system with passive controls to reduce heating costs. Another respondent questioned the location of plant equipment on the roof.

Demolition / Construction

- The use of off-site construction methods was generally supported by respondents as it was felt to be less disruptive. One respondent felt they were unable to comment until they had more detail about the construction procedure.
- Concern was raised about the demolition and construction process generating dust, noise and more traffic.
- One respondent questioned the gap in the timetable between demolition (May) and construction (October / November).

Public Open Space

- Respondents wanted to see enhancements made to the public open space surrounding the site. Suggestions made included more planting (trees and climbers) as well as the provision of street lighting (including solar lights).
- One respondent requested that sufficient provision be made for open space inside the development to ensure that visitors did not loiter outside.
- One respondent suggested that the Applicant should run a competition or speak to local people to get their views on public open space improvements.

Any other comments

- On the one hand, the comment was made that additional staff in the area would enhance the local economy and support local businesses. However, others felt that this would cause a strain on local infrastructure.
- A number of respondents raised concerns about the loss of the community centre as it was used as a space for community meetings. The request was made to ensure the provision of a community meeting space as part of these proposals.
- Parking was raised as a concern, with respondents anticipating an increase in on-street parking as a result of the development.
- It was suggested that the proposed new offices be located at an alternative site.
- The principle of the relocation of the community centre was questioned by a number of respondents.

A list of recommendations suggested by respondents has been summarised in Table 1.1 below, along with the Applicant's response.

Table 1.1

Design	
Reconsider the design of the facades, particularly on Queens Road	The Applicant has progressed the design and provided further details on the proposed materials and design features.
Reconsider the height, footprint and massing of the building	The height of the proposed building does match the surrounding buildings. A step has been introduced into the first-floor slab and storey heights have been reduced to lower the height of the building from the previously stated levels: 1 st floor parapet lowered by 720mm; 2 nd floor parapet lowered by 950mm.
Publish more detailed plans	New feedback has been gathered on the draft plans, the Applicant is working up the proposals in more detail. These will be published as part of the second phase of the consultation
Publish dimensions, including height of the building and distances from existing properties	The basic dimensions have been published. More detailed dimensions will be published as part of the second phase of the consultation

Reconsider the impact of the proposals on 126a Asylum Road	The façade at 2 nd floor has been moved 3.6m away from 126a Asylum Road to comply with daylighting guidance, office window sills have been raised above eye level and projecting screens added to avoid overlooking.
Move the building further away from the gardens of the properties on King's Grove	The top floor has been moved by around 600mm away from King's Grove houses
Review the design of windows on the side of the building adjacent to King's Grove to minimise possibility of overlooking – e.g. using opaque film	The Applicant has produced a design proposal to avoid overlooking of ground floor windows and gardens.
Ensure that the materials on the side of the building adjacent to King's Grove do not generate glare	The materials used will not generate glare. The first two storeys will be Southwark stock or Atlas blue brick with timber slatted screens masking windows. The upper floor that is set back a further 4.45m will be coloured metal compatible in tone to the Stock brick.
Review prospect of moving building forward onto Asylum Road in order to generate more floorspace to enable a reduction in height elsewhere	The 1 st and 2 nd floors have been projected 600mm towards Asylum Road, which has allowed the top floor to be moved 600mm away from Kings Grove houses.
Environmental Impact	
Publish noise studies	These have been published
Conduct noise studies to ensure plant on roof does not affect immediate residents	These have been published
Publish daylight / sunlight studies	These have been published
Update the sunlight surveys to include the impact beyond 4pm, and to include the impact on 126a Asylum Road	These have been updated and will be published as part of the second phase of the consultation process.
Consider further screening, including planting more mature trees	Screening to Kings Grove gardens already includes tree planting and size of new trees will be governed by the Tree Officer to match those being removed, so they will be large trees and not saplings.
Retain the provision of green space on the north of the site and look to increase the provision of open space.	The north elevation is being retained as 'green' space.
Environmental Sustainability	
Consider adopting a concrete system with passive controls to reduce heating costs	This is not our intention and the building is already highly efficient in use and during construction.

Reconsider the location of plant equipment to ensure minimum impact on adjacent residences	The plant is already in locations that minimise any action on residents and is screened both visually and acoustically.
Demolition / Construction	
Ensure there is no gap in the timetable between demolition and construction	That is our intention and any 'gap' between the trades will be limited.
Publish more information on the construction process	The Applicant will publish additional details at a later stage should planning permission be granted.
Public Open Space	
Consider ways of enhancing the public open space next to the site, including additional planting and street lighting	We will approach the Queens Road development team to see if they have any suggestions for this.
Run a competition or ask local people to come up with suggestions to improve public open space	We will consider this and ask the Queens Road development team to look into it.
Other Comments	
Consider the impact of additional staff on local infrastructure, including parking and traffic	This is a high priority for us and we are carefully considering the impact on local transport as we develop our plans. The transport impact will also be carefully considered at the planning application stage.
Make provision for a community meeting space as part of the proposals	We are looking into this and are engaged in discussions with the Modernise and Facilities Teams to see if this is viable.
Consider an alternative location for the new office	This has already been undertaken and a review of locations in the borough was undertaken in 2017.
Reconsider the plans to relocate the community centre	This decision has already been taken by the Council and users of the day centre have already transferred to other centres and service providers.