

**Planning Consultative Committee**

Shane Baker,  
Development Control,  
London Borough of Hounslow

By email.

[date] 2017  
Ref: BCC xxx

**DRAFT**

Dear Shane,

**Planning Application: A4/Ealing Road site (aka Site C of the former Alfa Laval site).**  
**. Ref: ●**

The Brentford Community Council has considered this application and they have asked me to write to you.

**We are opposed to the proposal owing to the considerable height of the tower part of the proposed building in the north-east section of the site which we consider to be too tall by three storeys and we therefore request refusal of the application on that ground. We also have other concerns that we set out below for action as appropriate.**

## **1. Background**

1.1 This relatively shallow corner site has a full planning consent which has been 'implemented' (although the land appears to remain a completely vacant site) but which the applicant considers to be commercially unviable. The applicant has applied for a new permission and made a presentation to the Brentford Community Council on April 10<sup>th</sup> 2017, and made an oral statement of commercial non-viability of the consented scheme at the meeting, but did not substantiate this statement to us.

1.2 The applicant now proposes an office/B1 scheme of 7 storeys with a 13-storey tower in the north-east part of the site. The scheme will also include a ground floor café, and lift access to basement parking (16 spaces) from a vehicular entrance and exit on the south of the site. There will also be 43 bicycle spaces in the basement.

1.3 The proposal would increase the size of the currently permitted scheme from 47,000 sq. ft GIA to 70,000 sq. ft GIA. The proposed scheme includes certain benefits in the form of a planted area to the perimeter of the site along the A4 frontage, a 1.2m setback from the neighbouring building to the west and the installation of a 'green' wall.

## **2.0 The tower element of the proposed building**

2.1 We are concerned that the height of the tower is intrusive with respect to, and completely out of keeping with, the neighbouring residential development to the south of the site resulting in a significant loss of visual amenity. Although there is no effect on daylighting and sunlight, as the scheme lies to the north of that residential building, whose habitable rooms mainly face east and west, the visual detriment of the scheme as proposed would be considerable.

2.2 Questions of overlooking and loss of privacy for the residential occupants of the building to the south are to be dealt with, we understand, by the use of obscured glazing in the proposed scheme where necessary, and we assume that this will be covered in appropriate conditions if permission is granted.

2.3 The applicant has presented the scheme as being appropriate in height with regard to the other developments on the overall former Alfa Laval site, of which this forms the easternmost part, but the proposed scheme is significantly taller than those other developments. It has also been proposed as appropriate in 'marking the corner' of the roads but a building of a lower height would achieve this equally well.

2.4 The concept for the tower has been designed as a 'lantern' in a faux 'Art Deco' style, but we did not find this argument convincing: the 'lantern' idea has nothing to do with the site or the locale (there are no other 'lanterns' in the area) and is not compelling in terms of townscape. In any case, the attempt at a mock 'Art Deco' appearance merely by providing the tower with a 'pleated' façade, is not successfully achieved. If anything, this approach to the tower element makes the proposal visually very incongruous with regard to the actual townscape; in this location, a consistent approach across all the façades of the building would be more appropriate visually and would show an appropriate integration of the taller part of the scheme with the remainder – there is no functional reason why the tower should be distinguished from the remainder of the building.

2.5 The height of the proposed building is out of keeping with the neighbouring buildings to the west and is significantly visually intrusive with regard to the residential building to the south, in our view being three storeys

too tall. **We therefore recommend refusal on this ground.** We consider that if an application were made with the tower element reduced in height by three storeys and integrated with the overall façade of the whole building, this would represent an acceptable level of loss of visual amenity for the residential building to the south and would bring the proposal in line with the other schemes to the west that have been developed on the larger site.

### **3.0 Concerns about the additional strain that the implementation of this permission will place on the local bus service.**

3.1 We are concerned about the access of occupants to the proposed scheme. The working occupancy of the building will be around 500 people. This is clearly a far greater number than allowed for in the proposed car and bike spaces on site (61 in total), so the main burden of travel to the proposed scheme will be borne by the local bus service. The current bus services in that section of the road are already over capacity at peak times.

3.2 If consent is granted to the scheme, an appropriate s. 106 contribution should be required as a condition of the consent, such contribution to be assessed by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with London Transport, to allow funding for an enhanced public bus service to serve the area of which the site forms part. This should be at a level to facilitate the travel requirements of the significant number of additional users at peak hours from the proposed scheme so that it does not exacerbate the existing capacity problems on public bus services in this locale.

### **4.0 Concerns about the rear car park entrance.**

4.1 The basement car park is to be served by a single car lift accessed from a short private road running along the south side of the site. There are 16 spaces and as only one car can enter or exit the basement at any one time, there are concerns that this will create significant congestion at peak hours, leading to a problem with cars backing up onto the public highway. We recommend, if consent is granted, that the applicant should be required to provide two separate car lifts or a ramp to service the basement to avoid backing up at peak hours.

Yours sincerely

Denis Browne  
Chairman, Planning consultative Committee

cc Stephen Browne (BCC)  
Others?