

3 Strutton Ground SW1P 2HX (16_02061_FULL)

Comments submitted to WCC online 3rd May 2016

We were pleased to be consulted on this scheme some months ago, but find that there has been little alteration to the scheme and our reservations are the same as were expressed at that time:

The building is very tall for its context, as acknowledged in the statement found in the D&AS Conclusion, which suggests that the building will 'mediate[ing] between the larger scale of Victoria Street and lower structures along Old Pye Street and Strutton Ground'. In fact the building will not mediate but rather dominate over the corner between these two streets, both of which have mainly three and four storey structures. Further along Old Pye Street the Peabody flats are six storey but they are slightly set back from the street frontage, thus reducing their bulk.

The fact that 55 Victoria Street is a taller building than the proposed scheme does not reduce the impact that this building will have on the light levels in Old Pye Street and the buildings opposite. From the CGIs (eg p.24 and 25 of the D&AS) it would appear that the proposed building's skyline will project significantly above that of the rear façade of 55 Victoria Street, but without a drawing showing the existing and proposed section this is not clear. What is clear is that the building extends down Old Pye Street much further than the existing structure so that the light loss will be even more significant there.

We suggest that planning permission is refused unless a drawing can be produced showing a section through the proposed building, showing the existing and proposed profiles, and demonstrating that there is not a major difference in the skyline as seen from the street below and the houses opposite.

We agree that the treatment of the brickwork façade will give the building a livelier appearance than the alternative stacks of bathroom windows, although it will be difficult to appreciate from the street below. We are concerned, however, that the unusual brickwork treatment may be unsightly in the long run if these niches attract nesting birds. This is in contrast to the existing building, which has weathered rather well and helps to reflect light into this narrow street.