

The following was submitted to WCC via their online form on 23rd September 2015

New Scotland Yard, 10 Broadway, SW1H 0BG – Ref. 15/07497/FULL

Our Society was grateful for the chance to comment on this scheme during the development stage, both at the offices of GVA and at the public consultation. We were pleased to see some modifications to the façade in the finished scheme. However, while we acknowledge that there are merits in the proposed scheme, especially in the improvement the public realm, we are concerned about the following:

The Height of the buildings fronting Victoria Street

To the west of the site there is a series of tall buildings along Victoria Street, some of them the same height as the existing set-back element of New Scotland Yard. The part of New Scotland Yard that fronts Victoria Street is the same height as the buildings beyond it on Victoria Street, on both sides of this eastern end of the street. These followed the pattern of earlier buildings along this comparatively modern street ever since it was first built, and their proportions in relation to Westminster Abbey and the other buildings around Broad Sanctuary are acceptable. However, if a precedent is set for tall towers along this stretch of Victoria Street the visual environment of Westminster Abbey and Parliament Square will be threatened.

Affordable Housing

The supply of affordable housing is very low, thus reducing the mixed-use aspect of this development. Moreover we understand that this affordable housing will not be social, which would be far more valuable in addressing the housing crisis in London.

Mixed Use

The mix would be improved if some office space could be reserved for start-up companies, because small office units are becoming more difficult to find in this area. Some space for community use would be popular.

Appearance and materials

There was a very negative reaction among our members to the materials and detailing of the facades. The detailing of the patterned facades has been very much improved since the early version we saw, but the heavy articulation of the solid patterned grid on the façade still makes the buildings appear quite overwhelming, well illustrated in figs 101 & 102 of the Design and Access Statement.

There is also a problem with the scale of the façade pattern in relation to neighbouring office buildings, illustrated in the elevation fig 091. Moreover the strong pattern does not cope well with situations such as the sharp corner facing Strutton Ground, where the detailing is rather weak just where one would expect

to see an acknowledgment of this particularly prominent feature. Likewise the ground floor openings are poorly articulated (see Fig. 100).