

President: Sir Nicholas Underhill



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Vincent Nally
Development Planning
Westminster City Hall
64 Victoria Street
London SW1E 6QP

17 November 2014

Dear Mr Nally

14/06964/FULL

Eggington House 25-28 Buckingham Gate London SW1E 6LD

Demolition of existing office building and redevelopment to provide a replacement building over two basement levels, lower ground, ground and eight upper levels comprising 24 residential dwellings (4 x 1 bed, 13 x 2 beds and 7 x 3 beds) including 14 car parking spaces at basement level, accessed from Buckingham Gate.

The Design and Access statement is very clearly written and illustrated, and gives a convincing justification for many of the design decisions made in this scheme. The proposed building is respectful of the neighbouring properties with, it appears, insignificant diminution of daylight to the properties in Catherine Place behind it.

It is nonetheless disappointing that the front façade does not in the end reflect the design analysis described:

The ground floor and projecting entrance are weak elements of the façade; they do not provide 'an element of grandeur' (5.5.2 Design and Access Statement). It is a pity, for instance, that the entrance bay is not accented beyond the ground floor, as it is on the existing building. The treatment of the upper, recessed floors is also unimaginative.

The amount of metalwork, made up of the ornamental screens across the French windows and the balcony railings, will appear as an over-dominant feature on the façade, especially as the façade will be seen mainly at an angle.

The interestingly patterned brickwork, designed to enliven the façade, will, for the same reason, not be very visible, recessed behind the bay windows and the railings. Examining the local mansion

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blocks it is clear that decorative flourishes occur on the projecting window bays more commonly than on the main face of the wall between them.

While our Society finds the scale and nature of the development appropriate for the site, we would suggest that further thought is given to the front façade.

We note that there is no affordable housing provided on site and assume that this is provided elsewhere.

We trust our observations and comments are of assistance, and ask that our comments be made known to the Committee and Council.

Yours Sincerely
for and on behalf of the Thorny Island Society

Lucy Peck