

President: Sir Nicholas Underhill

Chairman: Miss June A Stubbs MBE MCSD FRSA



Friends of St. James's Park and The Green Park

39 Westminster Mansions Great Smith Street London SW1P 3BP Telephone (020) 7222 2449

John Walker Esq.,
Operational Director
Development Planning
Westminster City Hall
64 Victoria Street
London SW1E 6QP

By email also : southplanningteam@westminster.gov.uk

For the attention of Matthew Mason

25th April 2012

Dear Mr Mason

Ref 12/02431/ FULL

Vandon House, 1 Vandon Street London, SW1H OAH

Demolition of existing building and construction of new eight storey building plus basement, to provide 61 bedroom hotel at lower ground, ground, first, second, third, fourth and part fifth floor levels: and six residential units at part fifth, sixth and seventh floor levels (1x1 bed, 3x2 bed and 2 x 3 bed) Provision of plant and associated enclosure and solar panels at roof level.

Thank you for sending a copy of the planning application relating to the above proposal, with your letter dated 2nd April 2012. We have visited the site and reviewed the application documents.

The Outline Heritage Assessment refers to the building as being for the purpose of offices but we understood that it was an hostel. It is in some respects a pity that the context has been so changed by new and much taller buildings that it has become somewhat overwhelmed. That being the case and also that the building is neither listed nor has significant features that might otherwise mitigate against its proposed demolition, we have reviewed the application documents as a replacement building.

With regard to the elevations we are concerned that there is insufficient information regarding the design of the windows, including the various set backs, and this should be requested from the applicant. While there is a terrace at the 7th floor there is no indication as to how it is to be accessed - no openings are indicated.

We welcome the use of a warm "mixed brick" as indicated in the Design and Access Statement: but we are concerned that the 'base' of the building is proposed to be "grey honed granite/composite". We would prefer to see a lighter colour finish. While appreciating the distinction that the design proposes, a light stone colour is more in keeping with the traditional materials of this location. Secondly the site frontage is over shadowed by its surroundings and will tend to appear darker; and thirdly the grey base suggests more of an office use than a welcoming hotel, such as is demonstrated on the opposite side of the street. We recommend that further thought be given to these issues.

Subject to the above points the Society supports the application in principle. We trust our observations will be of assistance and ask that our comments be made known to the Committee.

Yours Sincerely
For and on behalf of the Thorney Island Society

PP Tom Ball

June A Stubbs
Chairman

