

8 Albert Embankment

PROOF OF EVIDENCE

IMPACT ON EXISTING CULTURAL ASSETS

OCTOBER 2020

Proof of evidence for A. David Crawforth BA (hons) Fine Art, RAS PG Dip Painting.

Witness to the longstanding cultural use of the former Lambeth Ragged Schools by the educational charity Beaconsfield, for 25 years, positioned in the Albert Embankment Conservation Area boundary of 18 July 2016, and as witness to the potential deleterious impact of 8 Albert Embankment proposals on:

- visual impact and overdevelopment
- operational daylight.

Representing the collaborative partnership of David Crawforth and Naomi Siderfin BA (hons) Fine Art, RA PG Dip Painting: founding co-directors of Beaconsfield, an educational charity registered and operational from **22 Newport Street, London SE11 6AY**.



1.0 BACKGROUND AND QUALIFICATIONS OF THE WITNESS

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1.2 The artistic partnership between Crawforth and Siderfin was initially based at Vauxhall Gardens Community Centre's studios, SE11 5SQ (1991-95) under the moniker of Nosepaint, and then at the former Lambeth Ragged Schools, later identified as Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall, 22 Newport Street, SE11 6AY (1995-present) under the moniker of BAW (Beaconsfield ArtWorks).

1.3 David Crawforth and Naomi Siderfin have worked in collaboration as artists and curators since 1992, based in North Lambeth. Both obtained Post-graduate qualifications in Painting from Royal Academy Schools London (1990) and before that BA (hons) Fine Art from Kingston University (1987) and Newcastle University (1985) respectively. Naomi Siderfin is currently completing doctoral research at Slade School of Fine Art, University College London.

1.4 Both artist-curators have taught in Higher Education as Visiting Lecturers across UK art schools since 1993. They are invited as experts in contemporary art: site-specific installation, radical art practice, curatorial practice and venue-based programming, by institutions including Royal College of Art, Slade School of Fine Art, University of the Arts London (Camberwell, Central St Martins, Chelsea, LCC, Wimbledon), Guildhall School of Drama and Music, Universities of Hull, Middlesex, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Reading and others.

1.5 Notable international curatorial partnerships have included Finnish Institute in London; Foam the Dutch Museum of Photography; Helsinki Contemporary; Henie Onstad Centre and Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo; Project, Dublin; Titanik, Turku; Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius: and in the UK, Tate Britain and Orchard Gallery Derry. Crawforth and Siderfin's curatorial projects in the UK have been publicly supported through Arts Council England, British Council, DCMS, London Borough of Lambeth and other London cultural authorities, since 1994.

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2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 Beaconsfield has been housed in the former Lambeth Ragged Schools building since 1995 and, for more than twenty-five years, blazed a trail in the art world as an experimental art laboratory and gallery, known for leading developments in contemporary visual art and curatorial practice. As the pioneering organization of the much cited and applauded local Gallery District in North Lambeth Beaconsfield would welcome the addition of a Fire Museum to the existing cultural circle, which includes Cabinet Gallery, Gasworks and Newport Street Gallery—although not at the price of destroying the viability of other businesses through inappropriate development.



East-facing public pedestrian entrance to Beaconsfield, 22 Newport Street, in 2015.

2.2 Recognised as a cultural pioneer in North Lambeth, we have previously been feted for a role in place-making initiatives, from our position on the edge of the biggest regeneration

project in Europe, Nine Elms. Between 2013-17 Beaconsfield was active in the Vauxhall Nine Elms cultural partnership, hosting Railtrack's launch of the VNEB partnership and co-commissioning a cross-gallery project with Vauxhall's Gasworks, Battersea's Pumphouse Gallery and Bankside's Tate Exchange in 2017: a collaboration spanning the three London Boroughs of Lambeth, Wandsworth and Southwark. Encroaching beyond the large cluster of high-rise development in Nine Elms, our historic site is currently threatened with engulfment by tall buildings in a designated conservation area.

2.3. Beaconsfield has been engaged with regeneration and the development of a cultural quarter in North Lambeth since the turn of the Millenium. In the early days of corporate development in the vicinity, in 2006 we curated a symposium focused on the widespread phenomenon of arts-led regeneration: 'Push the Envelope: sustaining arts communities on the left-bank' (**Appendix A**). Guest speakers included Peter St John of Caruso St John, the architect of Damien Hirst's Newport Street Gallery that had just achieved Planning Permission, and Sheena Wagstaff, then Chief Curator of the recently opened Tate Modern. The symposium took as its starting point the particularity of Vauxhall and development in its environs. It was not until 2015 that British art star Damien Hirst opened his Newport Street Gallery on the opposite side of our street. As a positive knock-on effect of this cultural expansion, we witnessed a huge increase in footfall to Beaconsfield Gallery.



Newport Street Gallery, looking north from Beaconsfield showing railway viaduct (left), showing retained pediment and oculus windows influenced by the Lambeth Ragged Schools neo-classical frontage and showing low rise residential housing beyond NSG.

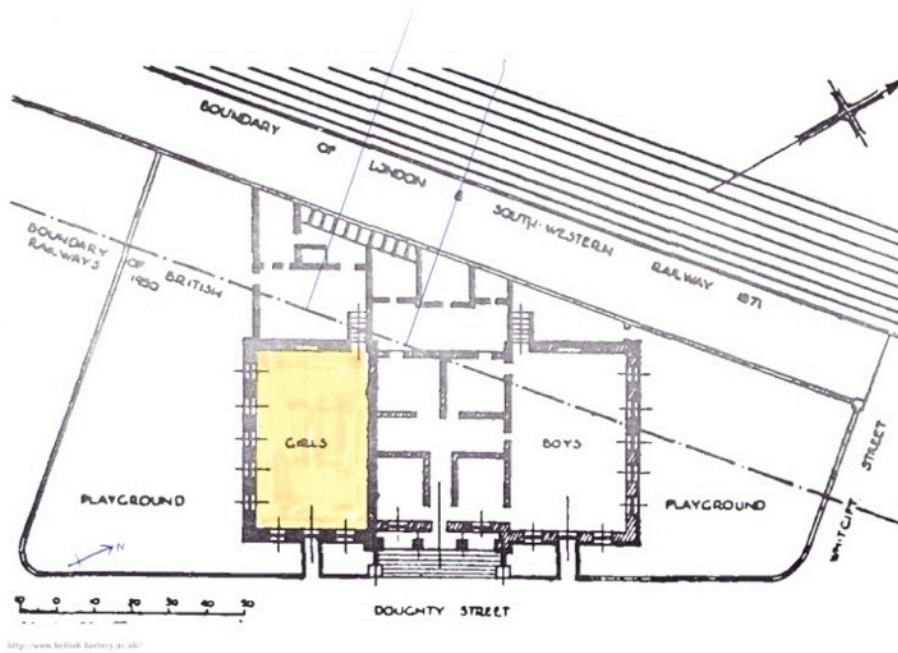
2.4 The Lambeth Ragged Schools were commissioned (1849-1851) by Henry Beaufoy FRS in order to provide for the most deprived children of the community. The building was originally three times the size and cost £10,000, with a further £4,000 laid down for maintenance and is a fine example of social provision generated by the philanthropic Ragged School movement that predated the introduction of state education from 1870. (**Appendix B**)



Illustrated London News 1851, courtesy Lambeth Archives, Minet Library.

2.5 Later in the century the building was used by Royal Doulton: the original Doulton ceramics works were in nearby Vauxhall Walk, and then in a number of local sites on Albert Embankment and Black Prince Road, the last of which is listed and is still in use for small businesses, a testament to the traditional occupancy of the area by light industry and small scale community enterprise.

2.6 In 1903 the school building was sold to the London and South Western Railway and reduced in size in 1904 as a result of the widening of the viaduct to Waterloo. The central part and the boy's wing were demolished, but the girl's wing – about one third of the original building – was retained. The Beaufoy Institute on Black Prince Road was built in 1907 to provide technical education for the poor of the area as a continuation of the history of local educational institutes, and a relief and inscription from the earlier building were salvaged and reused. The building remains standing, Grade II listed, used today as a Buddhist teaching centre.



Plan showing the impact of the railway line extension on the original footprint of the site.

2.7 By the second world war the building and all the land between Whitgift St and Black Prince Rd east of the viaduct was leased from the railways to the London Fire Brigade. The Fire Brigade used the old school yard for parking and servicing fire engines and the remaining Girls Wing of the old school building for brass band practice and then storage.

2.8 Beaconsfield acquired the lease of the former Lambeth Ragged School from Railtrack in 1995; the previous leasholder was the London Fire Commissioner. The undesignated heritage asset had fallen into a state of dereliction with substantial water damage. (**Appendix C**) At the time of lease negotiation, the freehold owner Railtrack was in the process of splitting the site into three separate leaseholds. When Beaconsfield took the lease we inserted public pedestrian and vehicle access to the unbroken brick wall on Newport Street and refurbished the main building to a high standard for art centre use. In 1997 we acquired the lease for Arch 134 – where the Ragged School had started around 1841 – which we refurbished for ambitious, large-scale art events, with in-kind support from Railtrack.

3. REGENERATION OF LAMBETH RAGGED SCHOOLS TO BEACONSFIELD GALLERY

3.1 In 1851 the Illustrated London News announced the official opening of the Lambeth Ragged Schools. A text written in 1851, describes the Doric architecture of the building with ‘spacious, well ventilated’ rooms and how the entire building was used to educate and ‘accommodate nearly one thousand children’. **(Appendix B)**

3.2 In 1991 David Crawforth and Naomi Siderfin held the first Nosepaint event in North Lambeth at Bonnington Cafe, 11 Vauxhall Grove SW8 1TD and thereafter held regular, monthly live art and performance events in various locations in Vauxhall until 1994: Bonnington Cafe was followed by Vauxhall Gardens Community Centre, Vauxhall Walk SE11 5SQ and then by Railway Arch 66, Goding Street SE11 5AW, as the popularity of Nosepaint events increased. By 1994 up to 500 people from all walks of life might attend one of Nosepaint’s monthly, evening art events. In 1993 a seven-day durational art event, commissioning twenty four artists, was curated by Crawforth and Siderfin across Spring Gardens, Vauxhall Underground Station and Vauxhall Primary School, as a site-specific response to the history and contemporary experience of the former Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens, funded by the Greater London Authority and supported in kind by London Borough of Lambeth. Nosepaint was an Unincorporated Association and its contemporary art activities began the long and embedded association the artistic directors of Beaconsfield have with the historic heart of North Lambeth.

3.3 In 1994 Crawforth and Siderfin went into partnership with Angus Neill to form a new arts organization: Beaconsfield was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee (company no. 02992457) in 1994 and awarded charitable status (registered charity no.1046852) in the same year, with aim to educate the public in the arts. The organization’s objective was to occupy a niche between institutional, commercial and ‘alternative’ cultural provision in the UK and this stated position continues to describe the nature of the artist-led organization and its provision of cultural events for local, national and international audiences.

3.4 In 1995 Beaconsfield took a twenty-year lease on the former Lambeth Ragged School, Newport Street SE11 6AY from Railtrack, in order to provide a permanent venue and a streamlined resource for the development and presentation of contemporary art. The charity

raised funds to refurbish the derelict building and within one year brought the heritage site back into use with a sensitive architectural brief, making only the most essential structural changes to the building for health, safety and public access reasons. (**Appendix D**)



East and South-facing outer walls Girls wing, Lambeth Ragged School, prior to refurbishment by Beaconsfield showing windows into what is now Beaconsfield's Upper Gallery (from a South Eastern perspective) in 1995.

The first lease expired in 2015 and has been renewed until 2030, managed consecutively by Railtrack, Spacia and The Arch Company on behalf of Network Rail. The educational aim of the charity continues in the spirit of the original purpose of the heritage building.

3.5 The objects of the Charity are to advance public education through contemporary art. To fulfil this objective through its own unique vision, Beaconsfield offers the remaining Girls wing of the former Lambeth Ragged Schools as a resource for artists and audiences to experience high quality ('beacon'), challenging, new art works in a wide range ('field') of contemporary visual art media, through commissions, group exhibitions, performances, publications and cultural events that contribute to the public understanding of key debates and developments in contemporary art. (**Appendix E**).

3.6 Beaconsfield is directed by a Board of Trustees, chaired, in this financial year, by Angela Weight. The Board meet on a quarterly basis. Day to day operational management is undertaken by founding artistic Directors David Crawforth and Naomi Siderfin. The trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in approving annual plans for the activities of the charity. To achieve Beaconsfield's vision and fulfill its charitable objectives the charity uses its powers to:

- produce and promote exhibitions and art events (incorporating live performance, film, music etc.), seminars, lectures and workshops, whether on any premises of the Company or elsewhere
- co-ordinate and work with other agencies or bodies having similar aims and encourage the provision and development of appropriate support and learning services.



East-facing public pedestrian entrance to Beaconsfield, 22 Newport Street, in 2015.

3.7 The remaining Girls wing of the former Ragged Schools is highly desired by contemporary artists wishing to develop their work on a large scale, with the site-specific stimulus of the historic purpose of the Ragged Schools and its artistically challenging original wooden floor and unusually high ceiling. The ground floor is used for more intimate exhibitions and art events, providing the bar and refreshment space for Private Views, talks and special events, as well as the public amenities of male, female and wheelchair user toilets. In addition, the Lower Gallery space has been deployed as a vegetarian daytime café since 2008. The café is not a franchise and is controlled by Beaconsfield to enable continuing flexible use of the space. Both storeys work in tandem and are used for educational workshops, seminars and mentoring for the benefit of Lambeth and Southwark schools, London and UK-wide Higher Education groups, and artists' talks and symposia directed at a broad public.



Erika Winstone, *The Duration* (2019). School drawing workshop led by the artist, Beaconsfield Upper Gallery (in natural daylight – no artificial lighting was used for this exhibition).

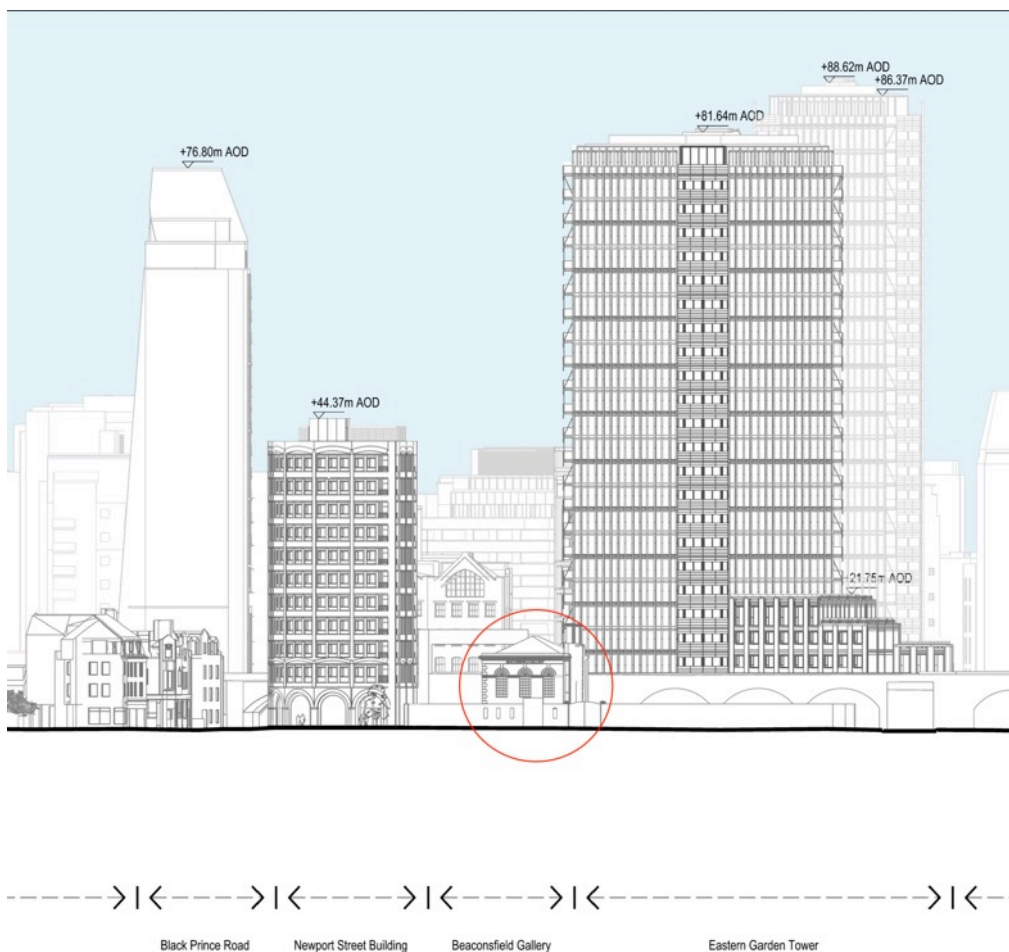


Dubmorphology, *Dreaming Utopia* (2019). Digital school workshop led by artist Trevor Mathison, Beaconsfield Lower Gallery (mixed light sources).

3.8 Beaconsfield's custodianship of the Victorian heritage building continues in the tradition of its original purpose as an educational community resource. As demonstrated, our work includes the inclusion and mentoring of children from local schools in Lambeth and Southwark, breaking down early barriers to galleries and museums, but Beaconsfield is also committed to lifelong learning. We provide reflective spaces in which people of all ages and abilities can adjust their perspective through the surprising ways in which we deliver art and culture.

4. VISUAL IMPACT AND OVERDEVELOPMENT

4.1 The raised railway line viaduct forms a physical barrier between the more domestic scale and height buildings on its east side, and the big, massive building blocks along the Thames on its west side. Most of the buildings on the east side of the railway lines are 2 to 4 stories in height. There are exceptions, such as the two 13-storey blocks further along Vauxhall Walk but these are outside the Conservation Area and are set in landscaped grounds. The nearest exception is a small 6-storey block at 17 Newport Street. Even so, in the main, the character of the area, especially around Beaconsfield, is that of small-scale homes and buildings which provide a human-friendly environment in which to live and work.



Lambeth Planning Application Documents 19/01305/LB, 05 Sept 2019 Plans - revised, title: PROPOSED EAST AND NORTH ELEVATION IN CONTEXT drawing 1528-PP-Z0-XX-DR-A-11-1101

4.2 The proposed 11-storey tower would be positioned on the very prominent northwest corner of a cross-roads (Newport Street/Black Prince Road/Vauxhall Walk). Here it cannot help but be a very jarring and out-of-place tall structure that will dominate its surroundings due to its inappropriate height, scale and bulk. As can be seen, the block will look totally incongruous within its smaller-scale surroundings, closing up a relatively open urban setting close to Pedlar's Park and Venn Park. The tower would set a very undesirable precedent for bringing taller buildings eastwards across the railway line. It would be extremely harmful to the character and appearance of the immediate area.

In addition, the proposed 11-storey tower block site and Beaconsfield Gallery lie in the Albert Embankment Conservation Area. The tower would be clearly seen in views along a long length of Black Prince Road from east, from both within and outside of the Conservation Area, especially from the small shopping parade just to its east, lying within the Conservation Area. It would also be seen in views southwards along Newport Street (see the applicant's photomontages in **Appendix F**), and clearly seen northwards in views from Vauxhall Walk because of the slight forward stagger in the cross-roads, and from Pedlar's Park and Salamanca Street which crosses the park - all which lie within the Conservation Area. This last view is the most critical view of our heritage building, which, at the moment, provides a landmark from Vauxhall Gardens. By blocking this South wall of the building our visual identity from the main Vauxhall transport hub, from which most visitors will travel, is demolished. This is a complete view of the building that has been intact for 169 years.



Corner of Black Prince Road and Newport Street, proposed site of 11 storey tower, currently in use by local entrepreneur Andy Vassallo as nursery garden centre (see more in Section 5)

In views from the east along Black Prince Road the proposed tower block would partially obscure views of the Grade II Listed Southbank House (ex-Doulton pottery) on the opposite (western) side of the raised railway lines. This corner has been long neglected but in recent years has become a 'green' corner (due to temporary use as a garden centre), which helps to provide a gentle, green appearance in long views along Black Prince Road, because of that

road's slight curve, which brings the site and Southbank House into view. This represents a much more sympathetic solution than a poorly-designed, disproportionate 11-storey building, placed with no consideration for its local environment.



Applicant's montage showing new build in Conservation Area with Grade II listed Doulton building, Southbank House, beyond. Heritage Townscaping Visual Impact Assessment.

We are not planners, architects, or conservation experts, but to our artist-trained eyes the prominence of the tall 11-storey tower block on the cross-roads where it would be intrude on so many public viewpoints, the loss of the green corner, the loss of views of the listed Southbank House and to Beaconsfield's heritage building would all be highly undesirable and unacceptable. The introduction of this alien, high and bulky structure that does not respect the scale or building styles of the other buildings in the Conservation Area can only be described as a clumsy monstrosity. It would seriously and substantially harm the Conservation Area.

4.3 By contrast, Caruso St John's sensitive design for Newport Street Gallery preserved key features of its original site, the former Victorian Victor Mara scenic painting workshops, winning the prestigious 2016 RIBA Sterling Prize for best new building, in keeping with the scale of our own art gallery in the same road; the former Lambeth Ragged Girls School.



Newport Street Gallery, looking south towards Beaconsfield (circled), showing railway viaduct (right), six storey block at 17 Newport Street (left side of road beyond NSG) and Peabody Trust residential housing on Lambeth Walk (far left).



North and East-facing outer walls Beaconsfield Gallery, prior to insertion of glass frontage to front wall (from a North Eastern perspective), showing corner of Black Prince Road and Newport Street, c. 2005.



East-facing outer wall following insertion of glass frontage Beaconsfield Gallery, 2015.

4.4 The proposed redevelopment at the application site along Albert Embankment will impact negatively upon Beaconsfield Gallery, an amenity that has been supported through the public purse for 25 years.

4.5 The various sites included in '8 Albert Embankment' have been the subject of a number of planning applications and Beaconsfield has objected on previous occasions to inappropriate development. The previous proposals were significantly less harmful to Beaconsfield's operations than the current ones. However, since we were not directly consulted at pre-app stage by the applicants, or at the application stage by Lambeth Council, we were not initially aware of the deleterious impact development would have on our business. We support other local parties in urging the Fire Commissioner and the former LFEEPA to adopt a more collaborative approach to redevelopment, which includes consultation with cultural providers

in the vicinity.

4.6 The proposed redevelopment of the site immediately adjacent on the corner of Black Prince Road and Newport Street will entirely mask the clearest view of the heritage asset from the south, eliminating brand recognition by local, national and international visitors as well as obscuring the heritage asset.



Crossroads of Vauxhall Walk, Black Prince Road and Newport Street, showing Beaconsfield building. Courtesy Google Earth.

4.7 The main visitor entrance would be compromised by the proposed servicing access to the new residential block on Newport Street; the inappropriate use of a narrow road for large vehicles would make pedestrian, cycle, wheelchair or pram access, potentially dangerous and contributes further congestion to what is already a rat run. This reverses local policy of improving the public realm in our area by building a Green Link (2017-2022)¹ from Vauxhall Gardens to Damien Hirst's Newport Street Gallery: a policy that greatly impacted on what is now a central pedestrian and cycle route linking, cultural space and forming the much vaunted Gallery District. Newport Street is due for green uplift 2021/22. The applicant's plans to increase the traffic in Newport Street reverses this positive trend and would have a

¹ Vauxhall One: Renewal & Extension Proposal 2017-2020

https://vauxhallone.co.uk/sites/default/files/vauxhall_one_-_renewal_extension_proposal.pdf Accessed 9 November 2010.

negative and particular impact on tourism in the area and passing trade.

4.8 Beaconsfield is not only a gallery but a making space—commissioning new art works is our core activity. We regularly use the facility of small business and service providers in the railway arches and elsewhere in the immediate locality. The currently successful mix of uses – artistic, manufacturing and light industrial, servicing, and other small businesses – creates a vibrant neighbourhood which supports our operations; and that the proposed mix of uses – largely residential and corporate offices, hotel and retail – would undermine the existing mix and threaten the commercial viability and aspirations for this being a cultural quarter.

5. IMPACT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON BEACONSFIELD ACTIVITIES: OPERATIONAL DAYLIGHT



Thomas Yeomans, *Anomie* (2015). Talk by the artist with BSL interpreter, Beaconsfield Lower Gallery (natural daylight and downlight foreground).

5.1 The visual is a key component of the art produced and experienced at Beaconsfield; and natural daylight is a critical resource for our business, just as access to fresh water would be a key resource for a fishery, and just as it was a critical resource for the education of poor children over a century ago, and remains so to this day. Lambeth's Local Plan offers some protection for loss of daylight from neighbouring development (Policy Q2) and refers to the BRE guidance 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight' (BRE Trust, 2011). The BRE provides a service to assess the impact on all neighbouring properties – commercial, community or residential – which will typically contain the following tests:

- Vertical Sky Component
- Daylight Distribution /No Sky Line (where room layouts are known)
- Average Daylight Factor (where BRE Appendix F criteria applies)
- Annual Probable Sunlight Hours
- Overshadowing to Gardens and Open Spaces

5.2 The applicant has not undertaken any such tests with regard to the Beaconsfield site,

which would be severely impacted by the proposals.

5.3 Currently Beaconsfield's site consists of four main spaces, three of which would be severely impacted by the development:

- On the lower ground floor there are three large south facing windows that provide most of the natural light in a very large square room (approx 16m deep and 11m wide) with quite a low ceiling. The room is very evocative, with the original flagstone floor of its former use by poor girls who used to get their shoes and clothes fixed before ascending into the main schoolroom. The room is known as the Lower Gallery space and is now used for mixed purposes: as an art exhibition and event space and as a daytime community café (currently curtailed by Covid19). During refurbishment we built in an open servery, additional toilets and adapted an existing room as an office. One half of the room is well-lit throughout the day, but the further away from the windows the gloomier it gets, which is where the toilets and kitchen are. The main source of daylight would be severely impacted by the proposed 11-storey development adjacent on Newport St. Light for the kitchen area is provided by one small north-facing window (the old coal shoot) that will be affected by the two skyscrapers proposed along Whitgift St. On the same floor, the male toilets are lit by three small, north facing windows and the female toilets by one small north-facing window, all of which will be similarly impacted by the two proposed skyscrapers.

- The first floor is the main room of the former school (girls wing) and now the main exhibition space: it has one large arched south facing window 1.65m x 3.80m (three further south-facing windows were blocked up decades ago) plus three east-facing arched windows (1.65m x 3.80m) and one small oculus – a port-hole window – high up to light a very high-ceilinged room (6m high almost the full height of the building) with an original raked floor, formerly a panopticon teaching device. This provides adequate natural light to read anywhere in the room on a bright day. The south facing window provides much of the light, but this would be severely impacted by the 44m 11-storey building proposed for Newport St.

- The yards to the east and north (approx 18m x 8m) are critical to Beaconsfield's operations, both for core artistic fabrication, educational workshops, disabled parking and storage. The front-facing yard is used by the café and for events for external seating. The natural light to the spaces on the north side and along Newport Street would be severely

impacted by the development, both the 44m high building on Newport St and the taller buildings on Whitgift St.

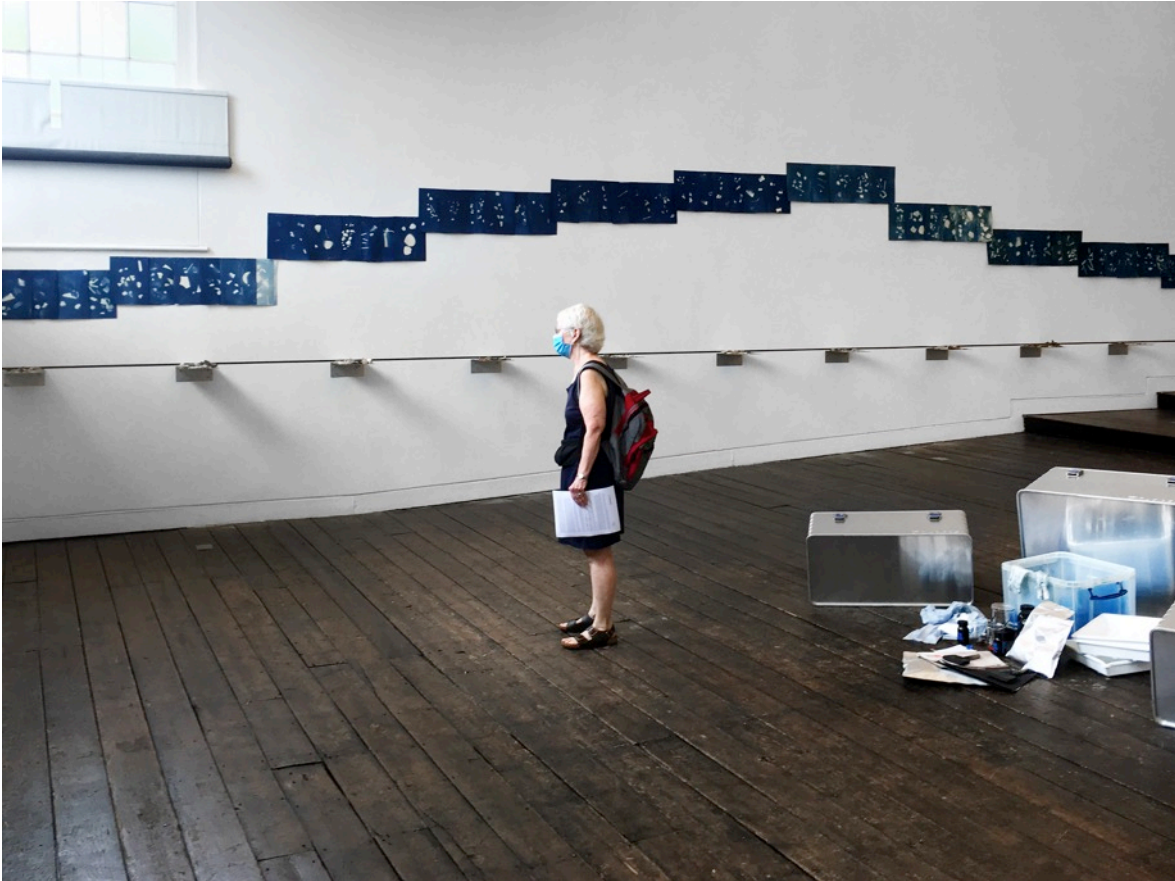
- One double railway arch is also an exhibition space (7m x 26m) which has no natural light and is used for exhibitions and operations requiring only artificial light.

5.4 The proposed Block C1 11-storey tower on the corner of Black Prince Road and Newport Street, immediately adjacent to Beaconsfield Gallery will decimate the provision of sunlight from the South from the two gallery spaces and the L-shaped garden yard: a 'green lung' contributing to the mitigation of urban pollution.



Beaconsfield Upper Gallery, showing east and south facing windows 2020.

5.5 Beaconsfield's Upper Gallery is the old schoolroom. It is distinguished by its original, wooden, raked floor and generous arched windows affording natural daylight to the room. Despite losing three large arched windows in WW2 on the South wall, the remaining south-facing window is the critical light source in this room and preserves the original drama of the original school room. This light source will be blocked by the 11-storey Newport Street tower.



Tuula Narhinen, *Deep Time Deposits* (2020) Beaconsfield Upper Gallery, showing impact of natural light from south-facing window

5.6 A small oculus window opens onto the railway line and throws light around the room throughout the day, like a sundial. This historic and unique journey of sunlight will cease if the skyscraper towers are built in Whitgift Street. The two 26-storey towers will block sunlight from the west to the oculus window and into the main Upper Gallery space, destroying the unique natural light conditions of the room.



Jane Mulfinger and Graham *Windaage* (2017) Beaconsfield Upper Gallery, showing oculus window in use as a pinhole camera, projecting image of a train (passing on the viaduct immediately behind the building) on floor.



Beaconsfield Upper Gallery, showing oculus window 2020.

5.7 Plans for opening up the loft area in the Upper Gallery, to maximise the potential of this space and increase community provision, are ongoing (see EBBA architects concept **Appendix G**)

5.8 The Lower Gallery space has most recently been used as artists' residency and exhibition space for our bi-annual Finnish Art Prize (**Appendix H**): used January-March by artist Tuula Narhinen as work space and public event space, followed by use as public exhibition space, March-August (reopened for July following lockdown). The Lower Gallery space is a highly flexible exhibition space that includes office and utilites and is also used as a daytime café. The main area is lit by three south facing windows which are essential to its character and usability as a semi-basement floor. The south facing windows ensure that what might otherwise be a gloomy room operates as a multi-functional gallery for site-determined art. The office is lit by a further south facing window identical in scale to the gallery windows.



Tuula Narhinen, *Deep Time Deposits*, Beaconsfield Lower Gallery, showing impact of morning light from south facing windows, March 2020.



Tuula Narhinen, *Deep Time Deposits*, Beaconsfield Lower Gallery, showing impact of late afternoon light from front garden yard and south facing windows, July 2020.



Keith Piper's artist's talk for visiting student group from Chelsea School of Art, Lower Gallery space, showing impact of daylight, 2017.

5.9 The two 26 storey towers – excessively high, residential skyscrapers – proposed for the corner of Whitgift Street and Lambeth High Street, sit immediately behind Beaconsfield's premises, the other side of the viaduct, and, if built, will block sunlight from the west into the garden yard running along the North side of the building adversely affecting light to the Lower Gallery facilities, provision of outdoor workshop space and community green-space.



Northwest garden yard; showing windows to Lower Gallery space and toilets, disabled parking space and (shuttered) entrance to Arch Gallery 2020.

5.10 Block C1, the 11-storey tower proposed for the corner of Black Prince Road and Newport Street, sits beside the south side of Beaconsfield's visitor entrance, and, if built, will block sunlight from the south into the garden yard running along the East side of the building and forming a visitor reception area and the south from the oculus window into the main Upper Gallery space adversely affecting community access and outdoor seating provision.



Southeast garden yard; reception area (showing partially extended weather blind) outdoor seating and visitor entrance to main galleries, July 2020.

5.11 In addition to its core purpose, Beaconsfield supports a micro-economy of local people building independent businesses through our garden and café eg. Andy Vassalo, Vauxhall's nursery gardener; Lucy Gregory, former venue manager and now freelance horticulturalist; Iben La Cour, former proprietor of the Ragged Canteen and Rupal Acharya, Ragged Canteen proprietor in waiting. Our Volunteers programme also supports people in developing skills to achieve their life goals and is a vital support to both the charity and the individuals that pass through, helping them to build experience and focus for future careers. Our volunteers often aspire to the curatorial and progress to academic courses or might be simply rebuilding confidence after a life setback such as mental health.

5.12 In 2010, in line with the increasingly urgent demand for urban green spaces, artist Dafnor Talmor proposed and was commissioned by Beaconsfield to build a garden roof, accessible by wooden steps, on top of a metal storage container sited in our yard on the North side of the building. In 2014 we invited local horticulturalist, Andy Vassallo, to use the outdoor premises as the base for his small gardening business in exchange for tending the

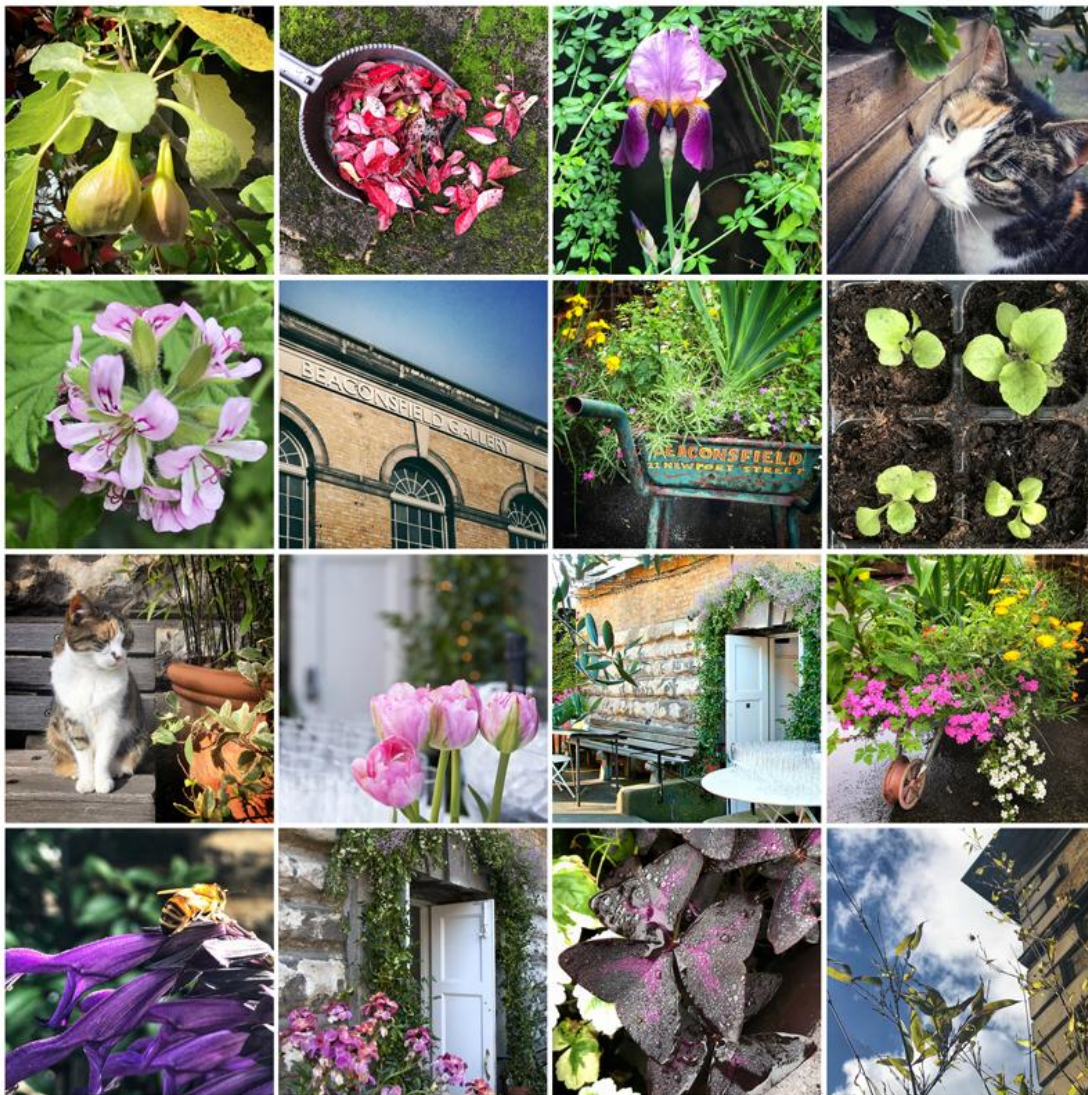
roof and greening our yard space. We introduced him to the local business consortium Vauxhall One which thereafter employed Vassallo to supply and tend the new public realm planting in Vauxhall. Under the auspices of Vauxhall One, in 2018 Vasallo moved his nursery from Beaconsfield's yard to the empty Fire Brigade site on the corner of Blackprince Road and Newport Street: site of the proposed 11 storey tower. Beaconsfield continues to supply this garden nursery with water.



Garden roof: Beaconsfield northwest yard showing Upper Gallery access doors, access to Arch Gallery and listed Doulton building (Southbank House) in Black Prince Road beyond.

After Vasallo's departure from the Beaconsfield garden yard, Beaconsfield's gallery manager Lucy Gregory took over the garden. Following impressive results and a part-time NVQ,

Gregory recently resigned her administrative position, to start her own horticultural business. Beaconsfield continues to employ her as gardener. This narrative not only describes the development of Beaconsfield's green lung exterior space, but bears witness to Beaconsfield's role in nurturing local individuals in small business enterprise, consistent with KIBA ambitions for the area. The urban garden will die without sunlight. Daylight will be blocked to the Southeast reception yard by the 11-story Newport Street tower and to the Northwest yard by the Whitgift Street skyscrapers; ironically named by the planners 'Eastern Garden Towers'.



Planting in Beaconsfield Yard, including semi-ferral cat, cared for and resident for 10 years.

5.13 A similar narrative of local employment describes the history of our daytime café. In 2008 we employed food writer Neil McQuillan to manage a café from the servery in the Lower Gallery space. Serving coffee, cakes and bespoke Vegetarian lunches, the Ragged

Canteen has since been managed by a succession of chefs, most recently by local resident Iben La Cour (2015–December 2019) working as a sole trader. This facility is known in the community as a cheerful lunchtime café and weekend brunch destination, attracting workers from surrounding businesses as well as residents and gallery visitors.



Ragged Canteen under the management of Iben La Cour, 2015–2019

The café is permitted to extend its territory outdoors to the garden yard and has the facility to cater under the front yard canopy. Our outdoor capacity has been developed as a crucial aspect of Beaconsfield's private events and visitor seating, especially during the summer months. This facility will be destroyed if light is taken from Beaconsfield's front yard reception area and Lower Gallery space by the 11-storey Newport Street tower, overshadowing both interior and exterior seating areas.



Reception area facing north, showing glass pedestrian door and windows, benches and canopy funded by National Lottery Grants for the Arts 2015; and steps to roof garden (2010) beyond.



Reception area facing south, showing pedestrian entrance, tables, benches and closed canopy; and site of proposed Newport Street tower beyond steel fence (where trees can be seen) 2019.



Reception area facing south, showing greening in lockdown 2020.

5.14 Responding to London Borough of Lambeth's document 'A creative Way to Grow: Lambeth Creative and Digital Industries Strategy for Growth'² we developed a potential scheme for increasing workspace capacity on our site: Beacon Yard. Following a Pre-app to Lambeth Planning, we received positive encouragement to transform our northwest yard storage space to KIBA-compatible creative space (**Appendix I**). This proposal is subject to successful charitable fundraising. This vision to expand the capacity of the arts centre would be impacted by the applicant's plans for the three high-rise residential sites. Given the heritage value of our site, and the fact that its very large spaces do not lend themselves to many uses, and the restrictions high-density high-rise residential blocks are liable to require from their neighbours in terms of amenity, it is unlikely that any other type of business would be able to operate from our site in these circumstances, without significantly intervening – if not effectively destroying – the former Ragged School building.

² London Borough of Lambeth, [A Creative Way to Grow](#).



Garden roof, Beaconsfield yard showing vehicular access doors and site of proposed Beacon Yard creative space provision, listed Doulton building beyond (Southbank House) and neighbouring KIBA usage: James Knight of Mayfair fishmongers: packing and central London distribution.



Simons Deputy Mayor of Culture for London opens Foam Talent Teen Tours 2017: student tour at 2016



2016 with Kajsa Ollongren, Deputy Mayor of Culture for Amsterdam
 "Thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to do Teen tour and I'm so grateful. Amira, 2019"



ew Foam Talent 2016

ew Foam Talent 2016

Conclusion

Block C1 Newport Street is flanked by unique and historic 19th Century buildings and is an unacceptable addition to the street: inappropriate for a Conservation Area due to its design and proportions. Natural daylight and sunlight is a critical resource for the contemporary art gallery and cultural centre that is Beaconsfield (**Appendix E**). The potential tragedy of losing elusive light conditions in the Upper Gallery, is compounded by the very substantial loss of southern light to the Lower Gallery and office: the key windows in the lower space are ALL south-facing and directly impacted by the 11-storey C1 tower. The outdoor space of 22 Newport Street has become a local destination and contributes to the impact of the Green Link running from Vauxhall Station to the end of Newport Street. Loss of sunlight to our garden spaces impacts on air quality, number of visitors and volunteers, mental health, wildlife and operational capacity. The applicant has no doubt capitalized on the pioneering initiatives and active role that Beaconsfield has played in the public realm in recent years. Now the applicant intends to squash this initiative by literally casting a giant shadow across our entire operation.

6.0 SUMMARY

6.1 Beaconsfield has been established and grown to a contemporary arts organization with international reach, on the same site in Newport Street for 25 years. The organization is progressively directed through a collaborative partnership with a Board of Trustees. The success of the organization has been greatly influenced by the specific qualities of the historic building and central location. We know the locality – its architecture and its communities – intimately, and are well positioned to comment on development that might equally harm or benefit those communities and buildings.

6.2 Having been active in the locality for some years, Beaconsfield invested in and restored the semi-derelict neo-classical Ragged School building 25 years ago and started a process of cultural regeneration.

6.3 As the pioneer cultural organization in North Lambeth we welcome the prospect of an additional museum asset, but object to the price we are currently being asked to pay for the privilege of a Fire Station Museum. We are happy to have been a positive influence in the growth of the cultural quarter, but object to being used as a pawn in the regeneration stakes. We appeal to the Secretary of State to enable us to continue to act as a catalyst for cultural growth and community wellbeing.

6.4 Continuing in the philanthropic tradition of the Lambeth Ragged Schools, the educational charity Beaconsfield works from this historic site of learning to reach out and involve a broad public in its charitable purpose, contributing to the public understanding of key debates and developments in contemporary art. This work extends to impact in formal education settings; from primary schools to Higher Education. The environment in which all this work is done is an uplifting one, and this is enabled by the architecture of the original Victorian building. The Ragged School was purpose-built for improving the circumstances of the underprivileged and relied on the light and airy architecture to elevate the educational experience. This is the gift that the building offers us in our curatorial practice and the gift of contemplation is one that we continue to offer to ordinary people—to people that might not have access to automatic cultural privilege. Gratitude for this gift was simply expressed by the students who participated in our 2019

Teen Tours mentoring programme. Einas wrote: *Thank you for giving us such a great opportunity, this has been such a great time and it taught me so much, such as confidence. I am really grateful (sic) for this opportunity, I have achieved new skills and a new stage of life.*

6.5 Beaconsfield's reach now extends beyond North Lambeth, across London and the UK, with ongoing international cultural partners such as the Dutch Museum of Photography and the Finnish Institute in London, that regularly collaborate on the site at 22 Newport Street. Their interest in Beaconsfield is influenced by the unique beauty and scale of the galleries and site, all of which depend on natural light for their attraction as exhibition spaces.

6.6 The scale of the buildings surrounding Beaconsfield on the southeast side of the railway viaduct correspond to the heritage assets of North Lambeth, of which our building is one. The visual impact of the proposed Block C1 11-storey tower in these streets, and viewable from far beyond, is totally disproportionate and sets an incredibly dangerous precedent for the south side of the viaduct. This ill-conceived and poorly designed monstrosity is disrespectful to the building next door; destroying a complete view of the Girls wing, the only fully intact aspect of the former Lambeth Ragged Schools; a historic anchorpoint that has been accessible for 169 years. This lack of respect has a significant impact on public access to the publicly funded cultural resource and contemporary art gallery Beaconsfield; counteracting local environmental policy on a central pedestrian and cycle route.

6.7 Commissioning new art works is our core activity. We regularly use the facility of small business and service providers in the immediate KIBA area to produce our work. The ramifications of losing protected KIBA territory are significant for our central London locus.

6.8 All that is visual is at the heart of the art produced and experienced at Beaconsfield; and natural daylight is a critical resource for our business. As noted in the evidence of Paul Littlefair on the daylight and sunlight impact of Block C1, the BRE guidelines apply to the art gallery at 22 Newport Street (Beaconsfield). Loss of light to the Upper Gallery is

significant to the quality of the overall natural light environment, which changes to a critical extent over the day. We rely on the power of that south facing window to flood light into the main gallery during main opening hours. In addition the oculus window provides a unique and quirky feature that makes life worth living and art worth making: 80% of the work that we produce is site-specific. The tragedy of losing elusive light conditions, is compounded by the very substantial loss of southern light to the Lower Gallery and office: the key windows in the lower space are ALL south-facing and directly impacted by the 11-storey C1 tower.

6.9 The outdoor space of 22 Newport Street has become a local destination and contributes to the impact of the Green Link running from Vauxhall Station to the end of Newport Street. The applicant has no doubt capitalized on the pioneering initiatives and active role that Beaconsfield has played in the public realm in recent years. Now the applicant intends to squash this initiative by literally casting a giant shadow across our entire operation. Loss of sunlight to our garden spaces impacts on air quality, number of visitors and volunteers, mental health, wildlife and operational capacity.

6.10 The impact of day light and sunlight on human wellbeing is well documented. Beaconsfield's unique creative and cultural offer depends on the light conditions in the gallery spaces: a consideration that has been completely lost on the developers, who did not even bother to come and talk to us.

6.11 We have presented evidence that application proposals (i) would impact negatively and significantly on a building of historic interest and therein an undesignated heritage asset; and (ii) would undermine our operations and ability to use or maintain the heritage asset, and would undermine any alternative use of the heritage asset.

6.12 We have presented evidence that with a very reduced and poor quality of natural light able to reach the various internal and external spaces in our building, it is likely we would no longer be able to operate as a community arts space. Given the heritage value of our site, and the fact that its very large spaces do not lend themselves to many uses, and the restrictions high-density high-rise residential are liable to require from its neighbours in terms of amenity, it is unlikely that any other business would be able to operate from

our site in these circumstances without significantly intervening – if not effectively destroying – the former Ragged School building. Furthermore, the building on Newport Street is so out of scale and context that it would completely diminish the grandeur of the heritage asset.

6.13 It is our firm view that were the Newport Street Block C1 11-storey tower a standalone proposal it would be so outlandish in scale as to have warranted a clear refusal by Lambeth. Its clear inappropriateness has only been masked by the equally inappropriate scale of the buildings proposed for the site along Whitgift Street.

6.14 For these reasons the building proposed for Newport St should not be permitted, and we therefore ask that you recommend the Secretary of State not to grant planning permission or listed building consent for this proposal.