Introduction

The purpose of this note is to summarise the design intent and function of the privately owned, publically accessible open space proposed as part of the major mixed use redevelopment at the Newcombe House site.

Landowner Objective

From the outset of the project, one of Notting Hill Gate KCS Ltd’s key objectives has been the creation of an accessible, inclusive, permeable and environmentally appropriate public realm with level access through the site providing a vibrant new public space for the community at Notting Hill Gate.

It is recognised that the public realm will be as important to the regeneration of Notting Hill Gate as the architecture of the proposed buildings. Great care has been taken to ensure that the buildings and the public space are integrated to deliver a successful piece of urban design.

The space will not be gated and will be accessible to pedestrians 24 hours a day, seven days a week (subject to permitted closures). The retail uses will be of appropriate scale for the local context, complement existing retail uses and provide an amenity for existing and future local residents, workers and visitors.

By naming the square (e.g. Silver Square, a reference to a former Street name on the site) and carefully curating the design, uses and activities it is anticipated that the new space will become an important local destination and be comparable to other successful spaces in the Royal Borough such as Duke of York Square. At all times the level of activity will be carefully managed to ensure it is appropriate for its town centre and residential location.

Location & Urban Design

From the outset the design objective has been to create an accessible and inclusive development that is permeable with legible integration and layering of land uses, routes and spaces.

The public space, or square, is centrally located and framed by the lower rise perimeter buildings and the two forms of the corner building. By framing the public square with buildings, a calmer space away from the traffic of Notting Hill Gate is created. The design team has worked with RWDI (Wind consultants) and GVA Schatunowski Brooks (Daylight/Sunlight consultants) to ensure the space is sheltered from the wind and enjoys an appropriate level of sunshine to allow outdoor seating and leisure activities.

Three open lanes and a generously proportioned covered pedestrian walkway provide physical and visual connectivity into the square ensuring the site is permeable from the north, south, east and west. These routes invite local residents, workers and visitors into the site and allow them to escape from the busy Notting Hill Gate and Kensington Church Street pedestrian thoroughfares.

The tall corner building meets the ground at the northern end of the square creating a sense of drama and providing a district wide marker for the new public square. The Cube office building partially encloses the space at the southern end of the square and provides the opportunity for a unique, playful building that interacts with the public realm.

At ground floor level the routes and central square are animated by active retail frontages or entrances to buildings. Along Kensington Church Street the retail units are double fronted allowing pedestrians to see through into the space and ensuring activity and interest is created on all sides of the square.

Given the mixed use nature of the proposals (office, retail, leisure, flexible surgery / office use and residential), the public square and pedestrian routes will benefit from activity at different times of the day / evening and the residential uses at upper levels will provide excellent natural surveillance.

Retail Uses

At a very early stage of the formulation of the client brief it was decided that commercially attractive, large convenience retail units would not create an appropriate ground floor plane and public realm. The area is already well served by national supermarket retailers.

Instead the objective is to deliver a collection of shops, restaurants and leisure uses of local scale and character including carefully curated independent retailers at ground and lower ground levels that will serve local residents / workers and create a local destination in its own right. The collection of units will be the ‘anchor’ for the site.

Shelley Sandzer (retail agents) has worked with the client / design team to ensure unit size, location and layout is appropriate for independent retailers including restaurants, cafes, delicatessens, butchers, bakeries, cheesemongers, florists, wine merchants and other small shops. The existing antiques shop, Sinai, will also be rehoused within the development.

The retail units will interact with the Public Square and pedestrian routes by providing active frontages, multiple entrances and outdoor seating onto the square. To further ensure the delivery of an appropriate critical mass of retail space lower ground floor retail will also be incorporated. Compared to the existing retail provision on site, there will be a 302 sqm uplift in gross internal floor space delivering a total retail floor area of 2,871 sqm (GIA).

Other Uses

Farmer’s Market – The size and layout of the public space will facilitate other activities to be accommodated such as a regular Farmers Markets. Notting Hill Gate KCS Ltd has been in regular dialogue with the operators of the Farmers Market to ensure they could come back to the site in future if appropriate.

November 2015

Newcombe House & Kensington Church Street
Careful consideration will be given to the positioning of landscaping and street furniture to ensure sufficient market stalls could be accommodated within the square. Power points and potentially storage facilities will be provided.

**Performance space** – the public square could be used by local arts establishments e.g. The Gate Theatre for occasional outdoor performances / performance art.

**Exhibition space** – temporary art exhibitions could be accommodated and linked to local artists / galleries.

**Outdoor cinema** – the Cube Building will be designed to include an integrated drop down screen for an occasional outdoor cinema (headphones will be used to ensure local residents / offices are not impacted).

**Community events** – the space could be used by local residents groups for community gatherings, celebrations or street parties.

**Shop Fronts**

All retail units will be designed with consistent shop fronts, high quality materials and signage to ensure the design integrity of the space is preserved going forward.

**Landscaping**

High quality hard and soft landscaping will be utilised within all public spaces. USCA has worked with Adams Habermehl (landscape designers) to ensure appropriate materials, species and lighting are used throughout.

As well as outdoor seating for the restaurants, informal seating for public use will be included within the proposals which will be an important amenity for local residents, workers and visitors.

**Public Art**

Permanent public art installations (to be agreed with the RBKC) will be housed within the square and there is the opportunity for embedded art within the building frontages or floor surfaces surrounding the public space.

**Pedestrian Priority**

The public square and routes into the square will be pedestrian only with the exception of emergency vehicles. No other vehicles will be permitted to enter the space. Servicing of the retail units will take place from the existing loading bays on Notting Hill Gate and Kensington Church Street.

**Management**

A management company will be set up for the development to ensure that the space is clean, safe, well maintained and to coordinate events and liaise with local residents / businesses / RBKC. The management company will also control future occupation of the retail units to ensure the correct balance of uses in maintained.
Activities on the new public square
Contents

1. The existing outdoor uses on the site
2. The proposed new public courtyard
3. Proposed outdoor activities on the new public courtyard
   2.1 Farmers market
   2.2 Public exhibitions
   2.3 Cinema/ Performances
4. Case study
   Public square at At St Christopher Place
   Farmers market on Duke of York Square, RBK&C.
Introduction
1. The existing outdoor uses on the site

The Farmers’ Market takes place every Saturday from 7am – 3pm, across allocated car parking spaces, bringing some positive activities to this run down area.
1. The existing outdoor uses on the site

Private car park for 61 car spaces, served by the private access and drive through road. Which occupies the majority of the unbuilt area on the site.
2.1 Farmers’ market

Indicative market layout on the new public square, supported by outdoor seating illustrating opportunity for the market to extend to:

- Lane connecting the new public square to Notting Hill Gate, within the site,
- Along east elevation of the existing church, outside the site. Single lane emergency vehicle access across the square maintained at all time.

Key:
- Entrance Residential
- Entrance Office
- Entrance Retail
- Cafe seats and benches
- Market Stall
- Additional Market stall locations
2.1 Farmers’ market

Indicative farmers market layout on the new public square, supported by outdoor seating. Cube ground floor layout illustrates opportunity for a smaller scale indoor public activities to be set up in support of the activities on the new public square. Careful ground floor zoning of the publicly accessible area and more private and secure office area, allow for the public access to the main part of the cube ground floor and supporting facilities without negative impact on the office activities at upper and lower ground floors. Single lane emergency vehicle access across the square maintained at all times.

Key:
- Entrance Residential
- Entrance Office
- Entrance Retail
- Cafe seats and benches
- Market Stall

Activities on the new public square
2.1 Farmers market
SK P503; 1:500@A3
2.2 Public exhibitions

Case study: open area exhibition "Earth From the Air" by Yann Arthus-Bertrand at the Natural History Museum, London 2002

“Earth from the Air marks the Natural History Museum's first outdoor exhibition and includes 150 images...” With great consideration to Arthus-Bertrand’s vision for the exhibition, the stunning photographs will be presented making use of the natural light and open space of The Natural History Museum's east garden.”

“Speaking in an interview posted on the official exhibition website the celebrated photographer said: I’m very happy to have invented a new way to show photographs.” “You know at the beginning, a few years ago, when I was trying my exhibition in Paris, it was very difficult to find a museum or gallery to put on the show. So, instead, my team found somewhere to put it - outside, on the railings of the Jardin de Luxembourg in Paris. It was a success. It was incredible, because by putting photographs in the street I could reach people who would never go into a museum or a gallery. We had created a new way of presenting photography. I’ve been so surprised how it’s worked.”
Ref “Story by Jack Foley” 2002,

“This is the first time the Natural History Museum's public gardens have hosted an outdoor exhibition and how fitting that it should be a vivid record of how the world looks at the beginning of the 21st century.”
Ref: Story by David Prudames |www.culture24.org.uk/art/photography-and-film/art13113

Activities on the new public square
2.2 Public exhibitions
SK P504; NTS

Planning
November 2015

Earth from Above by Yann Arthus-Bertrand
Natural History Museum, London

Space Girls Space Women by SIFA Press
Musée des Artes et Métiers, Paris

Earth from Above by Yann Arthus-Bertrand
Rio di Janeiro, Brazil
2.2 Public exhibitions

Exhibition of photography and art indicative layout on the new public square, supported by outdoor seating.

Cube ground floor layout illustrates opportunity for a smaller scale indoor exhibition to be set up in support of the activities on the new public square. Careful ground floor zoning of the publicly accessible area and more private and secure office area, allow for the public access to the main part of the cube ground floor and supporting facilities without negative impact on the office activities at upper and lower ground floors.

Single lane emergency vehicle access across the square maintained at all time.
2.2 Public exhibitions

Dappled Light of the Sun by Conrad Shawcross
Royal Academy of Arts, London

Elements of Art Pre Installation
Royal Academy of Arts, London

Dappled Light of the Sun by Conrad Shawcross
Royal Academy of Arts, London

From Landscape to Portrait by Chris Wilkinson
Royal Academy of Arts, London

Please Touch the Art by Jeppe Hein
Brooklyn Bridge, New York

Activities on the new public square
2.2 Public exhibitions
SK PS06; NTS

Planning
November 2015
2.2 Public exhibitions

Exhibition of sculptures indicative layout on the new public square, supported by outdoor seating. Cube ground floor layout illustrates opportunity for a smaller scale indoor exhibition to be set up in support of the activities on the new public square. Careful ground floor zoning of the publicly accessible area and more private and secure office area, allow for the public access to the main part of the cube ground floor and supporting facilities without negative impact on the office activities at upper and lower ground floors. Single lane emergency vehicle access across the square maintained at all time.
2.3 Cinema/Performances

Case study: Backyard Cinema at Camden Lock Market, London

“For three years now we have been bringing Backyard Cinema to the public with the same great ethos but bigger.”
“It should feel like you have been personally invited to our back garden, no matter the size of the event. All delivered to you in a variety of immersive, unusual and interesting locations both in and outdoors around London. Expect retro short films, well known classics and themed nights full of surprises. This is cinema as it should be, this is Backyard Cinema More than just the movies.”
Ref: Backyard Cinema website, The story, 2015

Note: Approximate area for outdoor cinema cinema at Camden Lock Market as illustrated on the images, width 7.7m- 8.3m. Info provided by the client Brockton Capital.
2.3 Cinema/Performances

The audience will be provided with headphones upon arrival.

Key:
- Entrance Residential
- Entrance Office
- Entrance Retail
- Alternative location for cinema seating
- Cafe seats and benches
- Cinema Seating

Activities on the new public square
2.3 Cinema/Performances
SK P509; 1:500@A3
Overlay Study of Established Successful Public Realm

Option 1
SK P510; 1:1250@A3

November 2015
Case Study - Comparison Study of Established Successful Public Realm St Christopher's Place

Key:
- Proposed Public Square
- Existing London Successful Public Space

St Christopher's Place Outline, 1:2000

Note:
- St Christopher's Place area is 77% of the proposed public courtyard area only.
- The newly proposed public square on the site is approximately 876 m² and is supported by proposed public lanes of an area in excess of 316 m².

Proposed Public Square compared with St Christopher's Place, 1:2000

St Christopher's Place within its context, 1:2000

Note:
- St Christopher's Place area is 77% of the proposed public courtyard area only.
- The newly proposed public square on the site is approximately 876 m² and is supported by proposed public lanes of an area in excess of 316 m².
Activities on the new public square
Duke of York Square Market
Sloane Square, London

Farmers’ Market on Duke of York Square
Sloane Square, London
Farmers’ Market on Duke of York Square

Duke of York Square Market
Sloane Square, London

apx. 740m²

Activities on the new public square
2.2 Public exhibitions
SK P513; 1:1250@A3