

PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF 1-9 NEWCOMEN STREET

Planning application 25/AP/0591

Representations by Team London Bridge

May 2025

1. Team London Bridge (TLB) is the Business Improvement District (BID) representing approximately 400 businesses in the area between London Bridge to the west, Tower Bridge to the east, and south towards Bermondsey. Team London Bridge has a remit from businesses since 2015 to deliver the [London Bridge Plan](#), a plan that was subsequently embedded to a great extent in the [London Bridge Area Vision \(AV.11\)](#) in the Southwark Plan (adopted 2022). TLB priorities are constantly being kept up to date through new strategies and consultation, ensuring our responses to planning reflect the wider aims of the business district. Our vision is “*to make London Bridge one of the most safe, sustainable and engaging places for business and tourism in the world*”.

2. TLB responds to planning applications that have the potential to deliver significant impact in the local area. TLB’s responses aim to encourage investment that can help realise the priorities set by businesses in the area, with particular focus on:

- Public realm and greening
- Area identity
- Land use and active frontage
- Transport, servicing and network management
- ESG

3. We welcome the opportunity to inform proposals for the redevelopment of this important area in London Bridge and contributed to earlier consultation in April 2024. **It is a disused site and development will make a much more positive contribution to the area. The plans realise important opportunities to regenerate the site and support wider ambitions for London Bridge.**

4. The site lies within the *London Bridge Science, Education and Medical Hub* character area as described in the London Bridge Plan, named the “*London Health Cluster*” in the Southwark Local Plan. TLB actively supports the SC1 Life Science district that has emerged to deliver this vision, and through the Medi-Culture programme we help celebrate the heritage of life-changing work that continues now and into the future. **The proposed development plays a critical role in delivering the SC1 vision for the life sciences innovation district.**

5. Further comments relating to areas of TLB focus are set out below:

Land use

6. To be successful, the proposals need to provide life sciences facilities which contribute to the “*London Health Cluster*” identified in Southwark Local Plan’s Site Allocation NSP52 where redevelopment “*must provide health, research and education facilities or otherwise support the functioning of London Bridge Health Cluster*”. This is consistent with our London Bridge Plan that identifies the site as being part of the Science, Education and Medical Hub Character Area where “*the Hub is an integrated area of medical, educational, science and research institutions, supported by shared services and facilities*”.

Affordable workspace

7. Given that both Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust and King's College London are registered as affordable workspace providers through SC1 we assume that provision will be made through these partners, though this is not made clear.

Area identity

8. The proposals will have an impact on the townscape in a Conservation Area. The Southwark Plan's Area Vision for London Bridge indicates development should “*support the creation of a distinctive world class environment through **a mix of innovative new architecture, restored heritage** revealed with ‘placemarks’, and quality public realm that provides openness, connectivity and a ‘green grid’*”. Through the quality of the restored facades in combination with modern architecture, the scheme can be an example of a [Placemark](#), supporting the unique character and identity of the London Bridge area. To this end we believe the plans should be positively received by Southwark's Design Review Panel.

9. We worked with Better Bankside and Southwark Council to produce the [Inns and Yards Toolkit](#) to support better recognition and investment of these unique spaces off Borough High Street. While Nag's Head Yard sits just outside the development boundary and will remain secured, we hope that access may be possible for future occupiers and pedestrians, should KCL open this route in the future. This will help achieve the expectations of Local Plan site allocation NSP52 for development proposals to “*improve pedestrian movement and permeability*” through the campus. We welcome that the latest proposals have responded to consultation so that “*facades facing the yard (are) more permeable at ground level, illuminated and respond to the townscape through its colouring and materiality*”. We hope that the toolkit can provide further support as the designs develop.

Active frontage

10. Currently, the plans will not animate the Newcomen Street frontage, and the opportunity to provide a public facing use, such as a street facing café, has not been taken. There is however already a popular space along this frontage for which the Crol and Co café opposite has a pavement license (Team London Bridge has supplied planters and artwork for this, which have been very positively received). This use is not visible in the images accompanying the planning application. We recognise that this might be a matter for Southwark Licensing, but we hope that the developer will be supportive of extending this approach in future.

Servicing and construction

11. The plans need to demonstrate an approach to construction and servicing which recognises the severe constraints due to limited road capacity and a high volume of existing users and neighbouring businesses.

12. The Travel Plan indicates servicing requirements resulting in vehicles every two hours. Given the intended function as part of SC1 we hope there will be agreements in place to consolidate servicing with SC1 partners where practical. There is also potential for cargo bike operators to meet various servicing needs (for example GSTT blood samples are moved by cargo bike) to further reduce the impact of vehicle movements through these narrow roads and yards. Options are indicated in the London Bridge [Cargo Bike Service Directory](#).

13. There are challenges in the construction phase of the project, as illustrated by the Travel Plan's analysis of the constraints over access by larger vehicles. We welcome the applicant's involvement in the Community Transport working group looking at these issues along with Southwark Council, other developers, the local community and ourselves. These concerns will need to be addressed when a building contractor is engaged, and through an ongoing construction forum for the area, that we attend in relation to other construction locally (served by TfL).

Landscape and greening

14. We welcome the plans meeting the requirement for an Urban Greening Factor score of 0.3. This helps make a contribution to the Green Grid vision that is so popular with the business community. It includes welcome retention of the existing tree in the Conservation Area outside 1 Newcomen Street. There are further opportunities to provide greening on the side of new buildings and we suggest the narrow eastern elevation as a specific opportunity with impactful visibility along the street.

Walking and Cycling

15. We commend the Healthy Streets approach to improving Newcomen Street, which should improve walking conditions.

16. We support the provision of additional secure cycle parking. The development is situated on a busy cycle path and should additionally contribute to meeting extra demand for public cycle docking stations and dockless cycle hire. Managing an increasing number of dockless bikes is becoming an increasing priority, perhaps even above internal cycle storage – though policy has not kept pace with these evolving needs.

Sustainability and ESG

17. We welcome the sustainability commitments in the proposals. Some of these – such as carbon reduction – exceed policy requirements which is welcome and consistent with the purpose of the SC1 partnership to create a *“generation of new buildings... improving the liveability and decarbonisation of our local neighbourhoods”*. We believe the approach will best be supported by demonstrating a commitment to the circular economy and committing to some demanding environmental sustainability targets and standards. These include:

- BREEAM Outstanding (as proposed the plans are already to exceed Excellent)
- WELL Platinum
- air quality positive
- EPC rating A
- water run off at greenfield rates.

18. We believe meeting exemplary sustainability standards is an appropriate response to the circumstances now demanded by Southwark Council's Net Zero targets and the changing expectations of future tenants. TLB has developed a [Decarbonisation Charter](#) with businesses aligned to the Council climate declaration, and buildings like this will make a significant contribution to the aim for a business district that is recognised as taking leadership on sustainability. It will also meet the changing expectations of future tenants. KCL and GSST have signed, and we invite development partners to show this commitment also.

19. The development could also form part of the district heat network whose feasibility is currently being investigated by Team London Bridge, GSST and others, and is an important part of delivering the London Bridge carbon neutral [routemap](#) for the area. It can play a key role as an enabler for this wider network and the provision of clean energy. We recognise that connection will depend upon timing or linkage to the wider campus network.

20. We would welcome the development coming forward with both [SEAM accreditation](#) and [Living Wage Building accreditation](#) to secure an appropriate level of social impact.

21. We should be pleased to discuss further how to help deliver shared ambitions for this important location.