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Coin Street Community Builders respond to delay of expected decision from Michael Gove MP on former ITV studio site development

Coin Street Community Builders has been informed that Michael Gove's decision on planning permission for the former ITV studios on the South Bank has been delayed until 6 October. Coin Street Community Builders is a prominent campaigner against the proposal for a large, imposing office block to be built on the Upper Ground site.

Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Housing, Levelling Up and Communities, informed Coin Street that 'further time is required to consider this case'. The Secretary of State has the power to vary the timetable previously set out under paragraph 6 (2) of Schedule 2 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Coin Street and local campaigners fully expect that Michael Gove will honour his commitment to sustainable urban transformation.

This planning decision is an opportunity for the Secretary of State to demonstrate his pledge to encourage the construction of homes on brownfield sites, encourage thorough public engagement throughout the redevelopment process, and ensure that the reuse of existing buildings is fully explored as an alternative to demolition.

David Hopkins, Director of Communities, Coin Street Community Builders said: "Michael Gove has spoken extensively in recent weeks about his commitment to building more homes, using brownfield land to tackle the housing crisis, and prioritising a low-carbon future. This delay is an opportunity for the Secretary of State to ensure this decision is closely aligned with his own vision of building the homes London so desperately needs."

[Ends]

Notes to editors

Department for Housing, Levelling Up and Communities on Carbon

Last year, the parliamentary [Environmental Audit Committee](#) called for mandatory whole life carbon assessments and for priority to be given to retrofit and reuse of buildings. Committee chairperson Philip Dunne said: *‘From homes to offices, retail units to hospitality venues, our buildings have a significant amount of locked-in carbon, which is wasted each time they get knocked down to be rebuilt, a process which produces yet more emissions. Ministers must address this urgently... baseline standards for action need to be established.’*

In response to the [Committee report](#), the Government said: *‘We agree with the Committee that whole life carbon assessments (WLCAs) are likely to have a significant role to play in delivering this change. WLCAs will help ensure that carbon is properly accounted for, encouraging the industry to use low carbon materials and to produce more efficient, low-carbon designs. This is why the Net Zero Strategy set out Government’s ambitions to help the construction sector improve their reporting on embodied carbon in buildings and confirmed that we will explore the potential of a maximum embodied carbon level for new buildings in the future.’*

The assessment, which certain MPs want to see introduced by the end of this year, would calculate the emissions from the construction, maintenance, and demolition of a building, and from the energy used day-to-day. Similar carbon assessments already exist in other European countries.

Michael Gove on Marks and Spencer

In the case of [Marks and Spencer](#), Gove found that while the development proposals were in general compliance with the development plan policies, the development would *‘fail to support the transition to a low-carbon future’* and would fail to *‘encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings’*, contrary to paragraph 152 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). He was not satisfied *“that there has been an appropriately thorough exploration of alternatives to demolition.”*

[NPPF paragraph 152 means that there should be a strong presumption in favour of repurposing and reusing buildings. Where buildings are structurally sound and in a location with the highest accessibility levels, a strong reason would be needed to justify demolition and rebuilding; and the importance of optimising the use of the site and what alternatives are realistically available will be relevant factors in applying the presumption.]

About us

Coin Street Community Builders (CSCB) is a social enterprise working in Waterloo and North Southwark. CSCB owns, manages, and maintains the riverside walkway between the National Theatre and Sea Containers, Bernie Spain Gardens, Oxo Tower Wharf, Gabriel’s Wharf, and Coin Street neighbourhood centre. It is freehold owner of the Iroko, Mulberry, Palm and Redwood housing developments which are leased to primary co-operatives managed by their tenants.

<https://coinstreet.org/>

CSCB view is: The scale, bulk and siting of the proposed development is excessive, overbearing and overly dominant. The impact on daylight received by adjacent Coin Street housing co-operatives will be severe. The riverside walkway and gardens to the north of the proposed development currently enjoy sunshine throughout the lunchtime peak and afternoon but would be cast into shadow by this development. The wanton disregard of the South Bank, one of London's most popular amenities, is unacceptable and short-sighted! At the public inquiry it became apparent that the existing tower with its high floor to ceiling heights and fabulous views could be re-purposed for residential use and that is what should now happen.

For more information

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