

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet	Expiry Date:	04/04/2023
		N/A	Consultation Expiry Date:	22/01/2023
Officer			Application Number(s)	
Kristina Smith			1. 2022/5258/P 2. 2023/0747/L	
Application Address			Drawing Numbers	
Euston Fire Station 172 Euston Road London NW1 2DH			<i>Refer to Draft Decision Notice</i>	
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Installation of 4 ASHPs in rear courtyard and 1 ASHP in front lightwell 2. Internal and external alterations associated with the installation of 4 ASHPs in rear courtyard and 1 ASHP in front lightwell 				
Recommendation(s):		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refuse planning permission 2. Refuse Listed Building Consent 		
Application Type(s):		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full Planning Permission 2. Listed Building Consent 		

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice			
Informatives:				
Consultations				
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
Summary of consultation responses:	<p><u>Planning permission</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A site notice was displayed between 29/12/22 and 22/01/23 • A press advert was published on 15/12/22 <p><u>Listed Building Consent</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A site notice was displayed between 31/03/23 and 24/04/23 <p>No responses were received</p>			
Bloomsbury CAAC:	Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee responded in relation to 2023/0747/L saying they have no comments to make on the application			

Site Description

The site comprises the Grade II* Listed Euston Fire Station situated on Euston Road at the junction with Eversholt Street. Access is from Grafton Place to the rear. The Station was built in 1901-1902 and altered and extended later in the twentieth century. The original part of the building is recognised as a fine example of Arts and Crafts design by architect HFT Cooper of the Fire Brigade Branch of the London County Council Architects' Department. It is referred to in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy as a building that, together with the four storey bow-fronted houses to the north, are '*the only remaining indication of the former smaller domestic scale of the earlier buildings surrounding Euston Square*'.

The site is situated in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Relevant History

2022/4800/P and 2022/5312/L - Replacement of timber doors and metal / timber windows with aluclad doors and aluminium / aluclad windows on the rear (northeast and northwest) elevations at ground to fifth floor levels – **Planning permission and Listed building consent refused 25/01/2023** on the grounds that the proposed replacement of windows and doors, by reason of loss of historic fabric and inappropriate detailed design would result in 'less than substantial' harm to the significance of the listed building as a designated heritage asset which is not outweighed by any planning benefits

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

London Plan 2021

Camden Local Plan 2017

A1 Amenity

A4 Noise

D1 Design

D2 Heritage

CC1 Climate change mitigation

Camden Planning Guidance

CPG Design 2021

CPG Amenity 2021

CPG Sustainability 2021

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011)

Assessment

1 Proposal

1.1 It is understood that the proposed works consist of the external installation of four Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) units and acoustic attenuation cabinets in rear northern courtyard, and a new ASHP unit in the lightwell on the front Eversholt Street elevation. Internally the heating/domestic water/gas/ventilation systems will be stripped out and replaced in association with the new ASHPs with 11 new radiators installed, and electrical upgrades to the basement and ground floor. Works will involve creating new internal and external penetrations through the historic fabric.

1.2 However, the full extent of the proposed works has changed over the course of the application process, where new works have come to light (via site visit and further correspondence) that were initially missing from the submission.

1.3 Officers have tried to be proactive and work collaboratively with the applicant to avoid a refusal but adequate information was not forthcoming and to avoid additional resources being expended on the application it was decided to proceed with a refusal. A timeline overview of the correspondence is as follows:

20 November 2022	Planning Permission application received, with no associated LBC
12 December 2022	Emails detailing that LBC was required and requesting further information “specifically showing the locations where there would be internal modifications/replacements including new penetrations required for ductwork etc.”
19 December 2022	Response stating: “replacement equipment [LTHW heating and domestic water services pipes] will reuse the locations of the existing equipment wherever possible... There will not be any new penetrations required for ductwork within the proposed scheme.”
9 January 2023	Site visit was carried out where it was mentioned that all of the ceilings would have to be taken down to facilitate installation of the new pipework new penetrations needed through the historic fabric and that electrical works were also proposed. Updated Plans were then provided with the positions of the 11 new radiators clouded – the number of new units had not previously been stated.
10 January 2023	Scope of Electrical works stated but no associated Plans provided.
28 February 2023	LBC application received. Plans matched those submitted for the PP with no further detail about the internal modifications proposed (including electrical works).
15 March 2023	Scope of Works and updated Plans provided (as requested on 1 March with locations of +30 new perforations highlighted. No elevations or detail regarding the dimensions or locations of the penetrations included.

2 Assessment

2.1 The main considerations in the determination of the application are:

- Design and Heritage
- Amenity of neighbouring occupiers

2.2 As the application site is situated within a Conservation Area and the building is Grade II listed, the following statutory provisions are relevant to the determination of these applications are Section 16, 72 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013.

- 2.3 Section 16 of the Act requires that in considering whether to grant listed building consent for development which affects a listed building, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building, its setting and its features of special architectural or historic interest.
- 2.4 Section 66 of the Act requires that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building, its setting and its features of special architectural or historic interest.
- 2.5 Section 72 of the Act requires that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development in a conservation area, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 2.6 The NPPF terms listed buildings designated heritage assets. Section 12 of the NPPF provides guidance on managing change to designated heritage assets through the planning system, including avoiding or justifying harm to the special architectural or historic interest of listed buildings. Paragraph 134 states that “less-than-substantial harm” to a designated heritage asset must be outweighed by the public benefits secured by the proposals, including heritage benefits to the assets.

3 Design and Heritage

- 3.1 Policy D1 (Design) of the Local Plan expects development to comprise details and materials that of high quality and complement the local character whilst Policy D2 (Heritage) relates to designated heritage assets including conservation areas and listed buildings. The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.
- 3.2 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (BCAAMS) encourages owners to maintain their buildings to ensure their condition is improved or appropriate and adequately maintained so that important historic buildings and their architectural features are preserved.
- 3.3 Throughout the application process, conflicting and incorrect information with very limited detail has been provided, such that the true impact and potential harm posed to the historic fabric and architectural character and appearance of the Grade II* Listed buildings cannot be accurately assessed. Specifically, elevations have been requested showing the location of the works in relation to historic fabric and location/dimensions of new external and internal penetrations. This failure to provide adequate information has not instilled confidence that the proposed works would be carried out in such a way that respects or mitigates any harm that may be posed to the building. The engagement of a Heritage Consultant to advise on the works (in line with NPPF paragraph 194) has been repeatedly recommended by officers but this advice has not been taken up.
- 3.4 The installation of the four ASHP units in the rear courtyard is deemed to be acceptable. They would be set away from the historic rear elevation and sited in a service yard where the presence of building services including plant equipment is to be expected. As such they would not appear incongruous or harmful to the setting of the listed building. In contrast, the proposed ASHP located in the lightwell on the front historic Eversholt Street elevation is not considered appropriate. The new units would be visible from the public realm and contribute further infrastructure clutter and incongruous features to the historic front façade. Penetrations would have to be made through the external masonry wall but no detail about the dimensions or locations of these penetration have been provided. Whilst it is acknowledged there are existing units in this location, these cannot act as a precedent as it is not best practice to exacerbate or pose further harm to the heritage fabric

with the installation of additional units. Moreover, no planning history has been located for these existing units and as such they are considered to be unlawful. It is noted that the existing units have not been shown on the existing or proposed drawings.

3.5 When considered cumulatively, this application is considered to cause 'less than substantial' harm to the historic fabric of the building. This is derived from the installation of an ASHP and associated pipework to the front elevation of the building as well as associated internal works relating to all ASHP installations. Due to the insufficient level of information, the full degree of the harm posed to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and special architectural and historic interest of the Listed Building cannot be accurately determined. Multiple requests for further information have been made with limited and inadequate responses. It has become clear over the course of the application process that preserving the special interest of the Grade II* Listed Building is not considered a priority of the works.

4 Impact on the amenity of surrounding occupiers

4.1 The proposal involves the installation of several ASHP units in the rear courtyard and front lightwells. The nearest buildings comprise a hotel and a hostel. It is not clear whether there are residential dwellings although Council Tax records shows there to be a unit at St Philomena's Convent, 70-71 Euston Square.

4.2 A noise impact assessment (NIA) has been submitted with the application which assesses the air source heat pumps to the rear of the building but not the one proposed on the front façade. It identifies the closest residential receptor as the hotel on the other side of Grafton Place (no 1-11 Grafton Place) opposite the proposed installation location.

4.3 The Council's Environmental Health officer has reviewed the NIA and considers that the plant noise criteria have been adequately predicted taking into consideration distance losses, surface acoustic reflections and, where applicable, screening provided by the building. In order to meet the Council's noise criteria, it has been recommended that an enclosure is installed around the plant.

4.4 The assessment indicates that the proposed plant should be capable of achieving the proposed environmental noise criteria with suggested mitigation at the nearest and potentially most affected noise sensitive office and residential windows. Should planning permission be granted, conditions would be attached to limit noise and vibration.

4.5 Whilst the NIA does not account for the plant equipment on the front façade, it is considered that, as this would be further away from residential receptors than the plant to the rear, combined with the existing noise levels from Euston Road, the proposed installation would not adversely affect neighbouring amenity and a further reason for refusal cannot be justified on these grounds.

5 Energy and sustainability

5.1 Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) are proposed to replace the existing conventional boilers on site which have apparently reached the end of their economic lifespan. As a renewable heating technology, ASHPs are generally supported by the Council.

5.2 It is not clear whether the applicant wishes to use the ASHPs purely for heating or to cool the building too. Were the latter to be the case, an Overheating Assessment would be required to demonstrate the need for them as passive measures. Otherwise, were planning permission to be granted, a condition would be attached to ensure the ASHPs are used in heating mode only.

6 Planning balance

6.1 'Less than substantial' harm requires corresponding public benefit to flow from the development if planning permission and listed building consent is to be granted. In this case, there are very limited public benefits that are confined to improving the energy efficiency of one building. This benefit

fails to outweigh the identified harm. As such, the proposal is contrary to policies D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan.

7 Recommendation

7.1 Refuse Planning Permission on the following grounds:

- The proposed ASHP in the front lightwell and associated works to the front facade, by reason of the introduction of visual clutter to a historic façade and the failure to demonstrate there would be no harm to historic fabric, would result in 'less than substantial' harm to the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area as designated heritage assets, which is not outweighed by any planning benefits, contrary to policies D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage) of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.

7.2 Refuse Listed Building Consent on the following grounds:

- The proposed ASHP in the front lightwell, associated works to the front façade and all internal works relating to the ASHPs to both front and rear, by reason of the introduction of visual clutter to a historic façade and the failure to demonstrate there would be no harm to historic fabric would result in 'less than substantial' harm to the special interest of the listed building as a designated heritage asset, which is not outweighed by any planning benefits, contrary to policy D2 (Heritage) of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.