

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2023/5175/L	Covent Garden Community Association (form completed by Amanda Rigby, Vice-Chair)	11/02/2024 20:49:43	COMNOT	<p>As the amenity society for the area, Covent Garden Community Association (CGCA) wishes to comment on this application. We ask for two Planning conditions, and for two small alterations to the plans.</p> <p>We have no objection to the internal improvements to this handsome building, as they seem sympathetic and are likely to give a welcome upgrade to the office accommodation.</p> <p>However, we do have concerns regarding the outside space, notably the terrace at 4th floor level. Terraces used by offices have great potential for harm to residential amenity, especially given the increase in an after-work socialising culture 'at the office' rather than 'at the pub'. We always therefore ask for restrictions on hours of use of such spaces if they are near to residential units, and for measures to lessen overlooking and noise, and to absorb sound.</p> <p>This application site is near to residential units. It overlooks the back of more than 20 family flats at 12 Parker Street (Market House), 22 Parker Street (Ruspini House), 158 Drury Lane and 37-40 Great Queen Street. Indeed, these flats have had some problems with noise and overlooking from the terrace before, even in its un-refurbished state. Noise enters the enclosed area below, between the flats, then it carries and echoes. A view from the back of a flat in Parker Street shows clearly why this has happened.</p> <p>(SEE FULL LETTER FOR MARKED-UP PHOTOGRAPH)</p> <p>The terrace also overlooks new (as yet unoccupied) flats at 24-26 Great Queen Street. The latter building belongs to the applicant at the moment.</p> <p>We have had an initial discussion with the applicant, who is keen for his commercial tenants not to cause any harms to the residential tenants in his own and others' buildings. However, as the ownership of the application building could change in the future, and as landlords have limited control over long-term commercial tenants, we ask for Planning Conditions.</p> <p>We note that a recent application for an office terrace of slightly smaller size on the other side of the flats in Parker street was recently refused for reasons of harm to residential amenity - see conditions being drafted by Camden (Bethany Cullen) for consent on application ref. 2023/2245/P (at 160-161 Drury Lane &amp; 4-6 Parker Street). That was at 2nd floor level. This application for the 4th floor of 31 Great Queen Street is likely to have somewhat less impact.</p> <p>We therefore only ask you to condition any consent with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A restriction upon the use of the improved 4th floor terrace, to be between the hours of 09:00 and 19:00 Monday to Friday. This is similar to other consents for office terraces in the area.</li> <li>- A restriction for no music, or sound from an amplified device, to be audible on the terrace.</li> </ul> <p>We ask that you request the applicant to make two small additions to the drawings, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Screening or a solid balustrade on the terrace up to a certain level to reduce overlooking.</li> <li>- Planting or some other means of absorbing sound in a location surrounded by hard surfaces.</li> </ul>

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