

Development Control
London Borough of Camden
Camden Town Hall
London
WC1H 8ND



1 November 2024

Dear Sirs

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Kingsbourne House, 229-231 High Holborn, London WC1V 7DA
Detailed planning application for a change of use and retrospective minor alterations of the rooftop and part of floor 7 from office use (Class E) to a dual use between Class E and sui generis (bar)

We have been instructed by our client, Rooftop and Friends Limited, to submit a detailed planning application for a change of use and retrospective minor alterations of the rooftop and part of floor 7 from office use (Class E) to a dual use between Class E and sui generis (bar) at Kingsbourne House, 229-231 High Holborn, London WC1V 7DA.

This application comprises the following material:

1. Site location plan
2. Site Plan (Block Plan)
3. Existing and proposed floorplans, elevations and sections
4. Noise impact assessment
5. CIL form.

Site and Location

Application Site

Kingbourne House is an eight-storey building located on the south side of High Holborn immediately east of Holborn London Underground Station. The ground floor comprises retail premises, communal parts, entrances and service areas. The upper floors are serviced offices / short term office rental spaces.

The rooftop of the building has been used as an outside seating area for the users of the offices below. The roof has had benched seating and tables and has had a fully decked timber floor as part of the existing office use.



Above. Photos of the rooftop as previously existing

Surrounding Area

The surrounding area is within the Central Activity Zone and is predominately in commercial use. The nearest residential development is at 115 High Holborn and 10 Gate Street. The property is not listed but is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Proposal

The main roof area of Kingsbourne House has been accessible as an informal private outside space for occupiers of the office space below (see photos above). This space has recently been fully refurbished to provide a higher quality outside space that has the potential to be used by the public as a rooftop bar. Free public access to the rooftops of tall buildings is supported by Policy D9 (part D) – Tall Buildings in the London Plan.

Refurbishment

As part of the refurbishment process replacement decking and seating areas have been provided and a secondary boundary wall created to keep people away from the edge of the building. This is for safety reasons as well as to ensure the original decorative metal railing

can be retained. The space is entirely open apart from a kitchen area formed from an existing plant room (seen in the photo above) and shared use of the toilets on the floor below.

The rooftop area is entirely open. Mobile parasols can be used in the summer to provide shade but these would not be fixed and would be retracted and removed each evening or when the bar would be unused. The bar counter area is also the open.

The new kitchen area does not require any extracts or mechanical ventilation and utilises existing openings and doors within the existing plant room.

On its own these minor works might be considered de-minimus but have been included in this application for retrospective permission for good measure. These works have been approved by building control in July 2024.

The roof area will include a series of small speakers to provide low level background music. The location and volume of these have been thoroughly assessed to ensure that they comply with also noise polices both for planning and for licencing. A detailed noise report is included with this application.

Much of these works have already been undertaken because of delays in getting a noise impact assessment complete. It took longer than expected to agree baseline noise monitoring locations with the Council. It was important to undertake the minor rooftop works during the summer months. The minor works were carried out in August 2024 and the background noise monitoring was carried out in July 2024 to avoid any interference.

Use

As can be seen from the floorplans the majority of the space subject of the application is open space and therefore is not technically floorspace. The only enclosed spaces are the kitchen and the existing toilets on floor 7.

The application is for a dual use to continue as an informal outside space, ancillary to the office use below as well as to be used as a bar accessible to the public at defined times. The roof top bar has been granted a licence to sell alcohol.

Access

The bar area is accessed in the same way of the offices below. That is using a shared entrance from the High Holborn entrance and then using stairs or a lift. A secondary entrance is available from Gate Street and will be for staff or used as an emergency exit.

All servicing and refuse storage will utilise existing ground and basement area which provide servicing to the rest of the building.

Planning Issues

There are three main planning issues:

1. The noise impact on nearby residential properties

2. The impact of the alterations on the Bloomsbury Conservation Area
3. The shared use of existing floor 7 toilet facilities.

The noise impact on nearby residential properties

The applicant has been aware from the outset that the key to the success of the proposal is to ensure that nearby residential properties are not harmfully impacted.

The Applicant has engaged with F1 Acoustics throughout the design process to ensure that the proposed venue is acceptable in terms of noise. This has involved advice on the inset secondary boundary wall, limiting the number of visitors to 200 or fewer at any one time, the size, type and location of the background music speakers and the preparation of a noise management plan.

The accompanying noise assessment demonstrates that with the measures proposed the roof top bar can operate within the accepted noise policies and guidelines protecting nearby residential properties.

The Impact of the Alterations on the Conservation Area

The minor alterations to the rooftop area are set back from the edge of the roof and the existing metal balustrade. A secondary solid balustrade ensures that all activity is set away from the edge of the roof area. The new deck, bar counter, wooden screens and roller shutter to the kitchen area are considered to be minor additions. They are not visible from any public view and only glimpsed from some private views from nearby buildings.

We consider that the physical alterations carried out to the roof are minor and do not have any impact on the conservation area.

The Loss of a Small Area of Space on Floor 7 for an Expanded Toilet Provision.

Existing toilet provision exists on Floor 7. This will be used both for the roof top bar and for the office space. As the application is for a dual use this space continues to be available as Class E space for at least 10 years.

It is not considered that the dual use of the existing toilets facilities represents a loss of office space and this will be a shared facility.

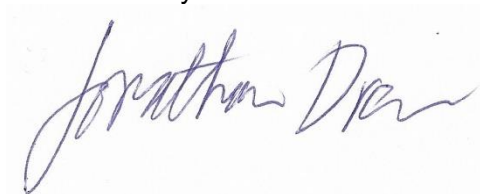
Conclusions

The proposal makes a more efficient use of an existing outdoor space on a tall building. Access already exists for office workers and this is now being extended to public access. This access is achieved with only minor alterations to the roof area.

The minor alterations are designed to have minimal impact on the conservation area.

The limitation of 200 people together a noise management plan makes the proposal acceptable in terms of the new public use.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Jonathan Drew', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Jonathan Drew
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