

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		31/07/2013	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:			
Officer				Application Number			
Aysegul Olcar-Chamberlin				2013/2981/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
University College London 1-19 Torrington Place London WC1E 7HB				See decision notice			
PO 3/4		Area Team Signature		C&UD		Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal							
Installation of new air handling unit and ducting (following the removal of existing air handling equipment) and lighting equipment on first floor roof top of building (Class D1).							
Recommendation(s):		Grant permission					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	39	No. of responses	01	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:		A site notice was displayed from 12/06/2013 to 03/07/2013. A press notice was advertised on 20/06/2013.					
CAAC/Local groups comments:		Bloomsbury CAAC raised no objection as long as care is taken to ensure that the new equipment is not visible from the street.					
Site Description							
The application site is a part 2, part 6 and part 11 storey large block on the corner of Torrington Place and Tottenham Court Road in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area (at the edge of the UCL' main Bloomsbury campus). The building is arranged over two basement levels, ground and ten upper floors on an 'L' shaped plan. This application relates to the University College of London (UCL) occupied part of the building.							

There is a mix of land uses in the surrounding area, with university and hospital buildings to the north and east, commercial uses to the south and mix of retail and commercial uses along Tottenham Court Road. The nearest residential dwellings are located at Woburn Mansions and Gordon House Mansions located at the corner of Huntley Street and Torrington Place.

The site falls within the Central London Area.

Relevant History

2012/4608/P – Planning permission was granted on 03/12/2012 for the change of use from offices (Class B1a) to dual use as offices (Class B1a) and educational use (Class D1) for a temporary period of 10 years (excluding retail and other commercial units on Tottenham Court Road frontage).

2009/4718/P – Planning permission was granted on 24/12/2009 for the installation of a chiller unit and extension to an existing plant enclosure screen on the roof of the five storey building fronting Tottenham Court Road in mixed office (Class B1) and education (Class D1) use.

9500064 – Planning permission was granted on 24/02/1995 for the alterations to ground floor front elevation including new fenestration entrance doors and ramp access.

Relevant policies

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

CS5 – Managing the impact of growth and development

CS10 – Supporting community facilities and services

CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

DP24 - Securing high quality design

DP25 – Conserving Camden’s heritage

DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

DP28- Noise and vibration

Camden Planning Guidance 2011

CPG 1 – Design

CPG 6 – Amenity

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management (2011)

Assessment

It is proposed to install new air handling unit, ducting and lighting equipment on first floor roof top of building to replace the old ones which are not energy efficient and have past their economic lifespan. The maintenance requirements of the proposed equipments would be the same or less than the existing ones.

The main issues are the impact on the conservation area and the impact on the amenities of the nearby premises.

Policy CS10b supports the higher education sector in Camden and aims to balance its requirements with those of other sectors and the local community. Policy DP24 requires all development to consider the character, setting, context, scale and proportions of the existing and neighbouring buildings. Policy DP25 also states that the Council will grant planning permission for development in Camden's Conservation Areas that preserves and enhances the special character or appearance of the area. Section 11 of CPG1 suggests that building service equipment where, because of its nature, it cannot be integrated within the building should not be a dominant feature of the building and cause visual blight.

The existing roof top is used for accommodating servicing equipments. The proposed arrangement of the servicing equipments would not be significantly different from the existing ones. The proposed lighting system would be mounted close to the roof surfaces (no greater than 500mm). The proposed air handling unit, ducting works and lighting system would not add a significant bulk to the existing roof top and would be mainly screened by the existing front parapet wall. The proposed servicing equipment would not be readily visible from the street views. The proposal is considered not to harm the appearance of the existing building or the character of the Conservation Area and therefore it is considered to be acceptable in design terms.

Policy DP28 seeks to ensure that noise and vibration is controlled and managed and will not grant planning permission for development likely to generate noise pollution; or development sensitive to noise in locations with noise pollution, unless appropriate attenuation measures are provided. The Noise and Vibration Thresholds set out in Table E of this policy need to be complied in this case. The nearest residential property is Gordon Mansions and the nearest sensitive façade is the adjacent office building (which is located 23m from the proposed plant).

The applicants submitted a noise report prepared by AECOM to demonstrate that proposed plant could be operated in accordance with the Council's noise criteria. The proposed plant would be Swgeon Gold RX unit. According to the report the lowest background noise levels are 56 dB(A) at daytime and 54 dB(A) at night-time and the predicted noise level to the nearest noise sensitive façade would be 34dB(A). This would be 10dB(A) below the lowest background noise level and therefore it complies with the Council's noise criteria.

The applicants also submitted lighting assessment with this application to demonstrate that there would not be unacceptable light spillage from the proposed lighting system. Given the positions of the lights and their low illumination the proposed lighting system would not cause unacceptable light spillage in the area.

The Council's Environmental Health Officer is satisfied with the supporting information provided with the application and recommended approval of the application subject to standard noise level condition. Subject the noise condition the proposal would not be likely to cause noise nuisance to the occupiers of the nearby premises.

Consequently, the proposal is considered to be acceptable as it would not harm the appearance and character of the Conservation Area and the amenities of the nearby premises.

Recommendation: Grant conditional permission.

