

Delegated Report (Members Briefing)		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		25/12/2012	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		07/11/2012	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Jason Traves				2012/5108/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
Whittington House 19 - 30 Alfred Place London WC1E 7EA				See draft decision notice			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature				
Proposal(s)							
Change of use of ground floor from wholesale furniture shop (Sui Generis) to offices (Class B1a).							
Recommendation(s):		Granted Subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	30	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00	
			No. Electronic	00			
Summary of consultation responses:	Nil						
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify	Nil						

Site Description

Whittington House (Nos. 19-30 Alfred Place) is a five storey building, the upper floors of which are in use as offices and the ground floor as a showroom for a firm selling office equipment and furniture for sale to non-retail (business) customers. It is located on the eastern side of Alfred Place close to its junction with Chenies Street. The building is not listed, but is located in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. It is located within the Central London Area.

Relevant History

The same application has been considered by the development Control committee on 2 previous occasions and resolved to grant permission. However, both were subsequently refused because of the failure of the applicant to sign the s106 agreement (securing car-capping and a contribution to Legible London) in the prescribed 13-week statutory timeframe:

- **2012/1437/P** - Development Control Committee resolved to grant planning permission on 31.05.2012 but subsequently refused because the s106 was not signed
- **2011/2242/P** - Development Control Committee resolved to grant planning permission on 11.08.2012 but subsequently refused because the s106 was not signed

It is noted that early contact has been made with the applicant's solicitor to give ample awareness and time for completing the s106 agreement in the prescribed timescales.

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

London Plan 2011

Policy 4.1 (Developing London's economy)

Policy 4.2 (Offices)

Policy 6.13 (Parking)

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies 2010

LDF Core Strategy

CS3 Other highly accessible areas

CS5 Managing the impact of growth and development

CS8 Promoting a successful and inclusive economy

CS9 Achieving a successful Central London

CS11 Promoting sustainable and efficient travel

CS13 Tackling climate change through promoting higher environmental standards

CS19 Delivering and monitoring the core strategy

LDF Development Policies

DP1 Mixed use development

DP13 Employment premises and sites

DP16 The transport implications of development

DP17 Walking, cycling and public transport

DP18 Parking standards and limiting the availability of car parking

DP20 Movement of goods and materials

DP21 Development connecting to the highway network

DP22 Promoting sustainable design and construction

DP26 Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

Camden Planning Guidance 2011

CPG1 Design

CPG4 Sustainability

CPG5 Town centres, retail and employment

CPG6 Amenity

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (18 Apr 2011)

Central London Planning Guidance 2007

Fitzrovia Area Action Plan (Draft, Nov 2012)

Assessment

The proposal

The proposal is identical to the previous schemes. Planning permission is sought for change of use of the ground floor of the building to Class B1 offices, with the future occupier yet to be established. It is however anticipated that there would be 80 full time staff and 12 part time staff employed. No external alterations to the building are proposed.

The main issues relating to this application are considered to be as follows:

- Land Use
- External appearance
- Neighbourhood Amenity
- Transport
- Sustainability

Land Use

There has been no material change in circumstances since the previous assessment, that the provision of new B1 floorspace is supported by policy CS8 of the Core Strategy, with the Central London area being identified as being particularly suitable for such a use. There is no specific protection for *sui generis* showrooms in policy terms and an office is considered preferable in this location due to its high accessibility and the greater number of people it would employ.

As was noted in the assessment of the previous application, there is no increase in floorspace, therefore, there is no requirement for a contribution to the supply of housing under policy DP1, or for a financial contribution towards the Mayor of London's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

External appearance

There are no external changes proposed with the application being solely for a change of use of the existing floorspace.

Neighbourhood amenity

No neighbour impacts are identified in accordance with policies CS5, CS9 and DP26, it being noted that the change of use is contained within existing floorspace with no external changes proposed

Transport

London Plan chapter 6 policies consider the integration of transport and development, connecting London, ensuring better streets as well as specifying parking standards. Policies support the objective of London being a city which is easy, safe and convenient for everyone to access jobs, opportunities and facilities with an efficient and effective transport system which amongst other things, encourages more walking and cycling. Camden policies CS9 'Achieving a Successful Central London' and C11 'Promoting Sustainable and efficient Travel' also seek to promote sustainable transport including walking and cycling and public and improvement to streets and places.

The site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) rating of 6b, which indicates that it is highly accessible by public transport.

As per the previous assessment, the proposed staffing levels warrant a Local Level Travel Plan as well as a £3000 monitoring fee to be secured by S106 agreement in accordance with Camden CPG7 and TfL guidance 'A new way to plan'.

Also as per the previous proposal, a £15,000 contribution towards pedestrian, cycling and environmental improvements is to be secured through the s106 planning agreement. This is to mitigate the impact of the proposal on the surrounding highway network, it being noted that the increase in trips to the site would have an impact of footways and public transport.

As per the previous applications, future occupiers will be exempted from being able to apply for parking permits in accordance with the London Plan 2011 and policy DP18 given the high PTAL. A basement drawing has been supplied for the current application indicating the existing bicycle parking and car parking that the proposal would have benefit of. The application is required to provide 8 no. bicycle parking spaces and the application also seeks 4 no. car parking spaces. Given bicycle parking and car parking utilise the existing provision made in a basement which is shared with several other occupants, the individual applicant would not have the discretion to make changes. Nevertheless, the available cycle facilities are acceptable in terms of being covered and secured. In terms of car parking, it is noted this is an existing provision which is otherwise available to tenants for which the Council has no control of and as such, is not a reason for amendment or refusal of the scheme, as apposed to a redevelopment situation where new schemes in central London should be car-free. Nonetheless, the scheme will be car-capped to ensure there is no increased on-street parking pressure and a green travel plan will promote for sustainable transport behaviour of users.

As per the previous assessment, a Servicing Management Plan is not considered necessary as the proposal is merely a change of use of an existing premises.

Sustainability

Having regard to the criteria DP22 and CPG3, it is unlikely that the scheme will be able to incorporate any significant energy efficiency and renewable measures beyond the requirements of the Building Regulations having regard to the constraints of working within the existing building. As stated in the assessment of the previous application, the current application does not involve any external alterations and involves internal works to a relatively small part of a much larger building shared with several other occupants. As such, the applicant has very limited options for enhancing the sustainability of the scheme, with improved insulation and on-site energy generation not being practicable. The applicant would not have any discretion to alter the building's central heating system and as tenants would not be in a position to install on-site energy generation such as solar panels or air source heat pumps.

Conclusion

Grant conditional permission subject section 106 agreement

Heads of Terms of the S106 Agreement:

- Car-capped development.
- Local Level Travel Plan and a financial contribution of £3000 towards monitoring of the travel plan.
- Financial contribution of £15,000 towards pedestrian, cycling and environmental improvements in the vicinity of the site.

DISCLAIMER

Decision route to be decided by nominated members on Monday 10th December 2012.
For further information please click [here](#).