

Delegated Report (Members Briefing)		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:	04/12/2012
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:	15/11/2012
Officer			Application Number(s)		
Elaine Quigley			(i) 2012/5450/P (ii) 2012/5453/L		
Application Address			Drawing Numbers		
32-39 Bedford Square London WC1B 3EG			See draft decision notices		
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature		
Proposal(s)					
<p>(i) Alterations and associated works including, the addition of entrance platform lift and passenger lift to No.35, installation of roof level plant, erection of roof covering over rear yard of Nos. 34-36 at first floor level and creation of roof terrace over, erection of extensions at basement, ground and top floor level to Nos. 34-36 to allow new lift, services, reconfiguration of workshops at basement level and creation of gallery space at ground floor level all in connection with existing use as an educational institution (Class D1).</p> <p>(ii) Alterations and associated works including, the addition of entrance platform lift and passenger lift to No.35, lateral connections between all houses at ground, first, second and third floor level and other internal alterations to form a new library, installation of roof level plant, erection of roof covering over rear yard of Nos. 34-36 at first floor level and creation of roof terrace over, erection of extensions at basement, ground and top floor level to Nos. 34-36 to allow new lift, services, reconfiguration of workshops at basement level and creation of gallery space at ground floor level all in connection with existing use as an educational institution (Class D1).</p>					
Recommendation(s):		<p>(i) Grant conditional permission</p> <p>(ii) Grant listed building consent</p>			
Application Type:		<p>Full Planning Permission</p> <p>Listed Building Consent</p>			

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notices					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	42	No. of responses	01	No. of objections	01
			No. Electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:	<p>1 letter of objection received from Flat 126, Bedford Court Mansions raising the following concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alleged that works have already started, without planning approval. This morning (Sat 20 Oct) I awoke to sounds of construction, at the rear of 34-36 Bedford Square, which is clearly visible from bedroom windows of Flat 126, Bedford Court Mansions A roof terrace at the top floor level will severely impinge on the privacy of the residents at Bedford Court Mansions and make the already substantial noise even more intolerable. <p>Officer comment: Applicant has confirmed that the works that have been carried out relate to site investigation works and trial pits and opening up works to understand the condition of the existing building structures and ground conditions.</p>					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify	<p>Bloomsbury CAAC – objects on the following grounds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excessive number of lateral connections Excessive height of new lecture hall blocking ground floor views from existing listed buildings Lack of lobby to entrance to no. 35 <p>Officer comments: See assessment section in relation to points one and two. The creation of a lobby cannot be insisted on as part of the proposal.</p> <p>English Heritage Minded to direct as to the granting of listed building consent subject to conditions relating to matching materials for all new external and internal works and all new joinery work</p>					

Site Description

The application site relates to 8 of 11 buildings forming the west side of Bedford Square. They comprise 3-storeys with attics and basements. Street numbers run consecutively. The centre building at no. 32 is stuccoed; others are yellow stock brick with a plain stucco band. The buildings in Bedford Square form an important and complete example of 18th century town planning.

Originally the Architectural Association (The AA) moved to Nos. 34, 35 and 36 Bedford Square in 1917 since which time the internationally renowned school has firmly established itself as part of the character and history of the area. As well as a recent expansion in the AA's physical size, student and staff numbers have increased to 900 persons. The AA also occupies buildings to the rear, fronting Morwell Street (16-18), which would have originally been the service road for the large formal houses on Bedford Square.

Nos. 32 to 38 (consecutively) are Grade 1 listed and no. 39 is Grade II listed. The buildings are within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Relevant History

A number of application (planning and listed building applications) have been submitted relating to these properties. The most relevant have been listed below:

Planning application and listed building consent were submitted on 16/03/2012 for alterations and associated works including, the addition of entrance platform lift to No.35, installation of roof level plant, erection of roof covering over rear yard of Nos. 34-36 at first floor level and creation of roof terrace over, erection of extensions at basement, ground and top floor level to Nos. 34-36 to allow new lift, services, reconfiguration of workshops at basement level and creation of gallery space at ground floor level all in connection with existing use as an educational institution (Class D1) (2012/1635/P and 2012/1636/L). Concerns were raised by the Council regarding the lateral connections at ground, first and second floor levels across the terrace and the impact this would have on the historic buildings as well as the design approach to modify the front steps of no. 32 to incorporate a disabled access lift. These applications were **withdrawn** on 11/05/2012.

Planning permission and listed building consent were **granted** on 01/09/2011 for alterations to roof at No. 37 Bedford Square including installation of a rooflight, in association with works to form new lateral openings at second floor level between nos. 33 and 34, and third floor level between nos. 32 and 33, nos. 33 and 34, nos. 36 and 37, nos. 37 and 38, nos. 38 and 39 Bedford Square (Educational Institution - Class D1) (2011/2809/P and 2011/2810/L). The proposal originally proposed lateral linking at first floor level between nos. 38 and 39 and nos. 37 and 38 Bedford Square. This was considered to be excessively harmful to the principal rooms of the Grade I interiors and was removed from the application.

Planning permission and listed building consent were **granted** on 01/09/2011 for alterations to 37, 38 and 39 Bedford Square including demolition of the rear extension for 37 and 38 and remodelling of the rear elevation; alterations to pavement vaults to accommodate plant and air handling units; and new extractor duct on No. 39 (2011/2990/P and 2011/2973/L).

16-18 Morwell Street (part of the AA building attached to the rear of nos. 37 and 38 Bedford Square)

2011/2140/P – Planning permission was **granted** on 21/06/2011 for the installation of 2 x air intake ducts and 3 x exhaust flues at roof level associated with part use of basement level as a workshop for model making ancillary to building's part use for educational purposes (Class D1).

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012)

The London Plan

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

Core Strategy

CS1 (Distribution of growth)

CS5 (Managing the impact of growth and development)

CS13 (Tackling climate change through promoting higher environmental standards)

CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage)

Development Policies

DP22 (Promoting sustainable design and construction)
DP24 (Securing high quality design)
DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage)
DP26 (Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours)
DP28 (Noise and vibration)
DP32 (Air quality and Camden's Clear Zone)

Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) 2011

CPG1 (Design)
CPG3 (Sustainability)
CPG6 (Amenity)

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (April 2011)

Assessment

BACKGROUND

The Architectural Association (The AA) moved to nos. 34, 35 and 36 Bedford Square in 1917 within which time the internationally renowned school has firmly established itself as part of the character and history of the area. The AA also occupies buildings to the rear, fronting Morwell Street, which would have originally been the service road for the large formal houses on Bedford Square.

In 2010 the AA acquired Nos. 32, 33, 37, 38 and 39 Bedford Square and commissioned a master plan to provide a cohesive approach to the future use of the buildings by the school. The master plan highlights the use of these very fine Georgian buildings by the AA as an important part of the character of the school.

Phase 1 of the master plan focused on lateral connections at the upper and basement levels along with some upgrading of the basement workshops and services (see planning history in relation to references 2011/2990/P and 2011/2973/L that were granted consent on 01/09/2011).

This application concerns Phase 2 of the works identified within the AA's master plan. The master plan identified 5 key issues that needed to be addressed to improve the AA's ability to function properly and secure its future on the site:

1. Access across the site for both able bodied and wheelchair users (the AA is obliged to provide access for all persons to both existing and new facilities. The AA has advised that the existing buildings restrict access severely with wheel bound students being required to be carried into the building)
2. Health and safety in the school's workshops
3. Site security for staff and students
4. Improving the AA's Public Programme (public lectures, events and exhibitions)
5. Improving the AA's library and archive facilities

The justification for the current proposed works is that it will ensure the continued occupation of the Bedford Square buildings by this pre-eminent architectural school. The aspiration is to enhance the facilities on offer, to improve the health and safety standards and to ease movement from one building to another, while ensuring the character of the listed buildings, which is integral to the character of the school, is retained. The proposed works will ensure public accessibility and will provide wide ranging public benefit, in particular through the public lecture series and events.

Internally some historic ad hoc lateral conversion within Nos. 34, 35 and 36, already exists but with the recently acquired Nos. 32 and 33 and Nos. 37 to 39 Bedford Square extending the AA's portfolio essentially the only way of moving currently from one building to another is to descend to street level and enter via the front doors. The Bedford Square buildings with front steps leading to the front doors are inaccessible to those with mobility impairment, as are much of the internal spaces. The WC's are outdated and also in the main hard to access.

PROPOSAL

Planning permission and listed building consent are sought for alterations and associated works including, the addition of entrance platform lift and passenger lift to No.35, installation of roof level plant, erection of roof covering over rear yard of Nos. 34-36 at first floor level and creation of roof terrace over, erection of extensions at basement, ground and top floor level to Nos. 34-36 to allow new lift, services, reconfiguration of workshops at basement level and creation of gallery space at ground floor level all in connection with existing use as an educational institution (Class D1).

The proposal includes the following elements:

- **Wood and metal workshops**

The wood and metal workshops would remain in their current location in the basement of nos. 34 - 36 however they would increase in size from 152 sq. m to 230 sq. m to occupy the former location of the digital prototyping laboratories which will be relocated to the basement of nos. 37 - 39 (as approved on 01/09/2011 under planning permission 2011/2990/P).

Mechanical plant associated with new ventilation system for these workshops would be concealed within plant rooms on the third floor at the rear of nos. 34 - 36 avoiding any visible external plant. This would require the extension of the third floor and construction of a new roof over the rear building at nos. 34 to 36. The existing barrel vault roof would be replaced by a more traditional mansard roof and would remain broadly within the profile of the existing roof structure.

- **Lecture theatre and multi function space**

A new lecture theatre and multi function space would be created. The existing link buildings at the rear of nos. 34 - 36 would be demolished and replaced with two storey linking buildings connecting basement, ground first floors. This building would allow the bay windows of the original Georgian facades of the Bedford Square buildings to be opened up revealing currently concealed windows.

- **Lateral connections**

Lateral connection would be proposed between all the buildings at ground, and second floor levels and between nos. 35-39 at first floor level. This would result in 12 new internal openings between the majority of the buildings that would allow disabled access to substantial parts of the 8 buildings. The applicant is seeking to justify the need for these openings to ensure the presence of the AA within Bedford Square and to secure the future use of these buildings in the context of the AA's stewardship of them. This means making the buildings accessible to all, in the most practical and sensitive way.

- **Alternatives to the lateral connections**

As the current proposal has evolved the AA have given careful consideration to alternative options to enable access for all to be provided throughout the properties. These included:

- (i) a lift in every building - this was rejected on the basis of the harm this would cause to the internal finishes and structure of each of the buildings affected. This would also necessitate a lift at each front entrance that was also considered harmful to the external fabric of the buildings
- (ii) constructing external walkways at the rear of the buildings - this was rejected on the basis that this would detract from and obscure the rear Georgian bays that give the buildings much of their character and would also require major structural support work to be erected across all the properties.

- **New library and archive**

The existing library is located on the first floor of nos. 34 -35 which has been its location since the late 1920's. It provides seating for approximately 40 readers and provides 483 linear metres of shelving. The increased intake of students into the AA requires the need to increase provision of approximately 110-120 seats and 796 linear metres of shelving to display the AA's book collection. The proposal includes a new library that would occupy the second floor and the majority of the third floor in nos. 33 - 36. Nos. 34 - 35 would house the main body of the library comprising the majority of the reader's seats, book shelving, journals and issue desk.

The new archive would be located on the third floors at the front of nos. 37 and 38. Works to accommodate the new archive would include the removal of internal partitions within the rooms in the front parts of these buildings. The buildings would be interconnected by a new lateral connection that would create an enlarged space. The applicants have advised that the existing floor structure has been investigated and deemed suitable for the loadings associated with the archive material. Mechanical plant would be required to maintain specific climatic conditions for the archive. New mechanical plant would be installed within the valley of the pitched roofs of nos. 37 and 38.

- **New disabled access lift into the entrance of no. 35**

It is proposed to install a new disabled access lift into the entrance of no. 35. A lift well/pit would be dug at basement floor level within the lightwell and the lift platform and mechanism would be concealed from view when not in use at basement level. New wrought ironwork would match the existing railings and the new front entrance door would specifically match others within the Square.

- **Other works**

Other works would include the replacement of the boiler and heating system in nos. 34 and 36 which is located in the Morwell Street buildings. The system would be rationalised with separate boilers serving Morwell Street and Bedford Square properties. The original boiler would be replaced with modern energy efficient equivalents. A new boiler would be installed in the pavement vaults at the front of no. 34 and within the new third floor mezzanine plant level at Morwell Street. New pipe work would use existing pipe work runs.

New roof level plant would include:

- Archive cooling plant located within the valley roof of no. 37
- Jury rooms intake/exhaust located in the valley roof of no. 36
- Kitchen extract located in the valley roof of no. 36

Revisions

The following revisions have been made to the scheme during the course of the application

- Removal of lateral connections at first floor level between nos. 32 and 33, and nos. 33 and 34
- Retention of existing internal partition walls and room floor plant at third floor level of nos. 37 and 38
- Alterations to the design of the platform lift outside no. 35 to ensure the lift platform and mechanism would be concealed within the lightwell at basement level when not in use.

ASSESSMENT

The main considerations as part of the proposal are:

- Impact on historic buildings
- Amenity
- Accessibility

Impact on historic buildings

Policy DP24 requires development to be of the highest standard of design and consider the character, setting, context and form and scale of neighbouring buildings together with the character and proportions of the existing building. With specific regard to Listed Buildings, Policy DP25 seeks to preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, permission will not be granted where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building. In respect of Conservation Areas DP25 seeks to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas.

This application specifically concerns the following elements:

(i) The provision of new library, archive and secure storage facilities to the upper floors of the Bedford Square buildings.

The library has out grown its existing space at first floor level within nos. 34 – 36 while the highly important archive requires specialised and secure storage. The proposal involves relocating the library, the photographic collection and the archive to the upper floors. The library is to be arranged over two floors with open light wells within the floor. This part of the scheme is within the buildings that were first occupied by the AA early in the 20th century. During the early occupation of the school much of the historic interior in this area was removed and altered. It is understood that the flooring and ceilings are replacements however the joists are original and these will remain in situ.

To the third floor of nos. 37 and 38 part of the proposal originally involved the total removal of the partition walls. These walls appear to be the original domestic plan of the attic storey and officers have consistently advised that they should be retained. As the rooms are to house plan chests and general storage it is not considered that their removal is justified. Following discussions with the Council this element has now been removed from the scheme and the revised proposals are now considered to be acceptable in this respect.

(ii) The development of the rear yards of Nos. 34, 35 and 36 to provide a new lecture theatre.

The existing main lecture theatre is located on the ground floors of nos. 35 and 36 and seats 54 people. This has been found to be inadequate as a lecture theatre and multi-functioning hall. The proposal would provide a multi function space within the existing rear yards at nos. 34 – 36 that would seat approximately 80 -100 people. A roof terrace would be incorporated above at first floor level. The design has been carefully detailed to ensure that the roof structure impacts on the listed elevations as lightly as possible. The rear elevations of the Bedford Square houses have handsome curved bays and the design of the roof incorporates a wide band of glazing to ensure clear views of the backs of the buildings are maintained. The later accumulation of assorted rear additions would be removed as part of Phase 2 to rationalise and enhance the historic rear elevations. These alterations are considered to be acceptable.

(iii) Lateral connections on ground, first and second floors across numbers Nos.32 to 39

The front rooms on the ground floor of many of the Bedford Square buildings retain original cupboards positioned and made to mirror the door to the room. This proposal involves forming lateral connections through the cupboards which, from the room side will have little impact on the appearance or spatial qualities of the space. Through the party wall on the neighbouring hall side, the door will be recessed within the depth of the wall at the base of the staircase. The design of these doors will be detailed to match the other doors of the hallway.

On the first floor the proposed lateral connections are far more sensitive, cutting through the recess to the side of the chimney breast via a jib door to emerge on the neighbouring staircase landing. These rooms represent what is considered to be the finest later 18th century interiors in Camden or for that matter, London, with highly refined decorative plaster work, tall classical proportions, historic joinery and fine chimney pieces.

Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states that *“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alterations or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting.”* It goes on to advise that *“Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably Grade I and II* listed buildings, should be wholly exceptional”*.

Paragraph 133 advises that *“Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:*

- *The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- *No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- *Conservation by grant funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- *The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.”*

None of the bullet point criteria listed above apply to this proposal as the AA are currently operating within the buildings. The Council would consider that the harm to nos. 32 and 33 and nos. 33 and 34 may be assessed as substantial as referred to in paragraph 133 of the Framework. It would therefore be necessary to establish whether there is an overriding public benefit arising out of the scheme.

Nos. 32 and 33 are considered to be architecturally more important than nos. 37, 38 and 39. The particular interiors of the rooms at first floor level are of greater special interest than the others. Originally the proposal included first floor openings between Nos. 32 and 33, and 33 and 34. Alternative options have been thoroughly explored and have been found to be unacceptable due to the need for flexibility and quality accreditation requirement of the School (see details listed above in relation to these options as well as evidence provided in the supplementary supporting document produced by Wright and Wright Architects dated September 2012). This work was considered to exert unacceptable harm to the special interest of the Grade I listed buildings due to the loss of historic fabric, the harmful visual impact and the adverse impact on the spatial qualities of the particularly fine interiors. As a consequence this element of the scheme has now been removed from the proposal.

The proposed first floor openings between Nos. 36, 37, 38 and 39 are also considered highly sensitive. However given the locations within these buildings the public benefit is considered to outweigh the potential harm. The character and appearance of the principal rooms to these Grade I listed houses are particularly fine and under normal circumstances this part of the application would not be considered acceptable, only on the basis of the public benefit, in this particular instance it is now considered an acceptable solution to accessibility. Therefore no objection is raised to these works.

(iv) The refurbishment of the existing lecture hall on the ground floor to create a new reception area and the provision of a wheelchair lift to the front entrance

The existing reception is considered inadequate in terms of security and accessibility, situated at the back of Nos. 35/36 up a flight of stairs away from the front entrance. The reuse of the current lecture hall, which runs across the front rooms of Nos. 34 and 35, will provide a far more effective front entrance and receptions. The

current exhibition space on the ground floor of No. 36 will also be refurbished to accommodate the bookshop.

Initially the scheme involved the removal of half the historic stone steps to No. 35 in order to integrate a concertina type wheelchair lift to the front door. The retention of the historic stone steps was considered particularly important to the appearance and setting of the building and the wider views along the terrace. After considerable debate it is now proposed that an additional stone slab is added to the historic top step/landing to ensure the levels are manoeuvrable for wheelchair users. This adaptation to the front entrance is now considered acceptable.

The original design of the proposed wheelchair lift to the front entrance involved the creation of a large stone paved landing at pavement level set inside the historic front railings and over sailing the front area across to a lift which will raise users to the front door landing. The paved landing was considered excessively large and visually dominant and at odds with the traditional form of these historic street frontages and the appearance of this part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The platform/landing cut across the basement window in a clumsy and awkward way. Following discussions with the Council this element of the scheme has now been revised to amend the design of the lift. It is now proposed to excavate a lift well/pit at basement level within the lightwell to store the platform and lift mechanism when it is not in use. The floor finish of the platform lift would match the finish of the basement lightwell to ensure that it is concealed from views into the lightwell. The platform lift would be raised up to ground floor level when required and would then take the user up to the top of the new stone step to gain direct access into the front entrance of no. 35. The proposed amendments are considered acceptable in principle however at this stage, the detailed design of the access lift will need further consideration. A condition would be attached to ensure that the materials and detailed design of the landing platform would be submitted to and agreed by the Council.

(v) The introduction of a lift within No. 35 and the replacement lift within No. 32

The main stair of No. 35 was removed in 1926 and the proposal now is for the installation of a passenger lift in the former stairwell. Within no. 32 a lift already exists and the proposal is to replace and upgrade this lift. Neither of these lift proposals are considered contentious.

(vi) The replacement and upgrading of services throughout the buildings

The existing services have the appearance of having accumulated in an ad hoc manner. Many cables and service links have been surface mounted with no regard to the sensitive nature of the historic fabric or the character or appearance of the interiors. This part of the proposal involves the upgrading of services which is considered acceptable in principle however the design, the exact position of the fittings, the method of incorporating them into the historic fabric and the reinstatement of fixtures needs careful consideration. A condition would be attached to any permission requiring the submission of these details.

Also part of the services strategy is the incorporation of roof top plant both on the Bedford Square and Morwell Street Buildings (see amenity section below for further details).

(vii) The provision of additional studio space and exhibition space in the Morwell Street buildings

The Morwell Street building is early 20th century in date and has an attractive industrial character. The proposal is considered to have a less sensitive impact to those for the Bedford Square buildings. The existing later barrel roof is to be replaced with a structure of similar height but on a larger footprint. The revised scheme has set the metal clad, mansard type roof back from the parapet which currently is in line with the adjoining building to the south.

Amenity

Policy CS5 seeks to protect the amenity of Camden's residents by ensuring the impact of development is fully considered. Furthermore Policy DP26 seeks to ensure that development protects the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission to development that would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents. This includes privacy, overlooking, outlook and implications on daylight and sunlight.

Overlooking and loss of privacy

The proposal would include the creation of a roof terrace at first floor level above the new lecture theatre at the rear of nos. 34 – 36. There are existing roof terraces at second floor level on the three storey extension to the rear of nos. 35 - 36 and one at first floor level to the rear of no. 34. Both extensions infill the lightwell area between the building along Bedford Square and those along Morwell Street. The roof terraces measure approximately 38 sq. m and 32 sq. m respectively (70 sq. m in total). The rear elevation of the closest residential properties within Bedford Court Mansions is approximately 41m from the nearest roof terrace at nos.

35 - 36. As part of this proposal the two and three storey extensions would be demolished and this area would be infilled by the new two storey lecture theatre at basement and ground floor level. The roof of the extension would be used as a new roof terrace at first floor level. It would measure approximately 76 sq. m. The proposed new roof terrace would increase in size by approximately 6 sq and would be no closer to the neighbouring residential properties than the existing roof terrace. This modest increase in size would not be considered to have any significant impact on the amenity of the adjoining neighbours in terms of additional noise generation. The existing roof terraces are accessible during the opening hours of the school. A condition is recommended to prevent use of the terrace outside of the opening hours of the school. This would remain unchanged as part of this proposal.

The new roof terrace would be located at first floor level. Given that it would not be located any closer to the rear elevation of the neighbouring properties within Bedford Court Mansions and the fact that it would be relocated at a lower level (from second floor to first floor level) it is considered that the new roof terrace would be less prominent and not result in any additional overlooking into the windows in the rear elevation of the neighbouring properties than is currently experienced at present.

Noise from plant equipment

The proposed archive cooling plant and intake/exhaust extracts would be located within the valley roofs of the buildings and would not be visible from the street. They would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of the adjoining properties in terms of daylight, sunlight or outlook. The existing kitchen extract would be relocated from the roof of no. 35 to the roof of no. 37. Its design and height would remain the same as the existing and would be considered acceptable.

The nearest noise sensitive facades appear to be the windows in the rear elevation of Bedford Court Mansions located approximately 19m from the application site. Although the report indicates that one of the noise readings was taken from the rear of no. 36 Bedford Square, the rear of this property is a similar distance away from the plant as the rear elevation of Bedford Court Mansions. The applicants have submitted details of the potential noise impacts that provides background noise levels during the night (43 dB) and predicted noise levels associated with the new plant and machinery (33 dB). The report demonstrates that the equipment should meet the Council's minimum noise standards, subject to the mitigation measures proposed. A condition would be attached ensuring that the equipment would meet the Council's noise standards. Further conditions would be attached requiring an acoustic report demonstrating that the Council's noise requirements have been met, to ensure limited impact on local amenity.

Noise from extended workshops

The current metal and wood working workshops measure 152 sq. m and would be expanded into the basement level to the rear of no. 34-36 (adjacent to Morwell Street pavement level) creating an enlarged area measuring 230 sq. m. The improvement of the control of ventilation from the basement to Morwell Street would result in a significantly reduced noise transfer outside the building therefore the extended workshops would not be considered to harm amenity of neighbouring properties from any noise transference.

Sustainability

Policy DP22 requires development to incorporate sustainable design and construction measures. Schemes must demonstrate how sustainable development principles have been incorporated into the design and proposed implementation.

It is proposed to install 21 photovoltaic panels on the roof of the building that fronts Morwell Street at the rear of nos. 34 to 36. They would also be installed on the existing roof of nos. 16 to 18 Morwell Street. This together with other energy efficient measures such as new condensing high efficient boilers and improvement to heating controls as well as highly efficient lighting is expected to result in approximately 15% reduction in energy use and 16% reduction in annual CO₂ emissions over the existing situation with 4% of the developments total energy demand being provided renewably. This is welcomed and would comply with the requirements of policy CS13 and DP22.

Air quality

Policy DP32 requires air quality assessments where development could potentially cause significant harm to air quality. The current exhausts discharge at street level. The proposal would include all exhaust terminations located at high level at least 2m above any nearby ventilation intakes or opening windows within 10m distance. This would not be considered to harm the existing air quality and would be considered acceptable.

CIL

Given that the proposal relates to a educational use there would be no requirement for a CIL payment.

Conclusion

Grant condition planning permission and listed building consent

DISCLAIMER

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