

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		04/09/2012	
		N/A		Consultation Expiry Date:		n/a	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Amanda Peck				1. 2012/4804/P 2. 2012/4805/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
New Court 48 Carey Street London WC2A 2JE				Refer to Decision Notice			
PO 3/4		Area Team Signature		C&UD		Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)							
<p>1. Observation to adjoining borough for demolition of existing building and provision of two replacement buildings (with combined sub-basement and basement levels accommodating car and cycle -parking spaces, cyclists' facilities and building services plant), one building comprising ground plus 7 upper floors for mainly office use (Class B1) incorporating ground floor accommodation for retail or cafe or offices (A1/A3 or B1) and the other comprising ground plus 6 upper floors providing 25 residential units and two retail or cafe units (A1/A3) at ground floor level, and a new public place between the two buildings.</p> <p>2. Observation to adjoining borough for demolition of existing building and provision of a replacement building comprising sub-basement, basement, ground plus 8 upper floors to provide 148 residential apartments, with ancillary gym/ fitness centre, car and cycle-parking parking spaces and building services plant on the basement and sub-basement levels.</p>							
Recommendation:		1. Objection 2. Objection					
Application Type:		Request for Observations to Adjoining Borough					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	17	No. of responses	01	No. of objections	01
Summary of consultation responses:		<p>One letter of objection was received to 2012/4804/P from 8 New Square as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In principle replacing the existing building is a good thing. The problem with the plans are that they appear to significantly increase the height of the building opposite us which if the building is not set back from the road (as it currently is) will lead to significant loss of light and privacy for our business. <i>OFFICER COMMENT:</i> See paragraph 2.14 We do not feel the need for the proposed cafes and bars but concede that they are on the other side of the building from us so we are not as directly affected as some. 					

CAAC/Local groups comments:

N/A

Site Description

The site is a 7 storey office building located close to Camden's southern borough boundary (the boundary runs along Serle Street). The site is bounded by Carey Street to the west and south, Portugal Street to the north and Serle Street to the east and is within the City of Westminster. The existing building has a basement car park with 110 car parking spaces as well as large areas of roof mounted plant.

The proposed development site lies within the City of Westminster but borders the London Borough of Camden. To the east of the development site lies the Grade II* listed New Square, seventeenth century chambers which also lie in Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The site is also within the Central London Area. The Holborn Growth Area is nearby to the north.

Relevant History

- 2012/2478/P - Observations to the adjoining City of Westminster for continued temporary use of part ground and first, fourth and fifth floors until 29 September 2014 for dual/alternative use as office use (Class B1) and/or education use (Class D1) and temporary use of remainder of ground floor and second, third and sixth floors from office use (Class B1) to dual/alternative use as office (Class B1) and/or education use (Class D1) until 29 September 2014. LBC consulted but did not comment on the application.
- 2011/1175/P - Observation to adjoining borough for dual/alternative change of use of the fourth and fifth floors as office (Class B1) and/or education use (Class D1) for a temporary period until 12 March 2012. No objections March 2011
- P9600491 Observations to adjoining Borough for the installation of 2 external condensing units behind brick-work parapet on 5th floor balcony. No objection April 1996

Relevant policies

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies 2010

CS1 – Distribution of growth

CS2 – Growth areas

CS5 – Managing the impact of growth and development

CS6 – Providing quality homes

CS7 – Promoting Camden's centres and shops

CS8 – Promoting a successful and inclusive Camden economy

CS9 – Achieving a successful Central London

CS11 – Promoting sustainable and efficient travel

CS13 – Tackling climate change through promoting higher environmental standards

CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

CS15 – Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces and encouraging biodiversity

DP2 – Making full use of Camden's capacity for housing

DP3 – Contributions to the supply of affordable housing

DP5 – Homes of different sizes

DP6 – Lifetime homes and wheelchair homes

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

DP22 – Promoting sustainable design and construction

DP23 – Water

DP24 – Securing high quality design

DP25 – Conserving Camden's heritage

DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

DP27 – Basements and lightwells

DP28 – Noise and vibration
DP29 – Improving access

Camden Planning Guidance (2011)
Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal 2011
London Plan 2011
NPPF 2012

Assessment

1. Proposal

1.1 There are two planning applications at the site for two different schemes following demolition of the existing building:

- Provision of two replacement buildings – one 7 storey plus ground floor office building and one 6 storey plus ground floor residential building (25 units) with A1/A3 units at ground floor level of each building and/or office uses at ground floor of the office building. This scheme includes the provision 22 car parking spaces and 226 cycle spaces in the basement.
- Provision of an 8 storey plus ground floor residential building (148 units), with ancillary gym/fitness centre. This scheme includes the provision of 50 car parking spaces and 192 cycle spaces in the basement.

2. Assessment

2.1 Both schemes have set backs and heights similar to the existing building on Serle Street, which is the elevation facing the London Borough of Camden and is in relatively close proximity to properties on New Square, which are within the London Borough of Camden. The proposed building line in both schemes is projected forward when compared to the existing building and this element will be 4 storeys in height. Both schemes are taller than the existing building on the Carey Street and Portugal Street elevations, with the full residential scheme being the bulkiest and tallest option.

Demolition/design

2.2 Dating from the 1960s the existing building is of limited architectural quality and does not preserve the setting of the either the listed buildings in New Square or Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The demolition of the building offers the opportunity of enhancing the setting of both of these designated heritage assets, therefore no objection is raised in principle.

2.3 A townscape and heritage assessment has been submitted showing a number of viewpoints of the proposed development (either wire line or fully rendered), however this has only been scanned onto Westminster's website for the mixed use scheme and not the residential development (which is taller so may have a greater impact).

2.4 Immediately adjacent to the Borough boundary the massing of the building is similar to the existing in townscape views from along Carey Street and along Newman's Row. Additional bulk is provided at the upper levels but due to its arrangement at the west of the site it will not affect these close views appreciably.

2.5 Paragraph 5.152 of Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal states:

"Lincoln's Inn and Gray's Inn have a more enclosed, collegiate character. The whole area has a private, internalised feel, hidden from view from the main surrounding streets except at key locations where there are glimpse views into the larger gardens".

2.6 A number of visuals have been provided from New Square which is an attractive space with a largely unbroken roofline. Any background structure which projects above the roofline are either isolated spires or plant rooms (which are muted in appearance due to their small size and white colouring). In contrast a consolidated area of bulk would project above the roofline (which particularly evident in View 4) and would have a much greater impact, especially with windows overlooking the space. This would erode the private and internalised feel of this space as well as interrupt the roofline of the square.

2.7 Taking aside the issue of bulk and massing the design of the façade for both schemes in terms of their architectural treatment appears acceptable. The level of detailing would break up the perceived bulk of the buildings and it would certainly be a significant enhancement over the existing.

2.8 In summary, whilst the proposed scheme does offer some benefits to the setting of the listed New Square and Bloomsbury Conservation Area, strong concerns are raised about the impact of the development from views within New Square. It is therefore recommended that Camden object to the application because of the impact on the setting of the Listed Buildings and views from the Conservation Area.

Transport

2.9 The existing office building has a floor area of 18,191 sqm and a basement car park with 110 car parking spaces. Both schemes propose an element of car parking on site with the office/residential scheme including 22 car parking spaces and the residential scheme including 50 parking spaces.

2.10 The site has a PTAL score of 6b, which indicates that it is highly accessible by public transport. The nearest station is Holborn, located to the northwest of the site, whilst Chancery Lane station is located to the north east and Temple station is located to the south. The nearest bus stops are located on Aldwych/Fleet Street, to the south of the site.

2.11 The proposed office development will lead to an increase in the number of trips to and from the site, however, it is considered that this can be accommodated on the existing highway and public transport networks. The residential only scheme will lead to a reduction in trips to and from the site.

2.12 Policy CS11 states that the Council will minimise provision for private parking in new developments through car free developments in the borough's most accessible locations, in order to reduced the environmental impact of travel and relieve pressure on the borough's transport network. Policy DP18 states that the Council will expect development to be car free in the Central London Area. The level of parking provision proposed is more than would be expected in Central London and if the site were located in Camden it would be expected to be designated as car free. The only exception would be if existing residential units had spaces on site and the occupiers were to remain or return on completion of the works, which is not the case in this situation. It is recommended that Camden object to the application as the proposed provision of 22 or 50 parking spaces on site is considered to be unacceptable.

2.13 Cycle parking for both developments meets the London Plan standards.

Amenity

2.14 On both schemes the proposed buildings have been designed to incorporate the same level of set back as the existing building on Serle Street (which is the road which runs parallel to the rear of the properties on New Square and is the boundary between the two boroughs). The increase in height of both schemes is proposed on the other street frontages to the west and centre of the site. The applicant has appointed consultants to assess the daylight/sunlight impacts of the proposals. They have concluded that, because there are no residential properties or uses which are considered to be sensitive in terms of daylight/sunlight, a BRE daylight/sunlight assessment is not required. Given the fact that the increases in height are located away from the Serle Street frontage and the properties in Camden, and the fact that the properties on New Square are all in office use it is considered that there will not be any significant impacts on amenity in terms of daylight/sunlight on any properties within Camden.

3. Recommendation

3.1 It is recommended that the City of Westminster be urged to address the height and car parking issues before this application is determined and until such time that this Council has been satisfied upon these matters, it objects to the impacts of the development upon this borough.

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