

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet	Expiry Date:	09/05/2012
		N/A	Consultation Expiry Date:	19/04/2012
Officer			Application Number(s)	
Jenna Litherland			2012/1522/P	
Application Address			Drawing Numbers	
19 Bedford Square London WC1B 3HH			Refer to draft decision notice	
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)				
Change of use from offices (Class B1a) to use as either offices (Class B1a) or a non-residential educational institution (Class D1).				
Recommendation(s):		Grant conditional permission subject to a S106 legal agreement		
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission		

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	04	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
			No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:	<p>Site notice displayed from 22/03/2012 until 12/04/2012. Advertised in the Ham and High 29/03/2012.</p> <p>No representations received.</p>					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: <small>*Please Specify</small>	<p>Bloomsbury CAAC: No comment</p> <p>Bloomsbury Association: Support the application.</p> <p>Support a mix of uses with Bedford Square. However, the proposal would increase demand for cycle parking and the existing cycle parking in the area is over used. The proposal should include cycling provision. The demand for seating in the square outreaches supply and provision of additional benches may be appropriate.</p> <p><i>Case officer's response: The proposed use requires provision of additional cycle parking which would be secured by a S106 agreement.</i></p>					

Site Description

Bedford Square, 1775- 86, is the most complete and most important Georgian square in London. The design of the square includes the design of railings, lampstandards, and private gardens in the middle of the square, as a complete set piece of townscape.

No.19 is part of the Listed Grade I Georgian terrace forming the north side of Bedford Square. It is 3 storeys high on a basement floor, with an attic floor over. Each elevation to the Square was designed as a 'palace' elevation with a central stuccoed pediment on pilasters flanked by wings. Bedford Square lies within Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Relevant History

There is no relevant history at the application site however the following permissions within the wider area are relevant:

34 Bloomsbury Street

2011/0258/P – Planning permission granted on 21/03/2011 for change of use from office to dual use of office and education (Class B1/D1) for a temporary period of 5 years.

2 Southampton Row

2010/5190/P – Planning permission granted on 27/01/2011 for change of use from office (B1) to an alternative use of either offices or non-residential institution (Class D1).

Relevant policies

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

- CS1 – Distribution of growth
- CS5 – Areas of more limited change
- CS8 – Promoting a successful and inclusive Camden economy
- CS10 - Supporting community facilities and services
- CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

- DP13 – Employment sites and premises
- DP15- Community and leisure uses
- DP16 – The transport implications of development
- DP19 – Managing the impact of parking
- DP25 – Conserving Camden's heritage
- DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

Camden Planning Guidance 2011

CPG5 – Town Centres, Retail and Employment

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Statement

Assessment

Planning permission is sought for the change of use from offices (Class B1a) to use as either offices (Class B1a) or a non-residential educational institution (Class D1). No internal or external alterations are proposed. The property is currently vacant, the previous tenants vacated in March.

Loss of B1 floorspace and replacement with D1 use

Policy DP13 seeks to protect employment uses, but this is on the basis that they can be used flexibly for a range of employment uses. The applicants have stated that the building is unsuitable for other employment uses because it is grade 1 listed, cannot provide for servicing by larger vehicles, is not close to other industry and warehousing uses, in a mixed use area including residential and commercial uses, and could not provide a range of unit sizes for small businesses. The site therefore has few, if any, of the typical design features as outlined in paragraphs 13.3 and 13.4 of policy DP13 that would allow flexible employment use and it is unlikely that incorporating such features would be feasible in a building such as this. Furthermore, Policy CGPG states that the loss of B1(a) may be allowable for that older premises or buildings that were originally built as residential. The quality of the premises and its suitability to provide features required by tenants seeking modern office accommodation should also be considered. This case the building is an older premises, which was originally built as a residential house and as it is Grade I listed it would not be appropriate to install features of more modern office accommodation. Therefore, in accordance with policy the loss of B1(a) office space would not be objectionable.

The applicant has not submitted evidence of a thorough marketing exercise over at least two years (as required by paragraph 13.5 of policy DP13) but has confirmed there is adequate supply of office space in the area. The case officer has undertaken searches and found that there is a substantial availability in this area of alternative sites which provide significant amounts of modern and flexible B1 floor space.

In addition to the above it should be noted that the applicants have not ruled out future office occupation and instead seek a flexible consent for either offices (Class B1a) or non-residential educational institution. The intended end user is the New College of the Humanities. The college would support permanent, full time employment at the site. It is expected that there will be a total number of 26 administrative staff and 13 academic staff initially and this number is envisaged to rise. There is also likely to be 70 part time academic staff. The previous tenants of the building employed 15 staff. Therefore, the proposed use would significantly increase the number of employment opportunities at the site.

Policy DP15 states that the Council will grant planning permission for the development of new community uses provided that they are accessible by a range of transport modes and located in the Central London Area if they are expected to attract a large number of visitors. The site is located in a highly accessible location close to Goodge Street and Tottenham Court Road tube stations. Therefore the proposed education use is acceptable in policy land use terms.

Policy DP15 seeks suitable educational facilities to make rooms available for local community groups to use or hire at a discount rate. The proposed operating hours of the college are expected to be 8am-6pm however staff may use the building outside of these hours. Given the operation hours and the layout of the building, with no obvious room which could be leased out, it is not considered appropriate to secure space for local community groups.

Amenity

Policy DP26 states that the Council will only grant permission for development that does not cause harm to amenity in terms of overlooking, loss of daylight/sunlight, noise, odour and fumes. Given that there are no external alterations proposed, the proposal would not result in an adverse impact for neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking, loss of sunlight or daylight. It is proposed that some teaching will take place within the building however most teaching will take place off-site, the majority of the building will be used as offices for the staff working within the building. The proposed use is not considered to have a adverse impact on the amenity of the neighbouring residential properties. A

condition restricting the hours of operation is not thought necessary.

Transport

The site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level of (PTAL) of 6b (excellent) and is within a Controlled Parking Zone. The site is within the "Clear Zone Region", for which the whole area is considered to suffer from parking stress. Not making the development car-free would significantly increase demand for on-street parking in the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). It is therefore recommended that the development be secured as car free in accordance with policy DP18, through a section 106 legal agreement.

Camden's Parking Standards for cycles states that 1 storage or parking space for staff is required from a threshold of 500m² per 250m². For visitors a minimum of 2 spaces are required from a threshold of 500m². As such this proposal results in a requirement for 6 cycle storage or parking spaces. Given that there is only one entrance to the property it is not considered appropriate to provide cycle storage with the building. Therefore, a contribution for the provision of 6 of on-street parking space will be sought in accordance with policy DP18, through a section 106 legal agreement.

Sustainability

Policy DP22 requires all developments with a floorspace of over 500m² to achieve 'very good' in a BREEAM assessment. In this instance it is considered unreasonable to require a BREEAM assessment as the building is Grade I listed meaning there is limited scope to incorporate sustainable design and construction measures. Furthermore, no external or internal alterations are proposed to the building. The applicant states that staff and students will be encouraged to make use of sustainable methods of transport such as walking, cycling and using public transport. This is encouraged.

CIL

This proposal would not be liable for the Mayor of London's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as it does not result in additional floorspace in excess of 100m² or one unit of residential accommodation.

Recommendation: Grant Planning permission subject to a S106 legal agreement with the following Heads of Terms :

- Development should be car free
- Cycle parking - 6 spaces (c.£750)

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