

DISCLAIMER

Decision route to be decided by nominated members on Monday 2nd November 2009. For further information see <http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/planning-and-built-environment/planning-applications/development-control-members-briefing/>

Members Briefing		Analysis sheet	Expiry Date:	28/07/2009
		N/A / attached	Consultation Expiry Date:	03/07/2009
Officer			Application Number(s)	
Aysegul Olcar-Chamberlin			2009/1923/P	
Application Address			Drawing Numbers	
59 - 60 Russell Square London WC1B 4HP			See draft decision notice	
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)				
Change of use of first, second, third and fourth floors from offices (Class B1) to either office (Class B1) or educational facility (Class D1).				
Recommendation(s):		Grant Planning Permission subject to S106 Agreement		
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission		

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	08	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
			No. Electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:	<p>A site notice was displayed from 12/06/2009 to 03/07/2009.</p> <p>No replies from the adjoining occupiers are received.</p>					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: <small>*Please Specify</small>	<p>Bloomsbury CAAC objects the proposed Class D1 use on the grounds there are more than enough Class D1 space in the vicinity.</p> <p><i>Response: Please refer to the assessment part of the report.</i></p>					
Site Description						
<p>The application relates to Grade II listed three and four storey terrace properties with basements, dating 1800-03 by James Burton. The application sites form part of the Grade II listed terrace on the south east side of Russell Square in the Bloomsbury Conservation area.</p> <p>The site is within the Central London Area. The surrounding area has mixes of office, residential and educational uses. Number of buildings associated with Birkbeck College is also located on Russell Square.</p>						
Relevant History						
<p><u>Application property:</u></p> <p>2009/3845/P – Planning application was validated on 11/09/2009 for the installation of a lift to the front lightwell of number 60 Russell Square for disabled access from lower ground floor to upper ground floor. No decision has been made yet. The statutory expiry date for this application is 06/11/2009. The associated listed building consent (2009/3846/L) also expires on 06/11/2009.</p> <p>2009/4871/INVALID – Listed Building Consent application for the internal alterations to include the installation two 5 x cycle stands at fourth floor level in connection with the current application was received on 15/10/2009. This application is waiting to be validated.</p> <p><u>Properties in the vicinity:</u></p> <p>38 Bedford Square: Planning permission (ref: 2008/3468/P) was granted on 29/09/2008 for the change of use from offices (class B1) to dual educational use (class D1) and office use (class B1).</p> <p>39 Bedford Square: Planning permission (ref: 2008/4427/P) was granted on 08/12/2008 for the change of use from offices (class B1) to dual educational use (class D1) and office use (class B1).</p>						

34, 35 and 36 Bedford Square: Planning permission (ref: 9211) was granted on 19/08/1970 for change of use from educational use to offices.

34-36 Bedford Square: Planning permission (ref: HB3110) was granted on 22/07/1983 for erection of a 2-storey extension at the rear of No.34 Bedford Square, to provide seminar rooms and library facilities, associated with works of alteration.

19 Russell Square: Permission (ref: RC/LK/DEL367) was granted on 07/08/1963 for the use of the premises for University purposes.

21-22 Russell Square: Permission (ref: 366/06/06/63) was granted on 22/07/1963 the premises for University purposes, with a caretaker's flat on the top floor at No.22 Russell Square.

23-24 Russell Square: Planning permission (ref: 10104) was granted on 14/01/1971 for the change of use from offices and storage for use for University purposes.

30 Russell Square: Planning permission (ref: 9000071) was granted on 22/08/1990 for the change of use from non residential institutional use (permission personal to Institute of Chemistry) to non residential institutional use for general university purposes.

52-53 Russell Square: Planning permission (ref: 2005/1516/P) was granted on 15/07/2005 for the change of use of the lower ground floor from office (Class B1) to alternative uses of either non-residential institution or office use (Classes D1/B1).

Relevant policies

Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006

SD1- Quality of Life
SD6- Amenity of Occupiers and Neighbours
SD7 - Noise and vibration pollution
B6 - Listed Buildings
B7 - Conservation Areas
T2 - Capacity for transport provision
T3 – Pedestrians and cycling
T9 - Impact of parking
C1 – New Community Uses
E2 - Retention of Existing Business Uses

Camden Planning Guidance 2006

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Statement

Assessment

The proposal seeks permission for conversion of the building with an internal floorspace of 903m² to dual educational use (class D1) and office use (class B1). No external alterations are proposed.

The possible educational use is anticipated to generate a maximum of 65 students between the ages of 18 and 45 and 21 numbers of staff. The proposed educational use would operate hours between 8:30 am and 7:00 pm.

The Council's transport planner raised concerns over the impact of the proposed educational use on the existing transport networks and conditions. In response that concern, the agent has proposed an internal cycle parking/storage space for 8 bicycles in the attic (on the fourth floor) level to mitigate the impact of the proposed use on the transport conditions.

The main considerations are the principle of proposed conversion, the impact of the proposal on the local amenities, accessibility and transport conditions.

Principle of Proposed Conversion:

Policy E2 of the adopted UDP states that change of use to other uses such as residential uses (in particular affordable housing) or community uses (such as educational, health care and childcare facilities) would be acceptable provided that the site does not have potential for continuation of the existing business use. Additionally, policy C1 of the adopted UDP encourages provision of new educational facilities in suitable locations where easily be accessible by public transport and would not harm the existing transport system.

Whilst these proposals would result in the loss of existing B1 floorspace, it is in favour of a use that is encouraged in policy C1 and the flexible nature of the application means that the option to return the premises back to office (Class B1) use is available. Given the location of the site and the proposal would provide flexibility to return the premises back to office (Class B1), the proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle.

The application site's central location means that it is highly accessible by a number of modes of transport, and the existing transport system is likely to be able to sustain the proposed use subject to the provision of on-site cycle parking/storage facilities.

In light of the above it is considered that the proposed change of use to dual educational use (D1) and business use (B1) would be considered acceptable. It is necessary to restrict the D1 use to educational facilities only. The Use Class is quite wide and other alternative D1 uses might have a significant impact on noise, traffic and parking.

Local Amenities:

Policy SD6 states that the Council will not grant planning permission for development that it considers causes harm to the amenity of occupiers and neighbours in terms of overlooking, loss of daylight/sunlight, noise, odour and fumes and light.

The application property would be used either as offices or educational facilities for pre-university and language courses. The proposed use is considered not to generate excessive noise and is consistent with the mixed use nature of the area. Given that there are no external alterations, the proposal will not impact negatively upon neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking, loss of sunlight or daylight. Thus, the proposal is considered to be consistent with Policy SD6 of the UDP.

The proposed use will be for a study centre and not for any type of student accommodation. A condition to restrict the proposed D1 use to educational facilities only is imposed to prevent additional noise level that might have generated by alternative D1 uses.

Access:

The proposal would keep the existing access arrangement. The proposed cycle parking/storage space on the attic space would be accessible via internal lift from basement level to the attic level.

Transport Conditions:

The site is located close to a number of bus routes and within 250m from Tottenham Court Road underground station and has very good public transport accessibility. The Council's transport planner considered the proposal to be on the border line as to whether the proposed educational use reaches the threshold for the requirement of a travel plan. Following the agent's later proposal for a cycle parking/storage space in connection with this application, the Council's transport planner considered the proposed cycle parking/storage space to mitigate the impact on transport conditions more than what a travel plan would. The proposed cycle parking/storage would also promote 'green travel'.

Subject to details of cycle parking/storage space the proposal is considered not to adversely affect the existing transport conditions and it would be acceptable in transport terms.

Recommendation: Grant Conditional Permission.