

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		29/02/2008	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		15.2.08	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Charles Thuaire				2007/5210/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
Kings Cross Post Office 17-21 Euston Road London NW1 2RY				Site Location Plan; 1721E/1/1007			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature				
Proposal(s)							
Change of use of part of retail shop (Class A1) to 24 hour minicab office (Sui Generis).							
Recommendation(s):		Refuse permission					
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	01	No. of objections	01
				No. electronic	01		
Summary of consultation responses:		JSRA Committee object- streets at rear for parking minicabs already congested; potential increase in street crime in area including loitering by prostitutes and drug dealers					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify		Transport for London do not raise objection, <u>provided</u> conditions are met- office is operating strictly by phone booking only and no counter booking service is offered, vehicles do not pick up or set down passengers in Euston Road between Argyle St and Birkenhead St.					

Site Description

Large Class A1 retail unit in western part of Belgrove House between Belgrove St and McDonalds, used as Post Office with various ancillary retail activities inside such as takeaway food, internet cafe, general provision sales etc. Adjoining uses include banks and burger restaurant/takeaways

Relevant History

None

Relevant policies

S1,2,3,9; T1,T2,15; R6,R7a

Assessment

The proposal involves use of a small corner of the Post Office at the western end, approx 5 sqm in floor area, which currently contains a food server/sandwich bar. The proposal involves a minicab office separated by a partition and door from the main retail unit and accessed from the existing entrance doors, and would be used on a 24 hr basis. It will operate by one person working in the office and 3 cab drivers parked in nearby streets, ie. Belgrove Street; the office will, according to the submitted statement, mainly operate by telephone calls being received and made for the service. No external alterations are proposed.

Issues- impact on retail character and function of frontage and impact on traffic flows and safety.

Landuse policy

The frontage of this parade between 2 side streets contains only McDonalds and the Post Office.

R7A seeks to resist loss of A1 floorspace generally. The Central London guidance is, amongst other things, concerned to protect the retail function of shopping uses, particular against over-concentration of food and drink uses. Guidance for King's Cross/ Euston Road Central London Frontage seeks to limit the development of further food and drink uses. However, it does not seek to retain any specific proportion of A1 use. Given the small amount of floorspace and frontage involved in the proposal, and the existing food server in that part of the shop, it is considered that the proposal cannot be resisted on the basis of damage to the retail function of the unit or the Central London Frontage.

R6 is a criteria-based policy. Criterion (b) has effectively been assessed with respect to policy R7. Criterion R7(c) is considered to be adequately satisfied in that there are no nearby residential properties that would be directly affected. There are no other minicab offices nearby which would result in a concentration of such uses in the area, and the use would not create fumes or noise nuisance, thus criteria R6(d,e,f) are met. The criterion of greatest significance in R6(g) relating to vehicular stopping and parking- this is specifically noted as an issue for minicab offices in para 6.38), and is discussed further below.

Transport policy

It is noted that the applicant states that the office will work mainly by telephone calls being received and made. Although it is not clear whether it would be solely operating by telephone, radio or computer and whether this would include both customers and drivers or only an element of this, the submitted statement that the staff will be "working mainly on telephone" implies that personal callers will be possible. It is not explicitly clear whether passengers would be able to visit the premises, although there is no reason why they should not be able to visit the site during shop opening hours (8am-6pm) given the layout and accessibility of the minicab office; outside these hours it is presumed that passengers will have to phone the office from outside. However it is not clear whether drivers will

have personal access to the office outside opening hours. Nevertheless the statement makes it clear that drivers will be parked outside the unit in back streets (no parking is possible on Euston Road itself) and thus it is presumed that customers will wait around the premises in Euston Road or Belgrove Road until a driver is ready to pick them up.

Policy T2 states that:

The Council will only grant planning permission for development where it considers that all forms of travel associated with the development can be accommodated by:

- a) the capacity of the existing transport provision; or*
- b) the capacity of planned transport provision that has fully secured funding and a firm start date; or*
- c) additional capacity and/or demand management measures directly related in scale and kind to the development, to be funded by the developer, and designed to cause minimum environmental harm*

Euston Road is a TfL Red Route with extremely high traffic flows, where no stopping or loading is permitted. The proposed use would mean that private taxis will be stopped for extended periods of time in the streets surrounding the development (Euston Road excluded). This will have a significant impact on these streets and obstruct other vehicles using the carriageway, thereby reducing the capacity of these roads. Neither the streets surrounding the development, nor Euston Road itself, have existing capacity to accommodate the increase in transport demand; therefore this development is considered unacceptable and should be refused planning permission.

The possibility of personal callers as discussed above would contravene TfL's conditional agreement with the proposal that only a strictly telephone- booking service would be possible here. The only acceptable operation would be if the office was as a purely radio control office, with no advertising on the outside of the building whatsoever (secured by condition or S106). Customers would need to phone the cab office and the cars would be controlled remotely (e.g. Radio, mobile, PDA), and be given instructions to pick the customer up from wherever they are and deliver them to their destination without returning to the office (i.e. point-to-point hire). The Council would need to have control over the operation of the business via a Management Plan secured via S106. The Council would take enforcement action if the cab firm did not follow the Management Plan. It should be made clear to the applicant that the Council will only accept the business if it were a purely radio control office operating point to point hire. However the application indicates that the operation will not be solely telephone-based and there is a possibility of passengers calling during the day and also of drivers waiting at the side of the premises in Belgrove Sreet and presumably picking up and dropping off passengers here as well.

The scheme is unacceptable due to its impact on traffic capacity of surrounding streets and its effect on highway conditions.

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